

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR



The students of the Philosophy, Politics, and Economics Program at the University of Pennsylvania are fortunate to receive comprehensive instruction in the social sciences. This year's issue of *SPICE*, like prior publications, showcases the remarkable achievements that can emerge from this interdisciplinary education.

A Study of Sustainable Behavior Inducement utilizes statistical methods to examine the role of color and written eco-labels in environmental impact reduction. It is followed by *Deliberative Citizenship*, an intense philosophical reflection challenging the hegemony of classical liberalism in the public discourse, presenting an alternative way of thinking about the social world by arguing for the complexity of human behavior and thought, as advocated by the deliberate democrats. *Institutional Trust* is a study about democratic life, delving into the relationship between structural reforms and trust in state institutions, emphasizing context over generalizability by employing a case-study methodology that focuses on Mexican institutions. And, to conclude, *Veering off the Abolitionist Path in America* offers an intriguing historical, political, and legal approach to understanding why the U.S. might be the only country in the Western world to retain the death penalty in its justice system.

I am proud to present each of these papers as they illustrate one or more of the Five Themes of Study that students may currently pursue. PPE students focus their coursework around the study of *Choice & Behavior*, *Ethics & the Professions*, *Distributive Justice*, *Public Policy & Governance*, or *Globalization*.

We reviewed many outstanding papers and we are appreciative of all those who submitted their work for consideration. This journal would not be possible without the exemplary effort of its contributors, authors, and editors. I applaud their enthusiasm for the Program, as well as their expressed commitment to research and scholarship, in general, and in the PPE disciplines, in particular.

On behalf of the Board, I extend my appreciation to Dr. Sumantra Sen for his invaluable guidance and support. Professor Sen deserves our gratitude as a mentor during our years at Penn; he is also an avid supporter of interdisciplinary studies and was paramount in the establishment of this journal.

I trust that the level of scholarship presented in the pages that follow inspires thought, reflection, and healthy debate. More importantly, it is my hope that it encourages *action*. While scholarship for its own sake is always a worthy use of intellect, it is my contention that scholarship should be most admired when it helps to solve the problems we face in the world. As students of philosophy we *learn how to think deeply and logically about issues*; as students of political science we *learn the value and inner-workings of human institutions*; and as students of economics we *learn how to analyze the production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services*. I thus urge the students of PPE to capitalize on their ability to understand issues through these multiple lenses as they go into the world and tackle its many challenges – all with an outlook towards making a rich contribution and powerful impact.

To the students, parents, faculty, alumni, and friends of the PPE Program at Penn, the Editorial Board and I hope that you enjoy this year's issue and continue to advocate for an interdisciplinary education.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Antonio Luis Vázquez", written over a horizontal line.

Antonio Luis Vázquez
Editor-In-Chief