It has Been an Honour: Pangea Op-Ed on Behalf of the Dalhousie Honours History Seminar
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I started university in September 2020, so most of my courseload was online for two years. I did not meet another history student during my first year; even in my second year, I only met a few. I am facing a whirlwind of emotions as I wrap up my final year of university. It is a surreal feeling to have started my university career in the thick of the COVID-19 pandemic and be graduating in a world that almost seems to forget the whole thing happened. I am eternally grateful to have been allowed to write this pseudo-op-ed for Pangea. It was not until I started writing this that I realized this was the end of a big part of my life. I have done nothing but think about the past for the last four years, and now I am forced to look forward and embrace whatever may lie ahead. It is a hard transition, however, one I am incredibly excited to make. Difficult though it may be, I find solace knowing I am not alone. My fellow honours history classmates share this journey, transitioning from meticulously chronicling the past to envisioning our futures in graduate school applications and cover letters.

The revival of Dalhousie's Undergraduate History Society (UGHS) amidst this emotional period has been particularly noteworthy. I am eternally grateful to those who made that possible. I have thoroughly appreciated being a part of that process. Thanks to the UGHS – specifically Kriti Maini – Pangea has been brought back to life. I gained experience in publishing and became a part of the historical field of study. As a class, the honours history students were tasked with peer-reviewing a record number of submissions as our journal made its first-ever national call-out. I could not have asked for a better team to work with, students and faculty.

My thesis research has been a truly incredible experience. I do not need to go in-depth here, but I am writing about hurricanes. Beyond the academic merit of my paper, I have learned how fragile everything is. Nothing makes you appreciate of what you have more than understanding that it takes truly little for everything to change. It can be easy to read this as doom and gloom. Still, I want you, the reader, to take this as a challenge. First, prepare a go bag if you live in a hurricane zone (like Nova Scotia). The second and more important challenge is this: Keep moving forward. There were times this year when I was incredibly close to dropping out and disappearing into the woods, never to be seen again. What keeps me going is the incredible group of people I am surrounded by both at school and in my personal life. Despite initially navigating isolation upon relocating to Halifax in 2020, perseverance has borne fruit, culminating in a sense of fulfillment and contentment.

I could not be happier than where I am today. Sitting in my favourite café, in a seat next to a window basking in the sun shining on me as I savour my coffee, writing a brief overview of the last four years of my life. It fills my heart that you are about to read some of Canada's best works of undergraduate history research – in my completely unbiased opinion. On behalf of the Honours History class of 2023/2024, it has been an absolute honour to bring these works to you.