Letter from the Executive Editor

All social science research begins with a question -- a riddle to be answered, a puzzle about human behavior. This issue of Insights addresses some particularly intriguing questions:

- Why is streaking tolerated on some college campuses, but not in the outside world? How does society tolerate two sets of cultural rules – “micro” rules for some colleges and “macro” rules for society at large?
- Why are valuable petroleum resources often described as a “curse” for a nation, rather than as a blessing? In Venezuela, how has oil affected politics, including the actions of that nation’s controversial president, Hugo Chávez?
- Why has Nepal experienced high rates of human trafficking? What are the proper roles of the government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in combating human trafficking?
- What are the root causes of illegal immigration into the U.S.? What are the most effective ways to curtail illegal immigration?
- Could the US have prevented the Vietnam War by making better diplomatic choices immediately following World War II? Were there good reasons for the U.S. and Vietnam to become allies rather than enemies?

Some may see education as learning the answers to prescribed questions, but I am particularly proud of our students’ ability to ask themselves interesting and insightful questions, and then go to great lengths to find the answers to those questions. Rather than passively regurgitating information from a textbook, the students in these pages have demonstrated a higher-order skill of independent, thoughtful, and careful analysis on issues important to them. You may not agree with all the answers provided, but I hope you will join me in congratulating these student scholars on the high level of their intellectual efforts.

Insights is a student-edited and student-written journal, so the issue in your hands (or on your screen!) has required the efforts of numerous referees as well as authors. Nineteen editors read dozens of papers over a period of seven months to select, and improve, the five
articles you see here. Sharon Topi, the administrator of the Levitt Center and our managing editor, has continued to shoulder the task of putting the journal together. And the Levitt Center has continued to provide essential financial support for the project. To all of you, my grateful thanks!

As always, we welcome submissions, either directly from students or from professors who spot a particularly well-crafted paper. Submissions should be no longer than twenty-five double-spaced pages, formatted in the American Psychological Association (APA) style, and should be sent to me via the e-mail address below.

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