

## LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

IT IS LATE SUMMER and California is burning. At the time of this writing, more than 14,000 firefighters are battling fifteen blazes across the state. The Mendocino Complex inferno is the largest recorded fire in the history of California, and the Ferguson Fire continues to rage just west of one of our greatest national treasures, Yosemite National Park. It is a dangerous thing, this landscape of ours.

Though few have fought as hard and valiantly for that landscape as our firefighters, many others have tried to preserve their vision of it. As Andrew Wiese explains, Friends of Rose Canyon waged a long and successful campaign between 2000 and 2018 to prevent construction of a bridge in the Rose Canyon Open Space Park in San Diego. Wiese's study demonstrates how twenty-first-century California urbanites created meaningful local places and mobilized effective politics around them. Similarly, as Richard Brock reveals, Modesta Avila fought against the railroad over the destiny of a patch of land in San Juan Capistrano. But as Brock convincingly proves, Avila's story is far more complex and elusive than historians have generally recognized. UCR Ethnic Studies Professor Edward T. Chang, and historical preservationist, Hannah Brown, have recreated the early days of Riverside's Pachappa Camp, the first Koreatown on the U.S. mainland. For Korean immigrants to Pachappa Camp, claiming a place on the California landscape was an essential part of both cultural preservation and gradual assimilation.

Like people everywhere, Californians endow their varied locales with personal meaning. In this issue, our authors explore the contours of that meaning.

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