

FROM THE EDITOR



In the era of COVID-19 and the Black Lives Matter movement, it is ever more pressing to analyze and critique America's politics, media, culture, and history. The year 2020 has challenged our nation and world to recreate its economics, politics, spirituality, culture, and socialization in an unparalleled way. This global transformation has called on all Americans to question their identity and beliefs. The four case studies included in this Volume of *Women Leading Change* exhibit phenomenal commitment to illuminate gender and racial biases. I can imagine that Newcomb Scholars Avery Anderson, Lauren Flowers, Hadley Sayers, and Emma Schreier faced their own obstacles this past semester as they battled to do research with a closed library and to maintain motivation through Zoom classes and social distancing. These case studies testify to their resilience and desire to expand knowledge during this transformative phase of American and global history. A case study enables students to place themselves in the shoes of influential, and sometimes controversial, figures and organizations to ask "how" and "why." The case study teaching method is a powerful tool for advancing women's empowerment and leadership through reflection and narration. The Scholars seamlessly weave modern questions of identity, culture, and politics into their case studies, teaching readers about *our* America and the pressing issues with which we all grapple.

Anderson and Sayers write about how media culture can impact political decisions, leadership choices, and gender standards. Anderson's case questions Tipper Gore's politicization of motherhood at the intersection of free speech rights and the hyper-sexualization of music. Sayers explores how prosecutor Marcia Clark's appearance and presentation in the O.J. Simpson trial influenced her credibility and the media's narrative. Both cases examine the lives and public image of monumental characters, evaluating how women navigate activism and work in a society embedded in patriarchal norms.

Flowers and Schreier investigate controversy around female leadership at Planned Parenthood and the Me Too movement. Flowers writes about Asia Argento's sexual assault allegations and her problematic presence in the movement. Schreier scrutinizes the connection between the de-politicization of Planned Parenthood and the leadership of Dr. Leana Wen. Both cases discuss the history of these widely known groups and explore the complicated dynamics of women's leadership and national visibility of women's issues in the 21st century.

I invite you to dive into these case studies and explore their themes. They resonate deeply with an America examining its identity and struggling to realize its potential. These case studies have the power to teach us about our place in American culture and wider global network.

Keep questioning perspectives and expanding your mind!

Sincerely,

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Class of 2021

Renée Trepagnier is a Newcomb Scholar and senior at Tulane University, double majoring in Classical Studies (BA) and Anthropology (BS). Her passion is exploring Minoan Bronze Age culture (3000-1200 BCE) and archaeology. She plans to pursue Aegean Archaeology in the future and explore gender relations in Bronze Age antiquity.