

FROM THE EDITOR



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omen Leading Change,” the second year Newcomb Scholars course, guides us Scholars through feminist research interrogation using the case study method. I remember that prior to my taking of this course, I had never written a case study. I barely knew what a case study was. And I was not the only one — within our first class, my peers nervously admitted to our shared lack of knowledge. But as we immersed ourselves in provided cases and eventually began to share progress on our own, we found ourselves exposed to both niche and broad subjects in entirely new lights. Each and every case served to expand our understanding of feminism, leadership, and change, and the liminal spaces found between each concept. The process of writing our cases also allowed us to discover things about ourselves. Technical things, like the words or grammatical structures we repeat most (I personally discovered my love for the em dash.) And personal things, like what was important to us. What kind of stories we wanted to share.

Considering this spirit of storytelling, I am so excited to share the cases of Anna Shattuck, Esther Boone, and Amanda Schaller with you in this edition of Women Leading Change. Anna Shattuck tells the story of Wangari Maathai, a Kenyan environmental activist who confronted patriarchal, autocratic government forces in her fight to protect Kenya’s ecological landscape. Esther Boone explores the infamous criminal case of Lizzie Borden with a fresh set of eyes, elucidating upon the sociological effects and implications of Borden’s long-contested not-guilty verdict in the murder of her father and step-mother. Amanda Schaller considers the possibilities and impossibilities of the coexistence of the legalization of abortion and free speech. This diverse set of cases may seem to bear little resemblance to each other. However, they are all bound by the common thread of the particular struggles that women leaders must face as they change the world – for better, or in the case of Lizzie Borden, maybe for worse.

What I loved most about editing these pieces was how clearly I could hear the Scholars’ unique voices echo off the page. Each Scholar’s case provided clearly articulated, thought provoking engagements with feminism that have stuck with me months after my editing’s completion. Despite what the rumors may say, academic writing really is not boring at all – and case studies, as proven by this journal, are a wonderful way to tell stories that stick. Some Scholars entered the Newcomb Institute as seasoned academic writers, but many of us did not. But we all have stories to communicate with the world, and Newcomb Institute teaches us how to do it. This journal serves as an outlet to make our Scholars’ stories more widely heard.

Sincerely,

Lauren Flowers
Newcomb Scholar
Class of 2022