

FROM THE EDITORS



The second year of the Newcomb Scholars Program pushes scholars to consider how feminist leaders and decision-makers navigate the world beyond academic papers and the theoretical. Throughout the school year, students question the responsibility female leaders have to pursue feminist goals. The course encourages students to wrestle with the expectations they have for feminist leaders.

This year, many of our authors have dedicated their cases to changemakers, fighting to upend the status quo and long-held institutional practices. Scholars consider the successes, failures, and consequences of these individuals' stories. While many of these cases may appear to delve into the past, the authors all offer important insights into the process of challenging archaic systems and the pursuit of a more progressive future.

Ainsley Anderson tells of Esther Duflo and presents a nuanced discussion about empirical data collection versus gender-conscious feminist research. She asks readers to consider whether technically sound development research can also prioritize gender equality goals. Ifeoma Osakwe unpacks the tension between free speech and institutional norms through Dr. Tara Gustilo's struggle to maintain her professional career while engaging in civic activism against racial discrimination. Trisha Jagadeesan introduces readers to Kushboo Safi's case and considers the complex tension between women's right to bodily autonomy, the cultural sanctity of marriage, and years of legal precedence. Avani Banerji tells of Andrea Yates' mental health decline and her decision to murder her own children, exploring stigmas surrounding mental health and the complicated relationship between individual responsibility and the failure of a weak healthcare system.

In conversation with one another, the cases illuminate the failure of social systems and institutionalized norms to support bodily autonomy, freedom of speech, and women throughout the world—whether it be Anderson's focus on academia and research, Osakwe's study of the professional workplace, Jagadeesan's consideration of legal precedence, or Banerji's analysis of the American healthcare system.

Please join me in congratulating these authors for their immense dedication to crafting such nuanced and thoughtful cases. It's been a rewarding process to see the cases evolve and see the passion these authors have for their chosen case topic. I expect that each of these authors will continue as leaders in their own lives, challenging the status quo in their future pursuits.

Sincerely,
Molly Shields
Newcomb Scholar
Class of 2024