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Letter from the Editor

Laya Reddy

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Letter from the Editor



Dear Reader,

Welcome to the second print issue of the Northwestern Law Journal des Refusés! We are so excited to put forward an issue that uplifts marginalized voices, questions the status quo, and explores the intersection between art and law.

Consistent with the goals of our journal, we were intentional about picking pieces, voices, and ideas that had been rejected in legal scholarship. In putting together this issue, we aimed to ask (and answer) the question of “who is the law for?”—who does the law protect? Who does it serve? Who makes the laws? Who is impacted by them? Each piece in this issue answers at least one aspect of the question, furthering and developing our conversations about law, accessibility, and humanity.

In addition to valuing diversity of thought, our journal also places importance on diversity of format. For that reason, our issue includes—in addition to a formal law review article—poems, artwork, and collections of letters and songs. Through these unique approaches, we aim to provide various modes of access to our readers to connect with the material.

Our first piece, by law student Aasiyah Wasif, investigates the history of abuse at Guantanamo Bay and calls for its abolition. Navigating issues including lack of due process, Islamophobia, and egregious punishments, Wasif not only effectively demonstrates United States non-compliance with domestic and international laws and policies, but also makes the case for the elimination of the oppressive institution.

Our second and third pieces are poems about Palestine, authored by Aysha Affaneh and Rachel Sherman. Affaneh expresses her rage about the treatment of Palestinians following October 7, 2023. She eloquently

criticizes the United States government for its actions, while also speaking directly to immigrants in the country who have been harmed. Sherman then offers her vision of a path forward. Her deeply touching poem looks to both the past and future to imagine “The World to Come.”

Our next piece, authored by Tung Yin, a law professor, presents a creative approach to criminal law. He connects concepts in criminal procedure to pop songs, allowing his students (and our readers) to better understand difficult ideas in the course. He makes challenging topics both accessible and fun to learn.

Finally, we end our issue with a piece by Dominic Shodekeh Talifero, a breath artist. Utilizing letters and artwork, he explores the history of racism and slavery in the United States. He thoughtfully approaches each recipient and topic to create an “art gallery” for readers to walk through as they simultaneously walk through history with him.

Our issue also includes incredible artwork by Caroline Faye, Bassim Al Shaker, and an anonymous artist. All of these pieces explore complex concepts and use color, design, and artwork to express hidden meanings.

Of course, this issue could only come to life with the help of several people. Noah Hornberger, our Deputy Editor-in-Chief, was great to have by my side as we put together this issue and built our journal. While the thought of leading such a new journal was daunting, Noah took this challenge in stride, and brought such valuable feedback and thoughts to every aspect of journal leadership. I’m grateful for his help, support, and partnership as we navigated the ups and downs of the journal and issue.

Graham Lane and Dana Meskan, our Articles Editors, were also instrumental in assembling this issue. Their thorough comments and edits on pieces allowed us to strive for the best-quality publication possible. All of our other editors on the journal, too, contributed to this issue through both their passion for the mission and their substantive work on each piece.

As I reflect on our publication, I am grateful that I got to lead such a unique and groundbreaking journal. We had the great opportunity to provide a platform to voices, arguments, and ideas that have been historically silenced in legal scholarship. We hope this issue sparks curiosity and inspiration in our readers. We hope, too, that this trend continues, and that the legal field

becomes more diverse and accessible, to bridge the gap between those who make the law and those who are affected by it.

Thank you for reading!

Warmly,

Laya Reddy
Editor-in-Chief
Northwestern Law Journal des Refusés