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Letter from the Editor: Fall 2019

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Letter from the Editor: Spring 2019

Amanda Pullum, Faculty Advisor

In the United States, freedom is often considered our most fundamental value. But what does it mean to be free? Can we all be free, or does freedom for some necessarily come at a cost to others? What is the role of the government in protecting and defending freedom? What restrictions are acceptable to ensure that all can enjoy freedom? And what are the responsibilities of ordinary people in creating “a more perfect union”?

In this issue, we feature scholarship that both celebrates and challenges the United States’ claim of being “the land of the free and the home of the brave.” We begin with a set of haiku by Gary Velasco that paint a picture of fall warmth and celebration. Velasco captures a trio of images--a tailgate party, a Halloween encounter, a bountiful heirloom tomato harvest--that encapsulate familiar moments of autumn in the United States.

Next, Carolyn Lockling continues our series on media literacy with an analysis of news coverage surrounding the net neutrality debate. (A description of this project can be found in the Fall 2018 [Letter from the Editor](#).) As the U.S. public and politicians continue to debate government regulation, corporate control, and individual access to the internet, Lockling emphasizes that educated participation in these debates requires carefully evaluating the media one is consuming.

Our third article, by Malgorzata Hausdorff, examines the ethical and legal dimensions of euthanasia laws. While concepts of freedom and rights in the United States usually include “life, liberty, and the

pursuit of happiness,” Hausdorff argues that the “right to die” should be afforded to all who are suffering from terminal illness.

Finally, we conclude with a closer look at our cover art. Artist Sandra Rios presents each vignette that makes up the artwork, with commentary on each image. Together, Rios’ drawings depict the hardship and heartbreak of immigration from Mexico to the United States in an era of family separation and detention. Rios juxtaposes immigrant families’ bravery and the freedom they seek against the conditions they face upon arrival.

We hope that this issue inspires you to ask how we, as readers, scholars, and members of our communities, can make the United States truly “the land of the free.”