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Letter from the Editor: Spring 2022

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Letter from the Editor: Spring 2022

Amanda Pullum

As spring gradually gives way to summer, we explore themes of creation and transformation. Our student authors present work on empowering conversations, shifting social relationships, and the potential of art to deepen our understanding of the human experience.

First, Grace Quinowski discusses problematic representation of transgender individuals in two popular films, *Psycho* and *The Danish Girl*. These films perpetuate harmful stereotypes, but Quinowski demonstrates that positive representation exists in movies such as *Disclosure* that center the authentic experiences of transgender people.

Next, Benedetta Lombardo continues our exploration of art, music, and creative writing, demonstrating the relationships between material objects and the networks of humans who create, use, and exchange them. Lombardo's work tells the story of a violin's life from its own perspective, describing the transformation of a tree into a musical instrument, the power dynamics that surround owning and playing a prestigious violin, and the value humans ascribe to old and storied objects.

Nikole Babcock studies undergraduate students' comfort levels in discussing their sexual needs. Babcock finds that as students become more comfortable discussing sex with their partners, they also become more comfortable discussing sexual dissatisfaction, are more honest about not reaching orgasm, and are less likely to fake orgasm. Creating safe, supportive environments for partners to discuss sexual needs results in greater honesty and more satisfying sexual encounters.

Finally, Joseph Mendoza compares migration patterns from Mexico and from South Korea to the United States. Mendoza examines the history of identities assigned to Mexican and Korean immigrants in U.S. society, the effects of Mexico's and South Korea's geographic locations relative to the United States, and the status of education in each country to identify factors that "push" immigrants to leave their countries of origin and "pull" them to their destinations.

We hope that these papers inspire you to take a closer look at the creative and transformative forces in your life!