MICHELLE DUERSCH

Knowledge Transcending

Cover Art

Michelle, from Orange County, CA, is a current master’s student of neuroscience at BYU. She resides in Provo with her husband and five children, ages 3-12. One of her favorite pastimes is to create whimsical projects, environments, and activities to teach her children and help them imagine and explore their world. She was inspired to create this piece to demonstrate to them the importance of filling their minds with many kinds of knowledge; though as it turns out, they think it makes a great "I Spy" game.
I’m pleased to present the sixth edition of *AWE: A Woman’s Experience*. This latest installment joins our journal’s tradition of both celebrating divine roles and pushing past stereotypes. One of our art pieces, *Female Faculty*, celebrates and commemorates several professors who represent women’s contribution to the BYU community. These images are interspersed throughout the journal, leading to the final culmination which unifies the collection.

As the Editor in Chief of this publication, I have felt the responsibility to present perspectives that are both global and personal. To do so, I set out to discover what feminism means to me. My mother was surprised to learn that she’d raised a feminist; but I think it came naturally. She worked hard, both in and outside of the home, and proved to me that a woman’s contribution matters in every sphere. She demonstrated a healthy balance of physical, mental, and spiritual wellness. She read to me, enriching my mind and soul and teaching me to value diverse voices and perspectives. Unknowingly, in every moment, my mother raised a feminist. She didn’t raise a radical or a man-hater. She raised me.

As you read this journal, I hope that you take the opportunity to explore and embrace your own brand of feminism.

I want to thank Valerie Hegstrom and Jessica Hansen from the Global Women’s Studies program for (literally) creating a space for this journal to grow and succeed and for their support and problem-solving along the way. I want to thank Marlene Esplin for stepping in as our faculty advisor this year and bringing her experience and insight to the table while allowing the students, my incredible editing team, to shine. I thank our authors and artists for sharing their scholarship, their perspectives, and themselves through their beautiful work. I thank our design editor, Ethan Pitts, who has done wonders in bringing this edition to its final, polished format. None of this would have been possible without the dedication and talent of our bright and passionate student editors. Finally, I want to thank you, dear reader, for valuing women’s voices and for seeking edification by sharing in our publication. You have made it all worthwhile.

-Alayna Een
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2019