

Amplifying Student Voices

Professor Bridget Crawford and 38 student and alumni co-authors publish law review article

GROWN OUT OF WORK DONE by students in Professor Bridget Crawford's Feminist Legal Theory seminar, Professor Crawford has published a dialogic style law review article, "[Reflections on Feminism, Law & Culture: Law Students' Perspectives](#)," 41 Pace L. Rev. 105 (2020) written with 38 co-authors, the majority of which are current law students and rest are recent alumni.

During the classroom component of the Feminist Legal Theory seminar in an ordinary semester, Professor Crawford explains that, "the class has readings—mostly from a casebook—that allow us to examine the presumptions, methodologies and organizing principles of traditional feminist critiques of the law. Then, through examination of a variety of topics that have been of particular interest to feminist legal scholars, we will examine and critique the assumptions of feminist legal theory. Throughout the course, our examination is grounded by inquiring to what extent feminism and theories of gender, when applied to the law, accurately have met the needs of people of all colors, with a particular focus on women and other historically disadvantaged groups. In a non-pandemic year, we meet live as a group once a week for two hours. The course is discussion-oriented. In addition to the classroom meeting, students are required to participate in an asynchronous discussion of a topic that is chosen and led by a different small group of students each week. The groups are assigned by a random draw, and the students get together to decide what to focus the online discussion on. By allowing them to choose topics, they can have input into both course coverage and engage in a different way with their peers as organizers. Over the course of the semester, I was so impressed by the quality of student contributions in both the in person setting as well as the online discussion forum."

In March 2020, the entire law school switched to distance education in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. "None of us knew at the time, but that was the way legal education all over the country would continue for the remainder of that semester, as well

as the following academic year," remarked Professor Crawford. "I found that all of the Pace students faced the abrupt switch to online learning with tremendous fortitude and determination. We all tried to make the best of a difficult situation. As I communicated to my students at the time, no matter the forum or manner of course delivery, my first commitment remained to the student's education and professional development. We got through the semester together, with understanding, patience and good humor."

Luckily, when the Law School switched to 100% on-line learning, the students who were taking the Feminist Legal Theory seminar already had developed a good rapport with each other from the classroom meetings as well as the online fora. The contributions to these online fora ultimately became the heart of the dialogic-style law review article, along with a framing essay and conclusion by Professor Crawford.

Haub Law student and contributor to the article, Jackie Jonczyk '21, believes that "incorporating each student's opinions in various sections of the article was a really great way to highlight the topics we discussed throughout the semester. In the process of contributing to each week's forum, we had a great opportunity to bounce thoughts and opinions off each other. When one person would voice a specific opinion, someone could jump off that and add in their own take on the overall subject. Ultimately, that led to a work that represents our collective and individual thoughts and opinions. I have also been asked about the article quite a few times when interviewing, too! Interviewers have been interested in discussing the topic further and have commended me for being part of an article that is so unique. It definitely provides me with an edge on my resume."

Professor Crawford notes that one of the purposes of the article was to "showcase the extraordinary learning that was happening at Haub Law at Pace, both before and during the pandemic. The students made extraordinary contributions and moved the theoretic-



Pictured: Professor Bridget Crawford, Robert Rosenberg '21, and Jackie Jonczyk '21

cal conversation forward on a range of issues including menstruation and law, gender in the legal profession, gender dynamics in interpersonal relationships and a range of other issues. The students' writings in the article show that feminist legal theory is not something that is only academic. It is a lens through which we can understand so much of law and life. Also, legal "theory" is not something that belongs only to pie-in-the-sky academics. We are all legal 'theorists' when we articulate the ways that viewpoints and ideas influence how legal cases are decided, what rationales judges give, what we aspire for the law to be, where it falls short, and what can be done to realize the law's promise of equality. I was excited to share the students' insights with the world in the form of scholarship that was accessible and reproducible. The students at the Pace Law Review kindly accepted the piece for publication, and I'm pleased that our "home" law review has published this unique portrait of law students' reflections

at an extraordinary point in history. The article sets a precedent in so many ways."

Robert Rosenberg '21, another student in the class and a contributor to the article reflected, "I have never had a more collaborative, safe and thoughtful class. We became united by our commitment to creating and maintaining that environment, led by Professor Crawford, and I'm just really proud to have been a small part of that class and the little community we created during that time. And now, being a contributor to an article with Professor Crawford is a privilege and an honor. Professor Crawford cares deeply about the students and the material, and that always breeds good conversation within the class. The end result here was a published article," commented Rosenberg, who also had accepted for publication the research paper he prepared for the class, "[Tax Credits vs. Corporate Social Responsibility: The Entertainment Industry's Challenge to State Anti-Abortion Bills](#);" it will be published by the Ohio Northern University Law Review. ■