

Letter from the Editors-in-Chief

Dear Readers,

It is with pleasure that we get to introduce to you this volume of *The Annual Review of Criminal Justice Studies* (ARCJS), thank you for choosing to read the works of these talented undergraduate authors. This volume of ARCJS had two editors-in-chief. Haya Shahzad, who primarily worked with John Jay College of Criminal Justice, and Daniella Krynsky, who primarily worked with San Francisco State University. We want to take a moment to discuss with you about this journal and the significance it has for us. Firstly, Haya will take a moment to make acknowledgements and thanks, then Daniella.

With a very dense heart, I would like to highlight and amplify the voice of my friend, Hamza Almofti. He is from Palestine, and is currently experiencing the ongoing genocide in Palestine. I met Hamza when he reached out through social media, seeking help for his family. He had 2 younger siblings, Omar and Maryam. They send me pictures of their daily life after the attack on October 7th, and I have never seen such resilience—such compassion, iman, and strength. Hamza was supposed to continue his career in nursing. His siblings should be in school, and his parents should be living life peacefully, yet his whole life was taken from him. Throughout the year, I have realized I wouldn't have been the same person I am if I hadn't met Hamza. He has taught me that the feeling of content is taken for granted. He has taught me gratitude isn't just praying for more, but desiring less and focusing on what you have already. He has inspired my growth, and has been a catalyst in my healing journey. He has taught me that this dunya is temporary; everything is. Cherish what you have. We deserve it; but they deserve it too. Thank you, Hamza. Your existence is necessary. It was divinely placed in my timeline. Your existence is resistance. May we rebuild together soon, Inshallah.

I would like to start off by thanking my team. Marisa was the one who believed in my vision. I was an author last year, and was given the privilege of having my poetry published. I've known Marisa since my freshman year, and with her help and her guidance, I have been able to unlock potentials that I have not even known existed within me. I would like to thank Taus, Jaden, Gia, Aleeyah, Rheanna, Cjsa'Marie, and Debarati for being the most wonderful team a person can ask for. This team was consistent of so many different strengths and perspectives. I felt so seen by many different people in many different ways. From Taus and Jaden to understanding how my brain works completely and

seeing right through me, to Rheanna and Gia stimulating new ideas in my brain that make me question everything, it is nice to know that I will always have people reassuring and reinstalling, healthy ideas, will also leaving room for growth. Cjsa'Marie definitely set a good example for somebody who was previously on this team. Aleeyah was behind the scenes and couldn't be any more helpful than she already was; she did everything behind the scenes and made everything so easy for the entire team. Huge shoutout to our incredible proofreaders, Hashir and Lucia! Your sharp eyes, relentless attention to detail, and commitment to clarity make all the difference. You're the unsung heroes who help our words shine—thank you for making sure every sentence hits the mark! Lastly, I would love to highlight Marisa. She does not hesitate to water us every morning, nor does she complain about the amount of water we take. Each one of us require a specific amount of energy in a specific amount of effort, and she manages to be everything to everyone with zero effort. This whole team helped me realize that every decision I've ever made let me up to this journal. This was part of all of our stories, and I am so grateful to be sharing this experience with these people specifically, in a lifetime where we know we could've been born anywhere at any time. I got the privilege of meeting Daniella, our editor-in-chief on the San Francisco side, and collabing this letter with her! Time and space are aspects that do not define or add limitations to anything, only potential! I believe everything is divinely placed, and the minds on this team were definitely strategically picked. I am eternally grateful.

Hi! My name is Daniella Krynsky, and I am the Co-Editor-In-Chief, working primarily with SFSU, for this volume of *The Annual Review of Criminal Justice Studies* (ARCJS). It's been a pleasure working with the students, the faculty, and my Co-Editor-In-Chief, Haya Shahzad. Thank you all for your patience and kindness you've granted me as I've held this position. First and foremost, I want to thank the current SFSU students and SFSU alumni who assisted me in the peer reviewing process for the SF authors in this journal. As they've heard over and over again, I couldn't have done this without you and your individual interdisciplinary knowledge. So the biggest thanks to, Estefany Romero, Laryn Bennett, Elsy Hernandez-Monroy, Alexzandria Ziem, Paola Saavedra Ramirez, Dulce Eulcide, Mayuu Kashimura, and Marbel Diderik. I am so grateful to have been able to organize and work with this diverse team of peer reviewers who are passionate about writing, social justice, and working with fellow scholars to contribute to advancing critical criminological knowledge. Finally, I want to thank Professor Lobo for all the support and encouragement he

gave me throughout the year we worked on this journal. The balance of being a student and working in this position wasn't easy, but was so incredibly rewarding, and I'd do it again in a heartbeat. Now graduating from SFSU, I find that my greatest pride are my contributions to this journal. From my own work being published in ARCJS last year to the support I was able to give fellow authors this year. As this journal continues to provide the incredible opportunity to publish talented undergraduate scholars, I find myself feeling bittersweet as I finally become exclusively a reader of this journal. What I cherished most about this opportunity was being able to connect with fellow criminal justice students. I learned so much from this community of my peers, and that has shaped me exponentially as a student, an author, and a scholar.

Following a year-long collaboration, San Francisco State University and John Jay College of Criminal Justice were able to create this collection of work that speaks out on a myriad of social justice issues these authors are passionate about. This venue is unique as it invites undergraduate authors to write a body of work that critically analyzes contemporary pressing social justice issues, for publication. Furthermore, our authors are granted the exciting opportunity to work bicoastally with like-minded students. This journal stands for every intersectional identity you can think of. Our goal was to creatively and academically provide a perspective of the criminal justice system, and the injustices within it. Highlighting sections that have to do with gun control, and incarceration to women's health and intersectionality, we hope to bring a very specific light to all of these topics. These were all put together by both editors-in-chief, Haya and Daniella, and we decided to group these the way we did because they all uniquely flow into each other and also have some intersectional aspects to it. First, we open the journal with discussing the ongoing genocide in Gaza, just how the journal opened last year. Editor-in-chief, Haya, opens with a poem for Palestine. We wanted to give the same platform for this topic, thus we decided to put it in the beginning. From there, we decided to do the categories in "gradients," and make them seem like they're blending into each other. The last paper of the previous section that you will read will lead into the paper in the upcoming section. We start these sections with one that highlights the ongoing genocide in Gaza and related discussions that these authors are pushing readers to have. After this section, we move into the next that discusses gendered injustices and papers that critically analyze in an intersectional lens. Following that, we move into the largest category of the journal, essays that discuss legal and punitive institutions. For this section, we begin by discussing the injustices that are experienced by adults in courts and

prisons and then segue into injustices within the juvenile justice system. Our next section discusses a continuous problem in the current United States, gun violence and the topic of gun control. The fifth section discusses the topic of immigration from a broader lens to more specific communities. The closing section of this journal discusses modern media & arts, and their relation to social justice. Discussing art as a rehabilitative tool, to fast fashion, the real world implications video games have, to the media representation of different races and ethnicities; this section covers all a range of how within our everyday lives the things we consume that may not seem related to social justice, in fact are. Both of us, Haya and Daniella, thought this would be a great way to categorize things because not only do they flow with each other, but they can be distinguished by the specific aspects of the criminal justice system that each essay focuses on. The journal closes with small bios of our authors that they wrote. These bios are included so that authors have an opportunity to introduce themselves and highlight the motivation behind their work. Following this editor-in-chief, Daniella, provides the results of a project that utilized the practice of visual criminology and the participation of the undergraduate authors in this journal to discuss the importance of author's identity in academic papers. Highlighting three authors and their relationship with intersectionality through a visual avenue, readers can begin to see why they chose to write and their motivations for critically assessing social justice issues.

In Haya's words, this experience has not only taught me how to pursue things I love with fear because it feels better when you do it scared, facilitate in areas that need guidance, and have fun with academics, but it also taught me how real things can be and how amazing it can be once you capture that feeling in writing and make it immortal. There are topics and situations that deserve undivided attention, and having each author uniquely add their own identity and style of writing to these topics was so amazing to be able to witness. Each author put so much time and effort into writing about these topics and they don't only reassure and reaffirm these beliefs, but they also help you critically and analytically look at the papers and information with the lens that develops as you go through the journal. Writing the journal was constructive for my brain as well. It not only helped me organize things in a "spreadsheet type of manner," but also help me realize that things have similarities, differences, and patterns. I have been dreaming of the day where I get to publish my writing, let alone be in charge of a journal, and I couldn't be more grateful. Having the amazing support of an awesome team, and having such bright intelligent minds come together and form a journal that I know we could bring to life has been one of the best

experiences I've experienced in college. This has taught me many skills, and has taught me many different ways of approaching any situation.

In Daniella's words, as said before, being editor-in-chief has really taught me how much I learn being in a venue like ARCJS. The constant exchange of knowledge and interdisciplinary issues brought to my attention teach me about things I would've never known without this community of my peers. The experience of being published was so incredibly important to me. It taught me how being an undergraduate author— emerging in this field of criminal justice— there is so much that I am so passionate to write and advocate for. More so, there are ways and spaces for getting my voice heard, spaces like ARCJS. In our modern day, where current political rhetoric makes the joy of expressing and advocating for ourselves feel impossible, the radical action of simply writing and publishing our voices and opinions brings hope on just how possible it is for our voices to be heard. This journal has taught me so much about the future of criminal justice and the authors and scholars going into the world. My heart is full and my mind is ever-growing, for everything I learned within my time in this venue, I believe I also taught and gave back to my peers.

All in all, we would like to congratulate all the authors, as well as all the editors who have helped put this journal together. We have worked tirelessly and put so much time into formulating this journal that represents the authors, the editors and board. We hope that this journal can be a beacon of light, or a comforting sound for people. We hope that this journal continues to flourish in the future, and cater to the people who really need it most. Both of us editors, Haya and Daniella, want to thank our teams one more time, as you all have made this experience worthwhile, and one we will never forget. Haya's social change professor taught literature in their class; and one quote that was taught, and we have decided would be best to include is "When you are a sociologist, every day is strange. Make every day strange." To close, we hope you live to make everyday strange, challenge social constructs, and make your voice heard.

Sincerely,

Haya Shahzad

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Daniella Krynsky

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