

TRINITY WOMEN'S REVIEW



VOLUME IV

# trinity women's review



# Volume IV

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## Letter from the Editor

Since achieving the equal right to parliamentary vote in 1918, the women of Ireland have initiated momentous strides in the direction of gender equality and women's rights. The percentage of women elected to Dáil Éireann has been steadily increasing and the constitutional prohibitions of divorce, contraception and abortion have been repealed. Despite these apparent victories, representational disparities continue to exist between the genders and the voices of women remain marginalised in political, academic and professional spheres. Since its conception in 2016, the Trinity Women's Review aims to address this issue by offering all self-identifying women and non-binary students of Trinity College a platform to showcase their rich and diverse academic opinion and research.

We received a high number of outstanding submissions this year, making the Editorial Board's job of choosing those to be published particularly difficult. The ten essays we ultimately chose for publication range in subject matter, from zoology and the influence of pregnancy rituals, to discussing topical cultural phenomena such as #MeToo and interrogating the relationship between the patriarchy and public space in literature. All essays, however, are united by the common theme of gender and thus embody the ethos of the Women's Review. Through publishing papers from a cross-section of academic disciplines, we hope to highlight the importance of adding feminist perspectives to all areas of academia.

There are a number of people, without whom, this review would not have been made possible. I would like to thank my predecessors Aisling Foster, Gemma Mortell, and in particular, Clodagh Prior for her constant kindness, support and

encouragement throughout this undertaking. I would also like to thank our generous sponsors at Eversheds Sutherland for their continued support and interest in the aims of our publication.

Of course the materialisation of such a high standard Review could not have been achieved without the talent of our incredible editorial board, who I would like to thank for all of the time, hard work, and dedication they have put into this project. It has been an absolute privilege working with and learning from this group of intelligent and equally driven young women. Finally, I would like to thank my sister Huda for being an unabating source of wisdom and inspiring me to be the strong, independent version of myself that I'm constantly working towards.

Working on this publication has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my college life thus far. I have come away from my role as Editor-in-Chief truly empowered by the wealth of knowledge that accumulates to form the pages of this journal. My hope is that this Review will serve to promote the discourse and discussion of gender-related issues on campus as well as highlight the academic talent that the women of Trinity College possess.

Hiba Awan, Editor-in-Chief

# SUTHERLAND EVERSHEDS Foreword

Eversheds Sutherland is proud to sponsor the Trinity Women's Review and to support the Review in promoting women's voices in academia. Underrepresentation at senior levels is an issue common to women in both business and academia. It is important to ensure we are doing everything possible to understand the reasons behind this disparity and take positive steps to address it. The Trinity Women's Review supports women from all areas of the university, providing them with a platform to showcase their abilities and their work in their many diverse fields of study.

While diversity and inclusion is on the agenda for more and more businesses today, these issues can often be seen as a nice 'to-do' rather than a necessity in organisations. International research tells us that diversity increases innovation, creativity and productivity. It tells us that the strongest teams are those made up of people from both genders and with diverse cultural backgrounds and life experience. Diversity enhances creativity, encourages the search for novel information and perspectives and leads to better decision making and problem solving. In business, this can have a real and measurable positive impact on profits. McKinsey & Company's study of 1,000 companies in 12 countries found that organisations in the top 25% when it comes to gender diversity among executive leadership teams were more likely to outperform on profitability

(21%) and value creation (27%). McKinsey & Company also recently reported that women, more frequently than men, exhibit leadership traits that are highly applicable to future global challenges such as inspiration (61%), participative decision making (57%), expectations and rewards (57%), people development (38%) and role modelling (34%). Nonetheless, according to the CSO, only one in nine CEOs in large enterprises in Ireland in 2019 were women and women occupied 28% of Senior Executive roles compared with 72% for men.

At Eversheds Sutherland, we have a progressive initiative focussed on providing the tools necessary to support our female employees in achieving their full potential. Pathways, which relaunched in March 2020, is committed to fostering an inclusive and positive environment with a focus on enhancing our people's personal and professional development and encouraging confidence in meeting their career aspirations.

We understand that there are myriad of reasons why more women do not reach the highest levels in organisations and that a 'one size fits all' approach is not necessarily the answer. We are determined that those reasons should not include a lack of confidence in one's abilities or indeed any level of gender inequality. Our objectives include supporting our talented female employees from the moment they join our firm and support them every step of the way as they advance through their careers. Through researching and addressing gender balance and barriers to progression, providing personal and professional training opportunities and organising



networking events with like-minded peers in the market, Pathways promotes gender inclusivity as a core focus for our firm.

It is easy to call for greater diversity in the workplace, but putting in place the means to actually achieve this is a real challenge. This is especially true when it comes to senior management teams. Truly diverse organisations can only be achieved when the team at the top is itself diverse. A common challenge is that people tend to hire others who are like them. The recruitment process therefore has a real impact on driving change. Organisations are encouraged to look at their recruitment policies with a diversity frame of mind, to ensure that they are not promoting copies of themselves, but are in fact hiring the best people for the job regardless of gender or background.

While our experience comes from the business world, and specifically the world of professional services, we believe that the education sector shares many of our experiences and concerns in relation to gender diversity. We hope our sponsorship of the Trinity Women's Review will help you further your goal of shining the spotlight on the many talented women in the university.

The Trinity Women's Review Vol IV. would not have been possible without the generous and ongoing support of Eversheds Sutherland.

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