

Editorial

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Abstract

This editorial piece marks the completion of our role as the Student Journal Editor for the Essex Student Journal. To commemorate this, we have written an account of my time in this editorial, exploring both the positives and challenges that have arisen.

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Article

We are delighted to welcome you to the summer issue of ESTRO, the academic student journal of the University of Essex. This is the final issue of the 5th anniversary year of ESTRO and we are proud to again present the very best of Essex student research. As you know, ESTRO is committed to publishing any excellent and engaging student essay from any year and from any department in order to strengthen the academic student community at the University. We are happy to say that ESTRO's multidisciplinary profile has been kept alive and well over the years, with this issue being well stocked with a variety of disciplines and years, containing a wealth of stimulating yet accessible Essex papers.

This edition of ESTRO starts with an essay by Zoe Farr, titled 'Ethnography: A study of sexist attitudes among students'. This essay should be of special interest for many of the University's students for two reasons. Firstly, in order to analyse sexism underlying student language and interactions, Farr unobtrusively studied the interaction of male and female students in their everyday environments. Familiar and innocuous locations such as the SU bar or a classroom belie casual examples of sexism at the University of Essex. Uncovering sexism towards both male and female students on campus, she concludes that sexism is tolerated differently between the sexes. Secondly, sexism is a fiercely debated subject which concerns a variety of staff and students at the University, regardless of their discipline.

An equally controversial topic is discussed in Chrispas Nyombi's 'The right to die for patients in a Minimally Conscious State: A review of the decision in *W v. M*'. This paper examines in depth the legal case of *W v. M*, where the judge had to balance the ethics of stopping life support with the wishes of the family and the patient. Should life-sustaining treatment be stopped if a patient's quality of life is arguably nonexistent? While the right to die may always remain a murky issue, Nyombi critically examines the many factors that were considered in the case of *W v. M*, in order to provide clarity in a legal morass.

Continuing with another case study, the next article investigates closely what influences the capital structure of a firm. 'Capital Structure of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises: Empirical Evidence from Vietnam', by Thi Thuy Linh Do examines the effects of determinants such as tangibility, profitability, ownership, firm size, and firm growth on the capital structure of specific firms in a developing country. Carefully compiling the empirical evidence for companies in Vietnam in the past few years, she finds that tangibility, profitability and size all impact the way firms finance their debt. The capital structures of Vietnamese companies differ from similar companies in developed countries, which the reader might not anticipate. While most financial studies focus on the developed world, this essay is a welcome reminder that the world is a diverse place.

In a similar vein, Alexander Borodin's 'How the presence of a vibrant Civil Society triggers Democratisation' is a fresh comprehensive look at civil society and the implications for the democratisation of countries. While the essay points out that the more vibrant a civil society in a country is, the more it promotes development and democratisation, there is a clear note of warning. Civil society and liberal democracy coexist and overlap, but civil society is not simply a panacea that invokes democracy. Both are essential, and you cannot have one without at least a basic measure of the other. Borodin argues that we should not as much be interested in the selection of one or the other, but in finding settings in which both act together to the greatest effect.

The fifth article in this issue of ESTRO comes from Joe Greenwood. 'Beyond Focal Points in Coordination Games' is a thoughtful analysis of Thomas Schelling's theory of focal points. Schelling argued for intuitively compelling 'focal points' as a solution to situations where rational actors should not be able to coordinate effectively, but do. Although recognising Schelling's seminal contribution to game theory, Greenwood explores the gaps in the explanatory power of the theory, as well as the perpetual tension between theory and reality. He examines focal point theory

alongside theories of power and determinism, digging closer to the reason why people coordinate in unpredictable situations.

Moving from Schelling to the more famous philosopher Immanuel Kant, the last essay is written by Iulia Minulescu, called 'Is beauty necessarily accompanied by pleasure?' Minulescu examines Kant's claim that the aesthetic judgment is always necessarily accompanied by a feeling of pleasure by comparing two well-known paintings (Dante Rossetti's *Lady Lilith* and Salvador Rosa's *The Witch*). She concludes that while our judgements of ugliness may be influenced by ideology, our judgments of beauty are a-temporal and beautiful artworks therefore always aesthetically pleasing.

Different from our usual fare, we close this issue of ESTRO with the results of The Microfiction Challenge of the University of Essex. Microfiction is all about writing concisely, communicating any story or idea in as few words as possible. The contest asked people to send in their microfiction of 10 words or fewer as stories, ideas, on university experiences, or on education. The Microfiction programme is close to our hearts as it encourages students (and staff!) to think and write carefully and efficiently. We received a grand total of 188 submissions, of which the winners and runners-up are printed.

We hope you enjoy reading the essays and examples of microfiction this issue has to offer. As editors we very much enjoy working with other students to deliver the best possible Essex research. ESTRO is always keen to receive new submissions, so please feel free to submit your best work to us. We rely solely on the submissions and reviews of interested students, and as such we want to thank everyone who contributed to this issue of ESTRO, especially the authors and reviewers, for their hard work and dedication.

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