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Founding Editor's Note: Special Feature in this Issue

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Dear Readers,

I would like to thank you for your patience in waiting for the January issue, its tardiness an unusual occurrence in our now 21-year history! I was traveling on a Fulbright Specialist grant to Japan and while there, my laptop crashed, and I experienced all kinds of technical difficulties accessing the JIWS' and my university email. But enough of that! You may have noticed that at the JIWS we are experimenting with some new formats and genres. In last August's issue we added a segment titled "Feminist Musings" which I have subsequently changed to "Feminist Reflections" because I don't want to give the impression, often associated with the word "musing" that the ideas contained within are not serious or profound. The ideas in Fawzia Afzal-Khan's "Traveling Feminista" the first installment of that segment, are both. Similarly, in this issue, we are featuring a series of articles by an emerging Iranian feminist, Ronak Karami following her moving and powerful autobiographical essay, which also contains links to two earlier articles published in the JIWS.

One of the exciting aspects of this editorial work is the personal connections I make with our authors; many have published with us many times, leading to warm interactions amidst scholar-activist conversations, one dimension of transnational feminism that the JIWS fosters. Ronak approached me a few years ago with her first article, and we worked together to shape it into publishable form. Over the years, we have developed a collegial online friendship, and her story, which I have learned slowly, simultaneously moved me and horrified me in the ways that she has horrendously suffered. Editing this journal—as an anthropology professor, a single mother, and all the other hats I wear, juggling and multi-tasking as we all do, I read countless stories of women's simultaneous suffering and determination to overcome suffering. The courage, resilience and power of women in a still-patriarchal world continues to inspire me to continue this work. Her story struck me in part because of her powerful intelligence seeking expression from stark loneliness. Therefore, I encouraged her to share her story with you and offered to create an anthology of her works to date, reflections on the ways in which the tentacles of Iranian patriarchy pervade the educational system as well as the films and literature of Iranian society.

I would like our readers to be aware that we are open to experimental writing and to harnessing the online format for audio/audiovisual/visual pieces and genres across disciplines; we also encourage your suggestions and ideas—we, being our committed editorial board and the graduate student editorial assistants who staff the JIWS.

Finally, I want to alert you to an upcoming special issue, although the date of publication is not yet set: we are in the early stages of planning an exciting first part of an anthology around the works of the late Dr. Angela Bowen. Dr. Bowen—dancer, gay activist, professor— influenced many lives across her storied life and three careers. You can read her obituary in the New York Times [here](#). Please email me directly, Diana J. Fox at d1fox@bridgew.edu with any creative ideas, suggestions, or comments. Enjoy the issue.