

EDITOR'S NOTE

*Sheila R. Adams**

On behalf the Editorial Board and Staff, I am extremely proud to present the Inaugural Issue of the *Columbia Journal of Race and Law*.

In an age where the U.S. Supreme Court increasingly urges “colorblindness” in its constitutional jurisprudence and where both legal and social commentators have referred to the period following President Barack Obama’s election as an age of “post-racialism,” some may question the necessity or relevance of a new journal dedicated to the study of race and the law. However, such a view would be misguided, as demonstrated by other recent indicators. Arizona’s passage of the controversial measure, S.B. 1070, has spawned an outcry from the civil rights community and others that the bill effectively authorizes racial profiling of Latinos in the state, while simultaneously other states have sought to enact similar legislation. Moreover, the disproportionate impact of the current recession and foreclosure crisis on communities of color have brought to the fore the gross inequalities in wealth and homeownership between different racial groups and the social and legal factors, such as residential segregation and discriminatory lending practices, that have contributed to this phenomenon. In short, the relevance of race in our society and, thus, the law, continues to be very much a reality, and the increasingly multi-racial and multi-cultural nature of our communities both complicates and enriches this sphere of academic inquiry.

To this end, the *Columbia Journal of Race and Law* embraces the continual importance of prioritizing this discourse as a means of better understanding contemporary issues and new ideas for social progress. The *Journal* intends to publish scholarship that focuses broadly on issues concerning race and the law and to provide an intellectual space for academics, practitioners, and students from both within and outside of the legal field who are interested in examining these issues critically.

The pieces contained in the following pages underscore the salience of race in the law today and explore both conceptual and practical implications of this intersection. Professor Kendall

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Thomas' foreword revisits the late Professor Charles Black, Jr.'s foundational essay on the 1950's desegregation cases and suggests that the essay promoted a 'preferential racial equality jurisprudence', while not completely dispelling the theory of "neutral principles" in constitutional scholarship. Mr. Stephen Hayes' article examines a novel strategy for enforcing local governments' fair housing obligations in light of a recent court case, which has yielded potentially promising results in the area of residential integration. Mr. Justin Steil's article complements Hayes' article by proposing both collaborations at regional levels of government and innovative homeownership structures in order to make tangible inroads in combating pervasive residential segregation. Professor Christian Sundquist's article critically examines barriers to access to justice that have been presented by the U.S. Supreme Court's jurisprudence in standing cases, with insight from a well-known field of social psychology. Finally, Judge Joseph Greenaway, Jr.'s essay comes full circle to the point, articulated in this note and illustrated by the Articles, that declarations that American society has arrived at a post-racial oasis are premature indeed.

This inaugural issue would not be possible without the assistance of many people, who contributed guidance, time, and other support to this immense undertaking.

First and foremost, we are indebted to the 2009-2010 Editorial Board of our predecessor, the *National Black Law Journal (Columbia Edition)*, under the leadership of Brittani Kirkpatrick '10, for their vision to institutionalize the critical study of race and law at Columbia Law School by founding the new *Journal*. We also would like to express gratitude to *NBLJ* Board member, Betre Gizaw '10, for his generous support of the new *Journal*. As a national law journal, *NBLJ* was hosted at Columbia for over a decade and returned to its birthplace, the UCLA School of Law, at the end of the prior academic year. We would like to thank our colleagues at UCLA for entrusting the publication to Columbia and we wish the board of editors great success with continuing the journal's tradition.

The *Columbia Journal of Race and Law* owes a very special thanks to Dean Ellen Chapnick, Professor Jane Spinak, and Tanya Greene of Columbia Law School's Center for Public Interest Law, for their unwavering and generous support of the *Journal's* launch and our inaugural fall symposium, "So Goes Arizona, So Goes the Nation?: Immigration and Civil Rights in the 21st Century." We are also extremely thankful to Professors Christina Burnett, Susan Sturm, and Suzanne Goldberg, whose direction and participation helped make the *Journal's* inaugural symposium a success. And we

are indebted to Professor Kendall Thomas for his guidance and for contributing his energy and passion for race law scholarship to this inaugural issue.

Lastly, I would be remiss not to acknowledge the exceedingly hard work of the Inaugural Editorial Board, for whom I am most grateful for their thoughtfulness, dedication, and perseverance in embarking upon this entrepreneurial endeavor together. Moreover, the Board is extremely fortunate to have our Staff, who have trusted our leadership during this journey and whose energy and commitment assure me that the *Journal's* future will be in more than capable hands.

We sincerely hope that you enjoy our Inaugural Issue.