From the Editor

With this issue, the editorship of *Law & Society Review* formally passes to me from Joe Sanders. I say formally because the articles in this issue were reviewed and accepted under Joe's excellent stewardship of the *Review*. In fact, a second issue for which I can claim no responsibility, a special issue on constitutional ethnography, is to be published later this year. This special issue was Joe's idea, and the process of reviewing and selecting articles was handled by Joe and the special issue editor, Professor Kim Scheppele.

I am honored to have been selected for editorship of the *Review*. This journal is vital to the interdisciplinary enterprise of law and society, and I recognize the crucial role played by the editor. My goal as editor is to make the *Review* accessible—both as a publication outlet and as an intellectual resource for readers—to a constituency that is as broad as possible. To this end, I have adopted the practice of using my excellent editorial board as a resource to assist authors in finding ways to broaden the potential appeal of their articles. This involves asking a member of the editorial board whose interests lie outside the specific area of an article to read the article after I have decided to accept it; the board member's task is not to "review" the article but to suggest things the author can do in preparing the final manuscript that expand the potential interest in what the author has to say. I have also sought to appoint a group of associate editors whose interests and expertise complement my own. I plan to turn to the associate editors for advice, both on reviewers and on manuscripts, when I find myself uncertain on how to proceed.

Although the first *Review* issue for which I am responsible will come later this year, I assumed responsibility for receiving new submissions, sending out invitations to potential reviewers, and making decisions on manuscripts some months ago. Therefore, I would like to take this opportunity to mention a few changes that have taken place since the editorial office moved to Madison on June 1 of 2003.

The major change in process is that we have moved from the traditional system of paper submissions to a system in which all submissions, requests for reviews, and communications with authors are handled electronically. During the first few months of our operation, the electronic submission was handled through simple e-mail attachments plus a Web-based reviewer's evaluation form. Early in the fall, we moved

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to an integrated system, Journal Manager, created at Ohio State University. This system automates many routine tasks (acknowledging receipt of manuscripts, acknowledging receipt of reviews, and sending reminders to reviewers), which means these tasks will be handled more promptly. More generally, the system should speed up the review process, cutting out the two to three weeks that were required when materials moved through the mail. It will allow us to know promptly if we have an out-of-date address for a reviewer (a problem that significantly delayed the reviewing process). It will save copying costs, both for authors and for the *Review*. It will make it easier for authors located outside North America to submit to the *Review*, and easier, cheaper, and quicker for me to include reviewers who reside outside North America.

One challenge facing the *Review* is space. Under our publishing agreement with Blackwell, we now have a "page budget"; for volume 38, this is 896 pages. Because of the new format of the *Review*, this page budget is actually equivalent to about 860 pages in the old format. The page budget places some new pressures on the editor to ensure that articles take only as much space as they need to present their argument and analysis. Traditionally, *Law & Society Review* has not imposed a formal length limit on manuscripts. However, the manuscript submission information on our Web page now takes note of the typical length of articles, and, after consulting with members of the Editorial Board, the Associate Editors, and the Association's Publications Committee, I have adopted a practice of declining to place in the review process manuscripts that seem overly long; I do not have a specific maximum, but I begin to become concerned with manuscripts exceeding what I estimate would take 45 pages or more in the *Review*, and I am very concerned when presented with a manuscript that would consume 60 pages or more.

Ultimately, the job I do is only as good as the advice and evaluations I receive from reviewers. Crucial to this is to gather and maintain information on scholars whom I can call on to review manuscripts I receive. The Law and Society Association membership list, and the areas of interests members indicate on their membership application and renewal forms, are particularly useful. If you have not provided this information, please take a moment to visit the Web page at the address shown below, which has an online form where you can quickly indicate areas of interest: http://www.law.wisc.edu/lsr/interestform.htm. We will add this information to our reviewer database and pass it on to the staff at the Law and Society Association office so that they can update their records.

Finally, I want to acknowledge the assistance being provided to the *Review* during my editorship by the University of Wisconsin through its Law School, the College of Letters and Science, and the Graduate

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School. I am particularly pleased to be working closely with people in the Law School, including my managing editor, Dianne Sattinger. The Law School is providing a physical "home" for the editorial office, which seems particularly appropriate given the Law School's long association with the law and society tradition of scholarship.

Herbert M. Kritzer

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