# From the Editor

## In This Issue

This Symposium issue of the *Review* is a satisfying conclusion for my three years as general editor. In her Introduction, Symposium editor Beth Mertz examines the long genealogy in law and society research of the central problem that the Symposium's contributors address, law and the constituting of communities. Community is a dual concept in law and society studies. First, it is a term that is used to refer to an empirical domain within which some research is situated, the boundaries of which simplify the task of description or analysis. Second, it is a normative concept associated with authority and, often, with meaningful action. Particularly in this second sense, community has been an important focus of recent thought and research, both as a foil for critical analysis of legal authority and its constitutive properties and as an element of work on the constitution and reconstitution of action and identity. This Symposium is intended to draw attention to the importance of continuing work on the group concepts that frame, with varying degrees of explicitness, law and society studies of action and identity—race, gender, class, and, overlapping all, community.

Beth Mertz has done an extraordinary job of managing the production of the Symposium, from its initial conception, to organizing an advisory panel for the issue, to issuing a call for papers, and, with the help of peer reviewers, selecting and editing a broad array of examples of research by thoughtful investigators who expand our understanding of the interplay of law and community. I urge readers to give careful attention to Beth's Introduction, placing the essays in this issue in context and situating each contribution, and to her insightful concluding remarks, which describe themes and questions for the next set of studies.

## A Final Thank You

I have many people to thank for making the past three years a success from a reader's perspective and a happy surprise from mine. My three Associate Editors, David Engel, John Hagan, and Nancy Reichman, must receive a great deal of the credit for improved turnaround time and for the expanded range of offerings in the form of symposia and special issues. Their ideas and hard work created and supported many of the most innovative devel-

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opments. In addition, David, John, and Nancy assumed a significant part of the role of evaluating and editing of manuscripts that normally falls to the general editor alone to do. Barbara Yngvesson, the Review Essays Editor, has also been an important part of this team, and has kept the *Review* supplied with review essays. I leave this experience believing that having a team of editors is a concept that works well.

I would like to thank the Advisory Panel on Symposia: Larry Baum, Jane Collier, Shari Diamond, Stuart Macaulay, and Susan Silbey. They generously provided advice to me on a great many symposium proposals, and although most of the proposals did not result in the publication of a symposium in the *Review*, those submitting proposals received helpful advice and good ideas for further development.

The Advisory Board of the *Review* has been involved in special ways over the past three years, by responding to my specific requests for advice about outreach and about new editorial policies, by undertaking special review assignments outside the usual flow of manuscripts, and by responding to my many requests for manuscript reviews. I wish to thank them all for their service.

Bette Sikes, production editor, is known to many of you who have published in the *Review*. Bette has been a great colleague as well as a terrific production editor, and I owe her a special thanks for being both. Sara Faherty has run the Buffalo office of the *Review* for the past three years, launching the editorial office into the era of computer databases, form letters, and effective file management. Sara moves on to her thesis work in American Studies, having completed her J.D. degree shortly before becoming my assistant. Oren Zeve and others too numerous to name have provided high-quality production support in the form of citation and reference checking throughout the entire three years. Oren, currently a research and writing instructor at the law school, may now actually finish his dissertation in Philosophy. Joyce Farrell has provided secretarial support for this project from the start. In particular, I want to thank School of Law at the State University of New York at Buffalo for providing generous support for the past three years.

Many others have provided personal advice and support when they were needed. Almost everyone I have dealt with, advice-givers, reviewers, authors of successfully reviewed manuscripts as well as disappointed authors, have treated me well and have made this position rewarding, and I would like to thank you all.

Frank Munger

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