From the Editor

With Volume 42, Issue 1, I begin my editorship of *Law & Society Review*. It is an honor to serve the Law & Society Association and our field in this position. I hope that I live up to the confidence that others have placed in me. I begin with excellent support. Foremost, I owe an enormous debt to outgoing editor Bert Kritzer, outgoing managing editor Dianne Sattinger, and outgoing editorial assistant Jess Clayton from the University of Wisconsin. In different ways, Bert, Dianne, and Jess played important roles. Bert has been an exemplary tutor, confidant, and sounding board as I began sending articles out for review and making publication decisions. At every turn, Bert provided superb counsel and support.

Bert has been an effective editor and advocate for the *Law & Society Review*. The transition from paper to electronic submissions occurred on Bert's watch. Bert worked with a very supportive committee to make this decision, but it is my hunch, and others will concur, that the majority of the work fell to Bert's able and careful consideration of vendors, contracts, and software programs. His most recent contribution to the *Review* and the Association is one that I believe all authors will appreciate: working closely with the Publications Committee, Bert revised the copyright statement and secured approval from Wiley-Blackwell to use an agreement that allows authors more latitude for posting their articles in various electronic venues. This is a complicated issue for journals, authors, and publishers, but Bert guided this process to secure a favorable outcome for all. For this and all his excellent service, we owe him an enormous debt of gratitude.

Behind the scenes, Bert assembled a superb team to guide the publication process. With the transition to an electronic system, all of the management protocols and practices had to be modified. Not only did Dianne take on this task in addition to her regular duties, but she also prepared written documents and conducted telephone tutorials with my support team at the University of California, Irvine. I know that Danielle McClellan, our new managing editor, and Robert Werth, our new editorial assistant, join me in thanking Dianne and Jess for their help in setting up our editorial office in Irvine.

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Taking my cue from Bert's creative use of the Editorial Advisory Board, I have continued the "tradition" of sending an accepted article to a Board member whose area of expertise does not coincide with the topic of the manuscript. I have been impressed by the ways in which these thoughtful comments spark authors to find creative strategies to speak to a wider audience of interdisciplinary scholars. The masthead shows the new Editorial Advisory Board; many have already provided thoughtful and insightful comments to authors, as I believe the authors whose work appears in this issue will attest.

When I was approached by the Search Committee to discuss editing the *Review*, I indicated that I hoped to organize a special issue that looks at the intersections of race, ethnicity, law, and inequality in the United States. My first step toward this goal was to select four excellent Associate Editors: Jeannine Bell, Laura Gómez, Ruth Peterson, and Jonathan Simon. In January 2006, Jeannine, Laura, Ruth, and Jonathan joined me at UCI for an open forum to talk through the contours of a special issue. Kitty Calavita and David Goldberg of UCI served as commentators. We had a lively discussion that was well attended by faculty and students. In spring 2008, there will be a conference at UCI that will be cosponsored by the Center for Law, Society and Culture (where Susan Coutin is the director) following an open call for papers. We have received enthusiastic responses from all over the world. Following the conference, there will be another open call for a special issue on these topics that will appear, at least tentatively, with my last issue as editor, Volume 44, Issue 4. Explaining the complex role of law in addressing the contemporary dynamics of racial and ethnic inequalities in the United States remains as challenging today as it was at the time of the Association's and the *Review*'s founding, 40 years ago. I believe that I can speak for the Associate Editors who join me in the aspiration that this special issue will present some of the most provocative and innovative considerations of the vexing relationship between race, ethnicity, inequality, and law.

Over the course of my term, I may from time to time turn over the editor's pages to a colleague to comment on an article, or a group of articles, when I feel that another voice might provide insight on a specific topic.

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