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Editors' Foreword

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Editors' Foreword

We live at a pivotal time in the history of the criminal legal system. Debates over punishment, mass incarceration, and policing have become common, far-ranging, and vibrant. Movements for systemic change continue to push these debates further, as activists question the assumptions and foundations of the American criminal legal system.

But this moment is filled with peril as much as hope.

As numerous scholars have emphasized, the history of punishment and the criminal legal system in the United States is itself a history of reform¹. The American carceral state is nothing if not adaptable.

This time of change and reform thus demands the rigorous attention of scholars and thinkers, as well as the participation of those who have traditionally been excluded from legal scholarship. The *Hastings Journal of Crime and Punishment* was established in this critical spirit.

This journal was formed to fill a void at UC Hastings when it came to student-edited scholarship on criminal law and punishment. From its inception, HJCP has envisioned itself as not only an interdisciplinary forum for the study of the criminal legal system, but also as a space for a discussion between different kinds of voices whether those be of academics, practitioners, or incarcerated writers.

We do not expect these to be easy discussions. Nonetheless, HJCP seeks to foster these difficult, yet necessary debates. We are hopeful that a rigorous exchange of ideas can contribute to the horizon of legal transformation.

The founding of this journal has been an arduous, but ultimately fruitful process. Throughout, we have had the steadfast support of several people at UC Hastings, without whom this journal would not be before you today. First and foremost, we owe a profound debt of gratitude to Tom McCarthy, Director of the O'Brien Center for Scholarly Publications. When we first approached Tom in the Autumn of 2018 about our nascent idea for a new journal, he was immediately enthused and supportive. His good nature, sense of humor, and ease at navigating the academic

1. ANGELA Y. DAVIS, *ARE PRISONS OBSOLETE* (2003); TONY PLATT, *BEYOND THESE WALLS: RETHINKING CRIME AND PUNISHMENT IN THE UNITED STATES* (2019); Alec Karakatsanis, *The Punishment Bureaucracy: How to Think About "Criminal Justice Reform,"* 128 *YALE L.J. FORUM* 848 (2018-2019).

bureaucracy were, and are, invaluable. We would also like to thank our academic advisors, who have helped to guide us through our founding: Professors Hadar Aviram, Kate Bloch, Binyamin Blum, John Diamond, Rory Little, Aaron Rappaport, Mai Linh Spencer and Lois Weithorn. We also offer our sincere thanks to Professor David Takacs and Professor Gail Silverstein, who helped to shepherd our journal through the initial academic approval process. Finally, we would like to acknowledge the comradely efforts of Virginia Millacci and the entire editorial board of the *Hastings Race and Poverty Law Journal*. From the very beginning, Virginia offered us institutional and logistical support, as well as the insights of her sharp politics and keen mind. We know this to be the beginning of a long and close relationship between our two journals.

In addition to publishing the inaugural issue before you, we are happy to announce our inaugural symposium, entitled “Progressive Prosecution and the Carceral State,” to be held at UC Hastings on February 7th, 2020. This daylong symposium will focus on emerging efforts to reimagine the role of the prosecutor within the American criminal legal system. Several elected District Attorneys from around the county will convene, along with scholars and activists, to interrogate the substance and definition of “progressive prosecution.” We anticipate the symposium to generate critical insight into the potential of, as well as limits to, this legal and political phenomenon.

We look forward to the *Hastings Journal of Crime and Punishment* being a forum which will continue to allow UC Hastings students to engage with the most cutting-edge debates about the criminal legal system, as well as to foster discussion between disciplines and through bars.

In Solidarity,
Tatiana Herschlikowicz
Christopher Johnson
Editors-in-Chief

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