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## Editor in Chief: Foreword

Virginia Millacci

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## Editor in Chief: Foreword

*“My abolitionist journey embodies the following twelve principles: (1) have courageous conversations; (2) commit to response versus reaction; (3) experiment: nothing is fixed; (4) say yes to one’s imagination; (5) forgive actively versus passively; (6) allow oneself to feel; (7) commit to not harming or abusing others; (8) practice accountability for harm caused; (9) embrace non-reformist reforms; (10) build community; (11) value interpersonal relationships; (12) fight the U.S. state and do not make it stronger. I ask that you sit with these vignettes, reflect on your own experiences, and begin to sketch your own abolitionist praxes and testimonies.”*

- Professor Patrisee Cullors, *Abolition and Resistance: Histories of Resistance, Transformative Justice, and Accountability*, 132 Harvard Law Review (April 2019)

The hardest question I have ever been asked in law school was: *What if?*

There was nothing more past the “if” and “What if” wasn’t a sentence starter. In our critical race studies class, Professor Veena Dubal stood above us as we huddled around one of the smallest classrooms at Hastings, and just said, “What if?” It was our last class of the semester, and I found it typical for my professors to give a some anecdote aimed at motivating, and/or calming my fellow students to do good with the law and enjoy law school. However, this wasn’t the case. Professor Veena Dubal was genuinely asking us, “What if?” and she didn’t have an answer.

In our critical race studies class, Professor Veena Dubal pushed us to embrace imagination. During our last class, I was tasked to lead a classroom discussion on open borders, reparations, and prison abolition with two of the most intelligent individuals at Hastings, Michelle Trejo-Saldivar and Axl Campos Kaminski. Little did I know that last class would present one of the most challenging, existential questions of my law school career and probably my life. By simply asking “What if?” my classmates and I were pushed to embrace imagination. We were pushed to go beyond critically analyzing laws, systems, and society, but to take a complete step back from every bit of comfort and sense of familiarity we knew. We were pushed to assume possibility.

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To this day, I don't have answers, and I can't honestly say I deeply feel imaginative or hopeful. I'm not convinced law school is designed to spark imagination or hope, but I can say that publications like *Hastings Race and Poverty Law Journal* foster an environment that ignites imagination and hope.

Since 2002, *Hastings Race and Poverty Law Journal* has committed to providing a space at Hastings and the legal world to embrace imagination and assume possibility. For many years, *Hastings Race and Poverty Law Journal* has not only been a publication, but a group of committed community organizers who sit in the tension of "What if?" From court observations, to rallying with unions, to addressing pertinent issues of immigration and the criminal system to many more things, *Hastings Race and Poverty Law Journal* has continued to build its coalition of students dedicated to progressive lawyering in the interests of the marginalized.

In this issue, you will find four articles that address seemingly different issues, but upon closer look, these articles share a common thread: As law and society fragments and disposes communities, we are capable of building a culture that counteracts fragmentation and disposability. To quote Professor Patrice Cullors in her article *Abolition and Resistance: Histories of Resitance, Transformative Justice, and Accountability*, "We need to be committed to building a culture that is rooted in care, dignity, and accountability. Let's not forget the consequences of a draconian and antiquated system."

As you read through this volume, I ask that you assume possibility, embrace imagination, and continue to ask yourself: *What if?*

Live Long and Prosper,  
Virginia Millacci  
Editor-In-Chief  
*Hastings Race and Poverty Law Journal*