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Founder's Remarks Commemorating the 15th Anniversary

Deborah Kochan

The first volume of the *Hastings Women's Law Journal* was published fifteen years ago. That it continues is a source of delight to those of us who were there in the beginning. The idea for the *Hastings Women's Law Journal* came about as a result of discussions that took place in a first-year criminal law class in 1987. At that time, there was a criminal law professor who expressed his support, during class, for the marital exemption to rape laws. According to him, marital rape wasn't "real" rape. At that time the majority of states retained some form of marital exemption for rape and this particular professor's endorsement of it caused many women and men to speak out in class. After the professor offered students the opportunity to respond in writing to his position, Diane Bessette, Amy Brown and I got together to write a response. Although we ultimately presented that response to the professor and the class and it was satisfying, it did not seem like enough. It was Diane Bessette who had the idea of beginning a women's law journal at Hastings. As I recall the conversation, she started out by saying "Call me crazy but . . ." She then went on to explain her idea, an idea Amy Brown and I thought was fabulous. The rest, as they say, is "herstory."

One of the original goals of the *Hastings Women's Law Journal* was to challenge the legal community to reconceptualize the law from a broader perspective and to invite discussion of the possibilities. A review of the many and varied issues tackled over the years by the *Hastings Women's Law Journal* demonstrates that that goal is being met.

The act of getting out this publication year after year is an act of optimism, an affirmation that change is possible. At the same time the publication of this journal represents a demand for change. It challenges the status quo.

My sister recently reminded me of a wonderful quote from Margaret Mead, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."

Congratulations to all of you who have participated in and supported

this effort over the years. You can count yourself among those who are working to make the world a better place.