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Forward

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Foreword

This volume of the *Hastings Women's Law Journal* marks the eighteenth year we have provided a forum for voices outside the traditional scope of legal academic scholarship. The founding members of the *Hastings Women's Law Journal* expressed a need for "alternative styles of legal discourse" in a community traditionally dominated by men. Even after 18 years, the inequality that spurred the creation of this journal remains a vibrant issue that continues to be largely unaddressed by the *Hastings* curriculum.

Substantively, the *Hastings Women's Law Journal* expands the academic conversation. Despite being a "women's law journal," we continue to provide an inclusive space for queer theory, race theory, disability rights, animal rights, prisoners' rights, and more. The articles in this issue address domestic violence, marriage, and abortion. The substance of their issues highlight how women's rights intersect with other struggles: For prisoners' rights, for religious freedom, and for criminal law reform.

Methodologically, the *Hastings Women's Law Journal* promotes alternative styles of legal discourse by publishing works in non-traditional formats and presenting an annual symposium.

This volume reintroduces alternative styles of discourse after a brief hiatus from the pages of our journal. We are proud to present two works, *I had a dream*, by J.K.D., and *WHO WAS THAT MOTHER'S SON?*, by Rev. Alan Laird, which tap into the heart of the law. They address the human factor that legal education tends to stifle — emotions, passions, pain, and oppression. They provide a needed perspective, helping readers understand how individuals are directly impacted by our legal system.

The reinvigoration of non-traditional voices in the *Hastings Women's Law Journal* is largely due to the enthusiasm of Angie Perone, Kristen Ross, and the committees under their leadership. We truly appreciate their efforts acquiring and selecting pieces for publication. We welcome submissions of personal essays, narratives, and other forms of art and literature that convey personal experiences with the legal system for our upcoming issues.

For almost two decades, our annual symposia have spotlighted

significant issues traditionally sidelined in legal scholarship. This year's symposium, entitled "Envisioning Equal Opportunity: The Realities of Discrimination, Prejudice and Bias," will assemble some of the leading scholars and practitioners in gender, national origin, religion, and appearance discrimination. We look forward to February 7, 2007, to continue the tradition of providing insight and substance for our community.

Our most heartfelt thanks go to the members of the Articles Committee, whose skill and attention shines throughout this carefully edited issue. Volume 18, issue 1, would not be the high-quality piece the reader holds in her hands without Meredith Packer's steadfast leadership and the tireless dedication of Teresa Brown, Nicole Bussi, Sarah Cronin, and Kristen Ross. Thank you for your hard work.

Readers, please enjoy Volume 18.1 of the *Journal*!

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Co-Editors-in-Chief, Volume 18