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## Introduction: Celebrating 150 Years of Women at WashULaw

Nancy Staudt

*Washington University School of Law*

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## INTRODUCTION: CELEBRATING 150 YEARS OF WOMEN AT WASHULAW

Nancy Staudt\*

Generations of women have helped make Washington University School of Law one of the most exciting places to study, learn, and research in the world. To celebrate these contributions, we hosted a year-long celebration of the women at WashULaw. Led by Professor Rebecca Hollander-Blumoff, our “Year of the Woman” included a special speaker series, banners across campus, small group meetings, and most importantly a feeling of excitement and awe across campus for the many accomplishments that WashULaw women have achieved over the past 150 years. This historic milestone cements the institutional stature of our law school, and highlights our well-earned reputation as a forward-thinking community of diverse students and scholars. As the first woman dean, I am honored and thrilled to join our women faculty members in marking our school’s early, pathbreaking decision to admit women law students a century and half ago.

The law faculty voted to admit two women in the 1869-70 academic year: Lemma Barkeloo and Phoebe Couzins. Not only was this the right decision, it also enabled the school to attract an incredibly talented and diverse student body and faculty over the next fifteen decades. Countless studies have shown that diversity is essential for the success of an institution, and for this reason it is easy to see that WashULaw’s reputation and profile are linked to the many women who have contributed to our community. In short, and on the behalf of thousands of alumni, students, faculty and friends, I would like to express our profound gratitude to the generations of women who have made our law school what it is today:

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\* Dean and Howard and Carolyn Cayne Distinguished Professor of Law, Washington University School of Law. I want to thank the editors of the *Washington University Journal of Law Policy* and Professor Karen Tokarz for making this commemorative symposium a possibility, the contributing authors for taking the time to write terrific essays, and to Elliot Rosenwald who went above and beyond.

diverse, highly-ranked, collaborative, and deeply committed to our academic mission.

In this commemorative volume of essays, nine faculty members contribute to the ongoing academic conversations taking place across the nation and world on some of the most important issues of the day. The authors weave together their personal experiences with scholarly insights, producing an extraordinary array of thoughtful contributions. While I will not attempt to summarize each essay here, a few brief highlights demonstrate how fortunate WashULaw is to have our many women scholars contributing to the law school's research mission.

Our collection begins with Professor Susan Frelich Appleton's review of a recent biography of Sandra Day O'Connor. Professor Appleton deftly highlights the lessons we can learn from the life experiences of our first woman U.S. Supreme Court Justice, but also notes the drawbacks of the male voice in telling this life history.<sup>1</sup> Professor Karen Tokarz's essay provides a short history of the women at WashULaw, and integrates that early history with her own experience as a practitioner and teacher of mediation.<sup>2</sup> Her essay builds on more than thirty years of archival research, and it was this research that led the *Washington University Journal of Law & Policy* editors to pursue this commemorative volume of essays.<sup>3</sup>

Professor Kimberly Jade Norwood presents a terrific collection of statistical and anecdotal data, which showcase and celebrate women's advancement at WashULaw and in the legal discipline. Professor Norwood also highlights the reality that true equality in legal academia and the legal profession, more broadly, has not yet been achieved. She notes that this task requires us to all devote substantially more effort, especially on behalf of women of color.<sup>4</sup>

Drawing on her expertise in the area of international human rights, Professor Leila Nadya Sadat's contribution details why the international

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1. Susan Frelich Appleton, *Telling the Story of Justice Sandra Day O'Connor*, 62 WASH. U. J.L. & POL'Y 5 (2020) (reviewing EVAN THOMAS, *FIRST: SANDRA DAY O'CONNOR* (Random House 2019)).

2. Karen Tokarz, *Pioneering Women Lawyers Who Changed the Legal Profession and Influenced the Practice of Law, Including Mediation Practice: From Barkeloo and Couzins to the Present*, 62 WASH. U. J.L. & POL'Y 15 (2020).

3. See Karen Tokarz, *A Tribute to the Nation's First Women Law Students*, 68 WASH. U. L. REV. 89 (1990).

4. Kimberly Jade Norwood, *Gender Bias as the Norm in the Legal Profession: It's Still a [White] Man's Game*, 62 WASH. U. J.L. & POL'Y 25 (2020).

community should lean in to the International Criminal Court by reforming it, rather than giving in to Brexit-style “leave” movements.<sup>5</sup> Professor Hollander-Blumoff, an expert scholar in the area of negotiation, shares her approach to addressing gender-based issues in the classroom.<sup>6</sup> Reflecting on her experience in the area of environmental law, Professor Elizabeth Hubertz looks at the particular hurdles facing both women and men who practice in this area of the law.<sup>7</sup>

In a fun and informative essay, Professor Adrienne Davis expounds on the gender and racial implications of teaching legal doctrines in her area of expertise, trusts and estates (which she lovingly calls “Dead Law”).<sup>8</sup> Professor Peggie Smith, an expert in labor and employment law, highlights the gendered implications of a recent U.S. Supreme Court decision that undercuts protections for unionized home-care workers, many of whom are women of color.<sup>9</sup> Rounding out the volume, Professor Kim Thuy Seelinger and her coauthors recount their efforts to address the charges of rape and sexual slavery that emerged in a high-profile trial. They helped to ensure the charges fit within the confines of customary international law, thereby opening the path for a landmark conviction and ensuring that sexual violence is recognized as an international crime.<sup>10</sup>

The essays included in the symposium are important contributions to the extant legal literature. Through their work, each author highlights just how far we have come as a law school, country, and world. But they also highlight how much more work we must do to achieve our goals. As we look to the future, we also express gratitude and appreciation for the thousands of women in our past who have made WashULaw the extraordinary institution that it is today.

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5. Leila Nadya Sadat, *Reforming the International Criminal Court: “Lean In” or “Leave”*, 62 WASH. U. J.L. & POL’Y 51 (2020).

6. Rebecca Hollander-Blumoff, *It’s Complicated: Reflections on Teaching Negotiation for Women*, 62 WASH. U. J.L. & POL’Y 77 (2020).

7. Elizabeth J. Hubertz, *Earth Mothers, Soy Boys, and Cool Dudes: Practicing Law While Protecting the Environment*, 62 WASH. U. J.L. & POL’Y 87 (2020).

8. Adrienne D. Davis, *Estate Planning with Shaq and Strom: Teaching Post-Mortem Intimacy Audits*, 62 WASH. U. J.L. & POL’Y 99 (2020).

9. Peggie R. Smith, *The Conservative Challenge to Caring for Compensated Caregivers*, 62 WASH. U. J.L. & POL’Y 131 (2020).

10. Kim Thuy Seelinger, Naomi Fenwick & Khaled Alrabe, *Sexual Violence, the Principle of Legality, and the Trial of Hissène Habré*, 62 WASH. U. J.L. & POL’Y 155 (2020).

