

In This Issue

In February 2013, I wrote my first “In This Issue” to mark the start of my term as editor of *Law and History Review*. This will be the last one I write; with Volume 36, Gautham Rao becomes the journal’s editor. Before I take up the editor’s mantle one last time in this essay, I wanted to take a moment to thank the people who have helped me over the past 5 years. First, and most obviously, I have to thank the book review editors, Felice Batlan and Will Hanley, for all the work and everything else they have done for *Law and History Review* during my term as editor. I also want to thank the members of the journal’s editorial board for their contributions and advice. Likewise, Samantha Wolner, Hal Moore, and the other people at Cambridge University Press did a great deal of work behind the scenes to help bring *Law and History Review* out, and I appreciate their assistance and advice in matters great and small. But most of all, I want to thank the hundreds of anonymous referees whose comments on manuscripts have made sure that we consistently published excellent articles.

In that first “In This Issue,” I remarked that I expected that being editor of *Law and History Review* would be at least as much fun as it would be intellectually challenging. Calling it “fun” was a bit optimistic perhaps, although I have certainly enjoyed being editor these past 5 years. However, there is no question that the experience has been intellectually challenging, especially as I pushed the journal to engage the ever-expanding world of legal history.

It is fitting, given my keen interest in having *Law and History Review* showcase histories of law from around the world, that this last issue of the journal has such an international scope. It opens with Faisal Chaudhry’s reconsideration of efforts to modernize family law in nineteenth century India. Chaudhry’s article unpacks a particular case to explore larger questions about how and to what extent the Islamic *Shari’a* tradition was

domesticated, and to argue that this process of translation reflected larger, global trends.

The second article, by Frances Clarke and Rebecca Plant, looks at a familiar topic, habeas corpus litigation during the United States Civil War, from an unfamiliar perspective. Focusing on habeas claims brought by parents trying to prevent their underage children from serving in the army, Clarke and Plant reveal an extraordinary mix of legal conflicts: between parents and children, state and federal judges, and military personnel and parents.

Daniel LaChance's article on legal consciousness and the death penalty in the United States looks at the way playwrights, screenwriters, and journalists shaped popular understanding of the death penalty between 1915 and 1940. In part, as LaChance shows, those efforts humanized the death penalty, preventing executions from being seen as clinical and detached processes. At the same time, their focus on the white men on death row gave the public a distorted picture of the condemned and the criminal justice system.

In the next article, Frederic Constant offers a very different view of criminal justice. Looking at the legal treatment of injury and homicide in China during the Ming and Qing dynasties, Constant shows how and why the Chinese legal tradition treated compensation for harm as a type of punishment. He also argues that this body of law demonstrates the irrelevance of Western legal categories to efforts to understand Chinese law.

The fifth article, by Hannes Kleineke and James Ross, is a study of law and lawlessness. Their article uses a single case to explore the rough and tumble world of Chancery Lane in the fifteenth century, a place where warring groups of law students took their disagreements into the streets.

Our last article, by Julia Leikin, challenges the idea that the legal system in pre-reform Russia was arbitrary and corrupt. Leikin looks at Russian admiralty law, particularly prize cases, to consider why late eighteenth century Russia challenged some international legal principles as it followed others.

This issue concludes with a selection of book reviews. We invite readers to also consider American Society for Legal History's electronic discussion list, H-Law, and visit the Society's website at <http://www.legalhistorian.org/>. Readers may also be interested in viewing the journal online, at <http://journals.cambridge.org/LHR>, where they may read and search issues of the journal.

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