

Preface

The 1996-97 Editorial Board

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Preface

When our Board met for the first time last fall, we committed ourselves to producing an issue of the *Marquette Law Review* that would serve as our signature issue. Our goal was to transcend the traditional role of a law school journal, and fulfill a purpose beyond that of a mere repository of scholarly writings, each of which may address topics pertinent to only a small segment of the legal community. We hoped to publish an issue that would candidly address problems facing legal practitioners, educators, and academics today, and prompt our readers to reflect on how we can all work to improve the integrity and public perception of our chosen profession.

As we began to pursue this goal, members of our faculty approached us and called our attention to reports prepared by the State Bar of Wisconsin's Commission on the Delivery of Legal Services and Commission on Legal Education. We learned that the creation of the commissions and their reports was prompted by national initiatives of the American Bar Association including a report published by the ABA Task Force on Law Schools and the Profession entitled "Legal Education and Professional Development— An Educational Continuum."

As the vast majority of our Board members have participated at some level in the Law Schools clinical and internship programs, we have had the opportunity to view and experience firsthand the problems that our State and our Nation face today with respect to the delivery of legal services. Furthermore, after spending nearly the last three years of our lives as law students preparing to join the practicing bar, we have each developed our own views as to the manner in which law school has prepared us for the career that we will soon begin. Accordingly, we all agreed that the Commissions' reports regarding the Delivery of Legal Services and Legal Education address issues that all members of the legal community should take time to reflect on, and, therefore, provide a timely and appropriate focus for our signature issue.

Our purpose in publishing this issue is to make a contribution to the

creation of an environment where the issues raised by these reports will be freely and candidly discussed. We have solicited the input of members of each of the two Commissions created by the State Bar of Wisconsin, along with Robert McCrate, under whose direction the ABA report was published, and other prominent members of the bar and legal academy working both in Wisconsin and elsewhere. We believe that we have compiled a collection of writings providing a diverse and thought provoking reflection and commentary concerning the delivery of legal services and legal education.

The selections published within this issue fall into several categories. The first selection, authored by Ralph Nader and Wesley Smith, addresses and lays the foundation for the discussion of one of the primary problems facing the legal profession today; namely the inaccessibility of legal services for large segments of our population. The next selection, authored by Wisconsin Supreme Court Chief Justice Shirley Abrahamson provides an introduction to the report prepared by the Wisconsin Commission on the Delivery of Legal Services and invites members of the bench, bar, and academy to strive to make legal services available to all who need them.

Following these selections are writings produced by members of both the Wisconsin and national bars reflecting on their participation in the movement to improve the delivery of legal services and legal education. Contributors include Dean Howard Eisenberg of the Marquette University Law School who also served as a consultant to the Wisconsin Commission on Legal Education, John Skilton, who served as President of the State Bar of Wisconsin in 1995 and 1996 and as Chairman of the Commission on The Delivery of Legal Services of the State Bar of Wisconsin, Jerome Shestak, the current President of the ABA, and William Ide who served as President of the ABA in 1994.

The next group of articles contain critical commentary and analysis of the Wisconsin Commissions' findings. Contributors in this realm include Robert McCrate, Professor Graham Lilly of the University of Virginia, Professor Michael McChrystal of Marquette University Law School, and Professor William Underwood of Baylor University. Finally, selected portions of the text of each of the two Wisconsin Reports are published as an appendix.

The entire editorial board and membership of the *Marquette Law Review* extends sincere thanks to the members of the Marquette University Law School faculty and to the contributing authors who made the publication of this issue possible. We recognize, and hope that all of our readers recognize, the importance of your input and commentary.

We sincerely hope that all who have the opportunity to read this issue are moved to consider how they can contribute in their own way to the efforts in their communities to improve the quality of and access to legal services and elevate the standards of the practice of law through legal education.

—The Editorial Board

