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Comments Celebrating the 100th Anniversary of the West Virginia Law Review

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**COMMENTS CELEBRATING THE
100th ANNIVERSARY OF THE
WEST VIRGINIA LAW REVIEW**

*David C. Hardesty, Jr.**

Those living in the twentieth century have witnessed extraordinary changes in American life. The changes have been both profound and numerous. The forceful currents of change have brought with them the industrialization and globalization of the economy; world wars, a cold war, and local conflicts that have threatened international peace; the dawn of the computer and the information age; revolutions in travel, communications, and entertainment; rapid advances in science, including medicine, chemistry, physics, and biology; advanced construction made possible by giant machines and advanced materials; space and deep sea exploration; and new understandings about how to grow and preserve food. To mention a few is to leave out many more. All have led to dramatic changes in the way we live.

At the same time, society has witnessed enormous changes in the ways Americans relate to one another. We have gone from an agrarian society to an urban one; family units have been redefined; public education has been made widely available to our children; college has gone from a private good, to a public good, and to a new hybrid of both; the rights of those disenfranchised at the dawn of the century have been greatly expanded; social and sexual mores have changed dramatically; spiritual life has been expanded to include more than traditional religions; and government has become much more activist at all levels. So much has changed.

Those who have some perspective on law in America know that American jurisprudence and the legal profession have not been exempt from change. To the contrary, our jurisprudence has made its own journey: from the heyday of formalism; through the new deal with its utilitarian view of law's purposes; on through the mid-century legal process constructs of legal institutions; to the application of economic and political theory to criticize the old order; and now to the development of the recent progressive and pragmatic explanations of the central

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role of law in society.¹ Lawyers have witnessed the development of uniform laws, rules of civil procedure, specialization in the profession and the courts, the emergence of advertising and marketing of legal services, developments in legal ethics and continuing education, the development of mega firms and public interest group practices and much more. The change in America and American law defies description.

It gives those of us at West Virginia University great pleasure to know that the students and faculty of our College of Law who have edited, advised, and contributed to the *West Virginia Law Review* have witnessed all of these events and changes, and much more. Their witness has led to commentary and scholarship in this publication that has made a meaningful contribution to our nation's understanding of law and our profession. Only three collegiate legal journals can claim more senior status.

Since 1898, this publication has served as a forum for the discussion of enormous developments in the law by America's leading scholars and practitioners. It has been an important vehicle by which our state's land-grant, comprehensive, research university has served West Virginia and our nation. Importantly, the students of our College of Law have participated in these discussions through their own research, editing, and writing, thus making each of them partners in the development of our jurisprudence and the legal profession. Our contributing scholars and our students have often gone on to achieve great things, in part because of their work for the *West Virginia Law Review*.

The next century, as hard as it is for us to contemplate, will no doubt bring about even greater changes than the last, in our daily lives and in the law which protects the freedoms that make our way of life possible. I am fully confident that throughout the next century, our efforts at legal scholarship will continue, and as they do, they will continue the tradition of excellence and relevance that has marked the contribution of this journal for the past one hundred years.

¹ Two reviews of 20th century legal theory are found in HENRY M. HART JR. & ALBERT M. SACKS, *THE LEGAL PROCESS, BASIC PROBLEMS IN THE MAKING AND APPLICATION OF LAW* (William M. Eskridge, Jr., & Phillip P. Frickey eds., 1994), and WILLIAM M. ESKRIDGE JR. & PHILLIP P. FRICKEY, *CASES AND MATERIALS ON LEGISLATION, STATUTES AND THE CREATION OF PUBLIC POLICY* (2d ed. 1995).