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Introduction by the Editors

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INTRODUCTION BY THE EDITORS

This Essay opens a Symposium honoring the contribution of Mari Matsuda to American legal scholarship. The first Asian American female to gain tenure at a U.S. law school, she helped establish a scholarly movement—critical race theory—that reshaped several academic disciplines. She also was the first to propose a new perspective—looking to the bottom—in which judges and activists would evaluate legal practices from the perspective of the least advantaged members of society.¹

With pathbreaking articles on hate speech,² accent discrimination,³ legal history,⁴ affirmative action,⁵ feminist legal theory,⁶ and the politics of coalition,⁷ Matsuda has left her mark on numerous areas of law. Her work has found its way into dozens of casebooks and anthologies. One of her articles, *Public Response to Racist Speech: Considering the Victim's Story*, is the thirty-third most cited article in the history of American law. It occupies a niche slightly below an article by Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw and just above another by Frank Easterbrook and Daniel Fischel, with the additional distinction of being *Michigan Law Review's* most-cited article in the journal's history.⁸

Each article in the forthcoming series will examine an aspect of anti-oppression thought or practice. Drawing inspiration from Matsuda's foundational essay on accent discrimination, in which she analyzes society's preference for clerks and salespeople who speak unaccented English, an opening article by Richard Delgado discusses resistance to same-sex marriage, identifying a number of core beliefs that underlie that resistance and subjecting them to analysis. Subsequent articles will build on other works by

1. Mari J. Matsuda, *Looking to the Bottom: Critical Legal Studies and Reparations*, 22 HARV. C.R.-C.L. L. REV. 323 (1987).

2. Mari J. Matsuda, *Public Response to Racist Speech: Considering the Victim's Story*, 87 MICH. L. REV. 2320 (1989).

3. Mari J. Matsuda, *Voices of America: Accent, Antidiscrimination Law, and a Jurisprudence for the Last Reconstruction*, 100 YALE L.J. 1329 (1991).

4. Mari J. Matsuda, *Law and Culture in the District Court of Honolulu, 1844–1845: A Case Study of the Rise of Legal Consciousness*, 32 AM. J. LEGAL HIST. 16 (1988).

5. Mari J. Matsuda, *Who Is Excellent?*, 1 SEATTLE J. FOR SOC. JUST. 29 (2002).

6. Mari J. Matsuda, *When the First Quail Calls: Multiple Consciousness as Jurisprudential Method*, 14 WOMEN'S RTS. L. REP. 297 (1992).

7. Mari J. Matsuda, *Beside My Sister, Facing the Enemy: Legal Theory out of Coalition*, 43 STAN. L. REV. 1183 (1991).

8. Fred R. Shapiro & Michelle Pearse, *The Most-Cited Law Review Articles of All Time*, 110 MICH. L. REV. 1483, 1490 (2012).

Matsuda to advance our understanding of social problems and issues, including a number that are just now emerging.