

From the Editors

At the dawn of 2020, as reports surfaced concerning the spread of COVID-19 and universities announced the shift to online instruction, it was clear to us at the Journal of Legal Education that the forced national experiment with remote learning deserved immediate study and commentary. We found inspired partners at the University of Miami School of Law in Dean Tony Varona, and Vice Dean for Intellectual Life, Lili Levi, and we co-sponsored with them a virtual symposium on August 5, 2020, entitled Power, Privilege and Transformation: Lessons from the Pandemic for Online Legal Education. You can read about it here: <https://www.law.miami.edu/events/symposia/2020/power-privilege-transformation/>.

But while our marvelous speakers anticipated so many of the important issues that the pandemic posed for legal education, we were much less savvy about gauging the effects of COVID-19 on our ability to publish the journal in a timely fashion. Staff illnesses, changing personnel configurations and the challenges our editors faced in converting our own classes to online instruction overwhelmed our plan to publish a selected group of essays from that symposium in a timely fashion.

Fortunately for our readers, however, many of our authors agreed to stick with us even as 2022 draws to a close. We are proud indeed of their work and stress that any loss of value in these articles due to timeliness is entirely the fault of the Journal. We have no doubt, however, that the articles we have included in this rare double issue remain deeply relevant as legal educators reflect on what we have just experienced and begin to plan for a legal academy in which the changes wrought by COVID-19 become part of our permanent landscape.

Cass Sunstein and Danielle Conway open the issue with keynote addresses from our August 2020 virtual symposium (Sunstein) and the 2021 AALS Joint Section Program of the Sections on Student Services and Part-Time Division, Academic Support, Balance in Legal Education, Minority Groups, and Pre-Legal Education and Admission to Law School (Conway). Professor Sunstein highlights powerful social dynamics that occur in group settings such as law school classrooms and wonders how phenomena such as self-silencing, group polarization, cascade effects, and hidden profiles, all of which he eloquently explains, might play out differently in online settings from the way they do when students gather in person. Dean Conway powerfully documents the countless ways that law schools have fulfilled their mission only through tireless contributions from student services professionals. She applauds and thanks them for their work, and so do we.

Nina Kohn's article has been a mainstay, via its presence on SSRN, for faculty seeking guidance on the tips of the trade for translating their teaching efforts into differing online formats. Yvonne Dutton and Margaret Ryznar add their

own reflections on the pros and cons of online instruction and feedback with particular emphasis on persuading readers to remain open to some advantages of the online world. Audrey Fried astutely trains her eye on the widely shared search for ways to reproduce, in an online format, the sort of wide-ranging stimulating conversations that occur in the classroom and offers us a “community of inquiry” framework as a useful approach. Bill Blatt echoes some of the themes Professor Fried raises when he emphasizes the value of “presence” to the educational mission. Andrele Brutus St. Val keeps our focus on the student experience, adding insightful suggestions about promoting on-line engagement drawn from empirical evidence gathered in other fields and from her own survey research. As disruptive as it was for classroom teachers to convert to an on-line format, the challenges confronting clinical supervisors were arguably even more complex. Sarah Fishel, Kellie Wiltsie, and David DeMatteo offer productive ideas for tackling these challenges with implications for clinical supervision that extend to the traditional in-person variety.

Turning next to the larger questions the pandemic raises for the future of legal education, Michael Froomkin provides a capacious account of economic pressures upon law schools and how technology may force dramatic change much more quickly than we might imagine. Christian Sundquist broadens the lens still further, exploring the disruptive effects of technology upon phenomena outside the academy, including the practice of law and even the very definition of law itself. Richard K. Neumann, Jr. then brings us to broad questions of university governance to explore how universities succeeded and failed to include faculties in crucial decisions about how best to respond to COVID-19. Finally, Michael Mogill reminds us all that none of our efforts to improve legal education can succeed without remembering the crucial role that community and compassion play in building better law schools.

Our *At the Lectern* feature by Daniel Keating is a heartfelt story of how he experienced the transition to on-line teaching necessitated by COVID-19. And we have three insightful book reviews; Jessie Wallace Burchfield reviews *Law in the Time of COVID-19* by Katharina Pistor; Elizabeth Bloom assesses *Improving Student Learning in the Doctrinal Law School Classroom: Skills & Assessment*, by Kimberly E. O’Leary, Jeanette Buttrey, and Joni Larson; and Scott Cummings turns his trained eye on *Mutual Aid: Building Solidarity During This Crisis (And The Next)* by Dean Spade.

We hope you will agree with our conclusion that this double volume is better late than never. Your feedback is welcome. Enjoy.

Jeremy Paul
Sonia Rolland
Robert Dinerstein
Ezra Rosser