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Acknowledgments

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Each year, the Editor-in-Chief of the *University of Richmond Law Review* authors Acknowledgments to be included in their volume's final publication. Typically in these remarks, the Editor-in-Chief offers their gratitude to those who have made the past year's work possible, highlights the ups and downs that have marked their time in the role, and reflects on lessons learned after publishing a full volume of distinguished legal scholarship. In keeping with tradition, I will leave space for those matters here, as there is plenty to reflect upon and plenty to be grateful for. These Acknowledgments, however, would not be complete without due consideration of the extraordinary and historic year that has enveloped Volume 55 of our *Law Review*.

A year spent as a member of a law review—any law review—is a considerable undertaking, regardless whether spent as a second-year or third-year editor, irrespective of the particular position held. Even in the most conventional of times, the hours spent poring over articles, the grind of learning the intricacies of the editorial process, and the effort of collaborating with peers combine to yield a uniquely challenging, if hopefully rewarding, experience. Such was the case well before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Since March of 2020, a year unlike any other in the sixty-three-year history of our publication has unfolded, and with it has come no shortage of tests.

The *Law Review* has traditionally done its work largely in-person, in a small but practical office space inside the Law School. Our publication process is an interactive one, uniquely dependent on conversation, engagement, and red ink scribbled across so many sheets of copy paper. In short, the journal's model of work was, like that of so many other businesses, rendered completely nonviable in the spring of 2020. It took little time for our spring 2020 publication to be reasonably delayed until a time when we were not all distracted by concerns for our health, that of our loved ones, and

the general course of a world suddenly turned on its head. As our Law School moved to remote operations, the *Law Review's* work ground to a halt.

Volume 55 began a slow return to its publication duties as spring turned to summer, but not without further ordeal. As we worked to adjust the annual journal competition used for hiring our staff to the complexities of the pandemic, we had to assess how best to administer the competition in the context of not only unprecedented social and economic disruption, but also the unrest and reckoning brought on by the killing of George Floyd. Over the course of the summer, we began the slow task of modernizing our processes to meet the demands 2020 had brought, the same demands visited on individuals, families, and workplaces across the world.

Many of our processes were restructured from the ground up. We expanded our existing digital operations to eliminate paper manuscripts and in-person editing from our workflow, such that even if this past academic year had played out in a fully remote context, we could have continued to fulfill our publication mandate. Whether by way of Zoom, Slack, Google Drive, or any of a variety of other tools, we found ways to continue to do the work. By reason of delaying our spring 2020 publication, we restructured our entire publication timeline, a modification rarely made since the *Law Review's* inception. The changes were not easy to devise: they were born of countless phone calls, emails, and text messages spent trying to figure out how best to digitize this convention or to access that print source that was simply no longer available. The changes have likewise been hard to adapt to: they have too often taken the joy out of what we do, like so much of the “remote” life we have all lived for the past year. Rarely being able to work in our office—a space where, in the past, hours were passed not only on meticulous editing but also laughing, disregarding looming readings for classes, and perhaps having a post-publishing mimosa—was a harsh loss for our third-year editors, and represents a pleasure that our Staff have not to date been able to experience.

To be sure, the hardships faced and the challenges surmounted by our *Law Review* pale in comparison to those stared down worldwide since last year. Carrying on with our work—indeed carrying on with the day-to-day minutiae of law school—has often seemed inconsequential or even frivolous when held in comparison to the

devastation that so many have felt since the onset of the pandemic. Justifying the work that we do, and justifying the continued exercise of the small routines that make up the life of a law student and which seem to ignore many of the hardships of the past year, has been consistently difficult. I am personally grateful to have had the opportunities I did within this year, but even more so to have remained in good health alongside friends and loved ones.

The unique challenges delivered by the past year deserve space for consideration, as does the extraordinary extent to which the *Law Review's* Editorial Board and Staff met those challenges head-on. But so too is the more ordinary material worthy of mention. As in any year, and as Glenice would remind me, the *Law Review* largely does one thing: “*we publish books.*” We have kept up our tradition of publishing top-quality legal scholarship against all odds, and that merits celebration.

Each year, our journal completes what is in essence a highly convoluted baton-passing operation. The public-facing side of our work is fairly straightforward: we publish four issues per year, each containing an assortment of scholarly articles on all areas of the law, written by academics, judges, practitioners, and students alike. Under the hood, however, there is much more process than meets the eye. We train a new group of thirty-some staff members each fall in the ways of our work. Articles are continuously passed from author, to second-year editor, to a lengthy series of third-year editors, back to the author, and a few more times around the circuit. Eventually, each spring, the Editorial Board publishes one last issue—*this* issue—and then, the Staff takes the baton. The point here is that while my position is charged with overseeing the big picture, ours is far from a one-man band, and with that in mind, many thanks are in order.

Preliminarily, my thanks are due to Ashley Phillips for entrusting me with this role, preparing me for among the most challenging professional experiences I have faced, and offering her counsel at some of this year's most difficult junctures. Ashley, your legacy in guiding Volume 54 of the *Law Review* will—if Michelle and I have had anything to say about it—live on, and the journal continues to be better for having enjoyed your leadership.

Thanks are, by necessity, owed to our Staff. It is true each year—yet never fully realized until they transition to their third-year roles—that the Staff are the foundation of what our publication does. The gears of our process would not turn without their careful work. The Volume 55 Staff are worthy of particular praise. On the heels of a 1L year unlike any previously experienced, our Staff persisted through an unconventional and ad-hoc journal competition, carried through a season of working for legal employers unsure of how to structure a “remote” summer job, and then had the good spirits to bear with their third-year peers who were trying their best to appear as though they had any clue how to run a law review. The Staff’s determination to excel and to aid the *Law Review* in fulfilling its mission in this most demanding of years was inspiring to me, and I am grateful for their trust, their hard work, and their friendship.

Thank you to the Senior Staff, Emily and Brian, for your steady hand in editing our articles alongside the Staff and for taking on extra projects when the help was needed. Thank you to the Associate Symposium Editors, Constantine and Taylor, for your work in transitioning our annual Symposium to—like most everything else—a virtual and remote format. Thank you to the Articles & Comments Editors—Daniel, Lucy, J.E.B., and Jake—for your diligent work in securing so many of our articles, your assistance in scoring the journal competition, and the invaluable guidance you provided to our Staff as they crafted their own scholarship.

Thank you to the Articles Editors—Gunnar, Wes, Dana, Karena, Natalie, Jack, Kelly, and Sam—for your mentoring and instruction of the Staff, an always-critical role the importance of which only grew this year, and for your fine understanding of the ins and outs of the spading process. Thank you to the Manuscripts Editors—Grace, Lizzie, Amelia, Sara, Stephen, Gemma, and Laurel—for your adept Bluebooking, keen attention to detail, and handling of some of the longest articles the *Law Review* has published in quite some time.

My greatest gratitude is to my Executive Board, which has trusted me to take on the Editor-in-Chief position and to guide our publication through the past year. Our Executive officers ran for positions that changed drastically in scope after the onset of the pandemic: while the long hours associated with each job would remain, the perks and diversions of a year in the *Law Review* office

would be no more. Our Board met once in-person after our election to our positions, and half of us have not seen each other except by video call since that time. My Board members have given me their advice when I have asked, and have trusted the decisions I have made on the issues facing us when I have acted. All the way, they have been not only dependable colleagues but friends, and this year's work simply would not have been without them.

In particular, my thanks go to Michelle Hoffer, my Executive Editor and right hand. Michelle, I cannot adequately account for my luck in having you accompany and guide me through this bizarre and trying year. Your confidence, can-do attitude, and passion for our publication kept me grounded and able to focus on what was most important. The problems we solved together would have been left hanging in the balance or, at best, half-addressed by some poor solution of mine absent your thoughtful and patient advice. Your tireless commitment to the continued success of the *Law Review* has meant the world to me, and I will be forever grateful to count you as my Executive Editor and my friend.

Thank you to the Annual Survey Editor, Jamie Wood. As the editor of the *Annual Survey of Virginia Law*, the *Law Review's* best and most widely read issue which is published first in each volume, Jamie had the poor fortune of working with me during the summer of 2020 in figuring out how to shift the bulk of our research and editorial processes online. The end result was a properly holistic treatment of changes in Virginia law, complete with a fitting tribute to the late Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, that would stand out even in a "normal" year. Jamie, I am so grateful to have been able to work with you and benefit from your brilliance this year. Thank you to the Senior Notes and Comments Editor, Nancy Simpson. Nancy was the force behind the feat of the 2020 journal competition and was my partner in the earliest and most chaotic parts of the pandemic's rise. Nancy, your dedication to our work propelled me through some of our hardest days, and despite never truly knowing if we were playing soccer or football, we made it through.

Thank you to the Lead Articles Editor, Adam Winston, whose devotion to seeking out and publishing the highest-quality scholarship possible is unmatched. I have been in awe of Adam's collectiveness, wit, and apparent limitless number of hours in the day since our first days of law school, and I am pleased to have served alongside him this year. Thank you to the Online Editor, Oliver

Ward, who met the challenge of a year in which seemingly every aspect of life moved online by coming up with a score of ideas to expand the *Law Review's* Online component. Oli singlehandedly expanded the number of avenues through which the *Law Review* can publish new research and scholarship all while deftly handling its many Twitter adversaries, an accomplishment for which he has my lifelong respect. Thank you to the Symposium Editor, Diana Dominguez, for working with the Associate Symposium team to present an important and timely topic in a virtual Symposium setting for the first time in the *Law Review's* history.

It is difficult to phrase the appreciation I have for, and the debt I owe to, Glenice Coombs, the *Law Review's* Legal Publication Coordinator. Editors-in-Chief come and go each year, but every one of my predecessors could attest to the same truth: Glenice *is* the institution, the bridge between volumes that keeps the books rolling off the presses. Glenice has been willing and able to adapt to the slew of changes we have implemented, and she has offered her wisdom and candid advice at each turn. I know that she has missed spending days in the office, hearing laughter and working with students. My hope is that she knows how much her guidance and support have meant to me, and that the work we do every single day would—without exaggeration—come to a full stop in her absence. Glenice, thank you for everything, and please know that you have certainly not seen the last of me.

Finally, my thanks are of course owed to my friends and family in Richmond, in West Virginia, and elsewhere, for supporting me in this role. I cannot possibly offer sufficient recognition to my parents, Jim and January. Their patience in listening to my latest complaints on phone calls when they doubtlessly had no idea what I was talking about, and their giving of support and advice nonetheless, has been invaluable to me in navigating the past year. If I have had any success not only in this position, but in law school and in the parts of life that came before it and will follow, it is thanks to them, and I am forever grateful for their love, trust, and friendship.

Serving as Editor-in-Chief is a tremendous task and offers an opportunity to learn a tremendous amount. I have learned more than my share during my time in the role, and I have been humbled by the opportunity to guide our publication through this historic time, with each lesson I have taken away underscored by the

teachings of a once-in-a-century catastrophe that should not have been. At the time of publication, the direction of the pandemic remains uncertain, but signs point in a cautiously optimistic direction if we are able to remain cognizant of the dangers we still face. In that same vein, I am cautiously optimistic that soon, things may return to some form of “normal” for our *Law Review*. I am *fully* optimistic, it should be noted, that the editors who will lead the journal for the next year are uniquely well suited to do so, and I hope for only the best for them.

It has been my distinct honor and privilege to serve as the fifty-fifth Editor-in-Chief of the *University of Richmond Law Review*, and it is now my honor to proudly present the final issue of Volume 55 of our publication.

J. Lincoln Wolfe
Editor-in-Chief
