

# St. John's Law Review

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Volume 50, Spring 1976, Number 3

Article 1

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## Foreword

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## FOREWORD

When the first edition of the *St. John's Law Review* was published in 1926, the editors' avowed goal was "to maintain the highest standard of scholarship" and to afford "an opportunity . . . to students and others to publish the results of scientific research in the law." Notwithstanding the many changes that took place in the years that followed, the goals of the *Review* have remained the same, and the editors of Volume 50 are pleased to carry on the tradition of excellence that has been the hallmark of the *St. John's Law Review* during the past half century.

In preparing a symposium to commemorate its 50 years of publication, however, the *Review* has resisted the temptation to become introspective and reflect upon its 50 years of change, growth, and development. Although we take pride in having provided a forum for scholarly discussion of topics of interest and importance to the legal community, we have entered an era in which the legal community itself is being subjected to close scrutiny. The bench, the bar, and the law school have become embroiled in a critical reevaluation of institutions and practices deeply ingrained in the legal profession. The presumption of an attorney's professionalism has been challenged by cries for mandatory continuing legal education. Plans for specialization and specialty certification compete with traditional notions of generalized practice and education. The law school curriculum has been subjected to demands for improvement in its training and education of future practitioners. With the profession as a whole undergoing such a radical reexamination, no legal journal can afford to reflect upon the past. Rather, with an eye towards examining those issues that may affect the next 50 years of its existence, the *St. John's Law Review* has dedicated this golden anniversary issue to a *Symposium on Current Trends in Legal Education and the Legal Profession*.

We are indeed honored to have gathered an outstanding selection of authors from the bench, bar, and professoriat to analyze the recent assault on our traditional concepts and methods of delivering quality legal services to the public. Robert L. Clare, Jr., chair-

man of the Advisory Committee on Qualifications to Practice Before the United States Courts in the Second Circuit, and Dean Michael I. Sovern of the Columbia University School of Law discuss their views on the recent attempts to impose more stringent standards of proficiency on the law school graduate. The Honorable Jack B. Weinstein, District Judge of the United States District Court for the Eastern District of New York, places this debate over minimum qualifications to practice in perspective and advances alternative means for preparing the law school graduate for a career of appearances before the courts. William Pincus, president of the Council on Legal Education for Professional Responsibility, Inc., and Patrick J. Rohan, Professor of Law at St. John's University, engage in a more general discussion of the overall objectives of a law school's imparting practical and substantive education to its students.

Herschel H. Friday, chairman of the ABA Standing Committee on Continuing Education of the Bar, begins an analysis of current trends in the legal profession with a discussion of the history and future of the movement towards mandatory continuing legal education; John P. Byron, chairman of the Minnesota State Board of Continuing Legal Education, details the development and operation of such a mandatory program. After offering a broad overview of continuing legal education, Paul A. Wolkin, executive director of the ALI-ABA Committee on Continuing Professional Education, indicates that expanded and improved voluntary, as opposed to compulsory, systems offer the best method for improving the quality of legal services.

The second major trend in the profession, specialization and specialty certification, is treated by David Fromson, chairman, and Charles H. Miller, secretary, of the New York State Bar Association's Special Committee on Specialization. Roderick N. Petrey, chairman of the ABA Standing Committee on Specialization, also surveys the profession's movement away from the era of the general practitioner and offers suggestions for specialization's future development.

We take special pride in the fact that Whitney North Seymour, Sr., and Professor Walter Gellhorn graciously agreed to author introductory remarks for our *Symposium*. Their unselfish contributions of time, prestige, and insight into the issues confronting the profession set the perfect tone for what the *Review* believes is a comprehensive and scholarly analysis of current trends in legal education and the legal profession.

We gratefully acknowledge the cooperation of all the contributing authors whose sincere desire to work with the Editors has been largely responsible for the quality of the final product. Warranting our special thanks is Professor Patrick J. Rohan whose continuing advice and guidance have been invaluable throughout this project. We also wish to express our deep gratitude to Dean John J. Murphy and Dr. Edward T. Fagan, our Director, who enthusiastically supported this *Symposium* from its inception and who have been consistently generous with both their time and ideas; to Professor David D. Siegel and Assistant Dean Andrew J. Simons, our Faculty Consultants, each of whom provided encouragement and support at the appropriate times; and to St. John's University School of Law and the editors and staff of the *Review's* Volumes 1 through 49 who have set the standards of achievement and excellence which this *Symposium* has sought to emulate.

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