

NOTE FROM THE EDITORS

In the winter of 1993 Associate Professor Philip Meyer approached *Vermont Law Review* with the idea of hosting a law and storytelling symposium *and* dedicating an issue of *Vermont Law Review* to symposium papers. Professor Meyer wanted to explore the relationship between legal storytelling and storytelling as practiced in popular culture. He wanted to emphasize the clinical power of storytelling by approaching the discipline as a discrete lawyering skill. Intrigued by the topic, *Vermont Law Review* agreed to organize both the live event and the symposium issue. In accepting the challenge of presenting *Lawyers as Storytellers & Storytellers as Lawyers: An Interdisciplinary Symposium Exploring the Use of Storytelling in the Practice of Law*, *Vermont Law Review* had two objectives: to merge theory into practice and to advance the existing scholarship.

First, the live symposium merged theory into practice by providing practitioners, academics, and students with an opportunity to challenge each other. A sizeable crowd attended the November forum. They were able to question panelists and to meet informally with them following the presentations. Whether entranced by attorney Donovan's superb storytelling abilities or moved by Justice Katz's impassioned recantation of misinterpreted battered women's stories, everyone was able to experience more fully the power of storytelling.

Second, the symposium advanced existing scholarship by focusing on unchallenged areas of the emerging discipline and by providing a practical and entertaining perspective. Practitioners and academics benefitted from a broader exploration of storytelling techniques by tapping other disciplines such as film and cinematic theory. Also, lawyers learned about themselves by examining how nonlawyers perceive, and tell stories about, the law and lawyers.

Hosting the November conference has resulted in a more synergistic and cohesive symposium issue. Combining the live event with the book allowed our panelists to work with each other before and after the live event. The day after the symposium we held a working session where panelists and *Vermont Law Review* members explored highlights of the prior day's events and discussed unanswered questions. This encouraged authors to share and develop their ideas with their peers before submitting final drafts.

Vermont Law Review is especially proud to have provided an

opportunity for such distinguished professionals to share their ideas and innovations with an enthusiastic and diverse audience. The pieces published in this issue reflect only a portion of the dynamic and inspirational work presented at the November conference. We are grateful to the Honorable Joette Katz, Associate Justice of the Connecticut Supreme Court, Robin Barnes, University of Connecticut Law School Professor, and Peter Teachout, Vermont Law School Professor and *Vermont Law Review* Faculty Advisor, for their contributions. We are also indebted to *Vermont Law Review* editor David Shulock for leading the symposium effort. Without David's relentless enthusiasm and hard work, neither the live event nor the symposium issue would have come to fruition.

We hope this symposium issue inspires continued exploration of the power of storytelling.