

FOREWORD

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I write this Foreword to the fourth edition of the York Law Review with pleasure and satisfaction. Pleasure, because to a teacher few things give more joy than the real and substantial achievements of one's students. Satisfaction, because in this year, when York Law School marks the fifteenth anniversary of its creation, the content of this Review stands as a token that we have achieved much of what we set to achieve when the department was created.

Our goal in setting York Law School was to create a department that gave students a very different way of studying law. Rather than have students sit in classrooms absorbing facts about law narrated to them by their lecturers, we sought to make the process of learning the law one of discovery. Our objective was to create a department in which students would study the law in a spirit of curiosity and open enquiry: learning actively through their own research and in a way that encouraged them to form their own ideas, perspectives, and understandings of law.

This Review is part of that broader project. It seeks to present to the wider world the very best work of our students, and to celebrate the insight into law that can emerge from students who have the tools they need to discover, analyse, and evaluate the law. It also seeks to give students a forum in which they can take their ideas and perspectives on the law beyond the confines of the university and put them on a more public stage.

There are five articles in this volume, four from our postgraduate students and one from an undergraduate student. The editor's introduction discusses the content of the articles in more detail, and I

do not propose to repeat her excellent summary of their contribution here. However, I would like to highlight two features that the articles share in common.

The first is they are all socially engaged and contextually aware. The articles do not discuss abstract issues of high theory. Rather, every one of them takes on an issue that is of pressing contemporary importance. And, crucially, each seeks to give a legal voice to the perspectives and experiences of people whose lives are far removed from the world of judges, lawyers, and jurists. Whether that be the impact of conflict on women and girls, or Syrian refugees compelled to return to the very regime they fled, or women suffering sexual harassment, or users of narcotic substances, these pieces share in common a commitment to studying and bringing to the fore the structure and logic of the experiences of people outside the elite circles that all too often dominate legal scholarship.

The second is the deeper commitment and intellectual passion for their subjects that each of the pieces evidence. Reading these essays makes it clear that for their authors, the process of writing them was not a dry or detached affair. Rather, these are issues about which the authors care. The effort the authors of each of these essays has put into writing them shines on every page. That passion and commitment are values which York Law School tries very hard to foster, and it is a pleasure and privilege – and, indeed, a matter of pride – to present this volume to the wider world.

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