

# Boston College Third World Law Journal

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## Introduction to the Anniversary Symposium for the *Boston College Third World Law Journal*

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# INTRODUCTION TO THE ANNIVERSARY SYMPOSIUM FOR THE *BOSTON COLLEGE* *THIRD WORLD LAW JOURNAL*

Observations and Remembrances of Maurice Hope-Thompson,  
Charles E. Walker and Bernard W. Greene<sup>1</sup>

The 25th anniversary symposium of the *Boston College Third World Law Journal* brought together founding editors of the *Journal* to honor both the *Journal* and the indispensable work of Professor Ruth-Arlene W. Howe, who provided the faculty guidance and intellectual support that made the *Journal* possible.<sup>2</sup> Professor Howe is the one original adviser of the *Journal* who is still teaching at Boston College Law School.<sup>3</sup>

The *Third World Law Journal* now has a twenty-five year history of accomplishment. It is published twice a year in printed bound format. It is available to the entire world on the web and, consequently, is cited by scholars in the United States and around the world, which includes what is often still referred to as the “Third World.” Most importantly, the *Third World Law Journal* is a recognized and vital part of Boston College Law School’s scholarly legal output.

The more than twenty-five year journey from the *Journal*’s beginning as a proposed issue of the UCLA Black Law Journal to its current position as a scholarly journal, was traveled over a long and difficult

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<sup>1</sup> Maurice Hope-Thompson (BCLS ’80), currently a visiting associate professor at the Tavis Smiley School of Communication, Texas Southern University, Houston, was the founding Editor-in-Chief of the *Third World Law Journal (TWLJ)*. Former jurist, the Hon. Charles E. Walker (BCLS ’78) is currently executive director of the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under The Law (Boston Chapter), and was the managing editor for the proposed journal that members of the Boston College Black Law American Students’ Association strove to establish during the 1977-78 academic year. Bernard W. Greene (BCLS ’81), currently an assistant attorney general with the Massachusetts Attorney General’s office, was the founding Executive Editor of the *TWLJ*.

<sup>2</sup> Rosalind Kaplan, the former Manager for Law Review Publications, Audrey Kwak, the former Editor-in-Chief, and Claire Donohue, the former Symposium Editor, worked with other event planners to ensure that the symposium and the subsequent events were memorable for all of us.

<sup>3</sup> The other original advisers were Arthur L. Berney and Robert C. Berry, professors *emeriti*. Other early advisers of *TWLJ* include former professors Leslie Espinoza, James Houghteling and Russell Murphy.

road, with many obstacles along the way. Nonetheless, today's *Third World Law Journal* is proof that the journey was worth the effort.

The journey began when Charles E. Walker, Pamela Lilly Washington, Patricia Hardiman-Long, and other members of the Black American Law Student's Association (BALSA) won the support of Dean Richard Huber and other faculty and staff to hold the "Entertainment Law Symposium from a Black Perspective" at Boston College Law School in April 1977. Dean Huber committed funds for the symposium and immediately assigned Professor Berry, a national scholar on Entertainment Law, as the faculty adviser. It was through Berry's close association with Fred Slaughter, the Associate Dean at the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) School of Law, who shared a strong interest in Entertainment Law, and UCLA's BALSA, that we devised the plan to host a symposium and publish the proceedings in an issue of the UCLA Black Law Journal. The symposium was a huge success due to the attendance and participation of academics, lawyers, other entertainment practitioners, and law students from all over the country.

While the national symposium was a memorable event, the second phase, publication of the proceedings, never came to fruition due to technical difficulties encountered in trying to transcribe tapes of the proceedings and the failure of the presenters to submit the text of their presentations. Funds from the Massachusetts Bar Association and the student division of the American Bar Association that had been received to underwrite the publication of the proceedings were put in escrow. The idea of establishing a new law school journal, instead of just producing an issue in the Black Law Journal, was born.

In 1979, Maurice Hope-Thompson, a former print and broadcast journalist who during his college years had gained experience organizing and working with students from Latin America, the Middle East, Asia, Africa and the African diaspora led efforts to make the idea of a new journal, first conceived in 1977, a reality. Maurice prepared a proposal to use the escrow funds to establish the *Boston College Third World Law Journal* that would draw upon the talents of students of African-American, Hispanic, Asian, and other African-descended heritage, and others interested in the concept.

Maurice worked with Bernard Greene and Peter Lee (BCLS '81), both of whom were present at the 25th anniversary celebration, and other students who endorsed the concept of establishing a *TWLJ*. They met with and sought the support of prospective faculty advisers: Professor Howe, Professor Berney and Professor Berry. Students canvassed for articles, and Professor Jan Ching-An Ting of Temple Uni-

versity School of Law in Philadelphia agreed to contribute an article on taxation in the People's Republic of China. Maurice and Bernard prepared student articles for the *Journal's* first issue.

The initial, fateful stage in the process involved a series of meetings with the law school's publications committee. We presented Maurice's proposal to the publications committee on October 24, 1979. The publications committee made suggestions that we incorporated into a revised proposal that then was presented at the November 8, 1979 meeting of the committee. The publications committee turned the *Journal* down by a vote of 7 to 1. The one member of the committee who recognized the potential of the *Journal* was Michael Roitman, the Editor-in-Chief of the *Boston College Law Review*. Despite the rejection, we did not give up. We persuaded Dean Huber to allow us to present our case to the full faculty on December 19, 1979.

The December faculty meeting was, probably, the final chance to make the case for a *Third World Law Journal* that could be published before the graduation of the *Journal's* driving force, Maurice. We went into the meeting with apprehension. But, the faculty listened attentively and respectfully.

Maurice made a brief introduction and turned the floor over to Bernard. Bernard presented the concept of the *Third World Law Journal* and explained how the *Journal* would benefit both the students on the *Journal* and the broader student body. He emphasized that publication of such a unique and scholarly journal could enhance the reputation of the law school and further the Jesuit mission of Boston College.

Questions from the faculty were tough and probing. The questions and comments appeared to reflect both serious struggles to understand and accept our concept, and a commitment to make a decision based on the merits of the *Third World Law Journal*.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the faculty gave qualified approval for publication of a prototype issue of the *Boston College Third World Law Journal*. This prototype issue was published in May of 1980. In the pre-word-processing era, publication required great effort by Maurice, with help from the law school secretarial staff and the student editors. Articles were typed on IBM Selectric typewriters and the *Journal* was produced on a mimeograph machine.

From the beginning, the *Journal* was viewed as a "work in progress" with the term "Third World" as an evolving concept. In the first issue of the *Third World Law Journal*, Bernard used the title "Toward a Definition of Third World" in his introductory essay to emphasize this point. We viewed the life-and-death issues facing so-called "Third

World” people as too important for fixed ideological or time-specific straightjackets. As the article stated, those issues demanded “that new legal approaches be discussed, tested, and either used or discarded.”

Over the years, the concept of an evolving scholarly journal seriously addressing “Third World” issues has frequently been put to the test. Twelve years ago, there was a proposal to change the name of the *Journal*. It was thought that the term “Third World” was old-fashioned, limiting, and perhaps not germane to the waves of change at work in the modern world. In fact, some of that critique was true—even the categories of “First World,” “Second World,” and “Third World” that we used twenty-five years ago, no longer had any meaning. This is especially true after the destruction of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet Union, the leader of the Warsaw Pact nations of the so-called “Second World.” The term “Third World” continues to be relevant, however, as became apparent during the September, 2005, Hurricane Katrina tragedy. As the world listened to the pleas for help coming from people in the Gulf Coast who were displaced by Hurricane Katrina, the term Third World was the one used by journalists, politicians and hurricane victims to describe conditions, especially in the Ninth Ward of New Orleans. This is because it was the one term that conjured a sense of hardship and suffering coupled with a sense of loss and of injustice.

The *Third World Law Journal* continues as a dynamic, evolving scholarly journal that addresses issues of importance to people and issues often not fully covered in more mainstream legal publications.

Thus, over the years, *Journal* editors have tackled issues of immigration law and policy in a post-September 11, 2001 world, ethnic and religious profiling, slavery and demands for reparations, the absence of Asian Americans from the television media, and, in celebration of the *Third World Law Journal's* 25th anniversary, “Black Children and Their Families in the 21st Century.”

Even the composition of the *Journal's* staff has evolved over time. In the beginning, we sought to carve out reserved spots for members of the founding group—African Americans, Hispanics and Asians—the so-called “minorities” on campus. That worked when the *Journal's* status was related to both ability and stamina, and *Journal* members were volunteers. Things changed when members of the *Boston College Law Review* petitioned for and won credit for their work on the review. Shortly thereafter, the membership of the *Third World Law Journal* began to reflect more closely the make-up of the entire student body, rather than just the minority population. This change was in step with

the school's recognition of the unique contribution that the *Journal* was making to the law school and the legal profession.

With the publication of this anniversary issue of the *Boston College Third World Law Journal*, the *Journal* and its staff are poised to face new challenges. As founding members of the *Boston College Third World Law Journal*, we congratulate this year's staff and the staffs of the *Journal* since 1980 on whose shoulders they stand. You have taken an idea that was planted in 1977 and developed it year after year. The *Journal* has become an important scholarly legal publication that has grown in international significance and now serves the legal profession and the entire world. For that we thank you.

