

FOREWORD

We publish Volume 35 of the *Chicana/o-Latina/o Law Review* (CLLR) at a trying time in our nation's history. The election of the U.S.'s 45th President has given rise to renewed white nationalism, anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim vitriol, attacks on healthcare reform like the Affordable Care Act, and efforts to further criminalize communities of color. Given our current political moment, the obstacles to resistance and progressive reform can seem insurmountable.

So what do we do in the face of the many challenges that lie ahead of us? One solution is to start small and local. In fact, local and state reforms have recently been at the forefront of advancing issues that disproportionately affect Latinx communities, such as immigration. This trend can be seen in the nationwide fight to establish sanctuary cities aimed at protecting undocumented immigrants and in the collective push to divorce federal immigration enforcement from local and state law enforcement, as evidenced by the recent passing of the California Values Act (SB 54). This emphasis on the local as a site where significant advocacy work can be achieved on behalf of Latinx, immigrants and communities of color can provide a useful framework in the current fight for civil rights and progressive reform. It also serves as a basis for the works of scholarship that comprise Volume 35.

Take J. Adrian Castrejón's *(Un)sustainable Community Projects: An Urban Ethnography in a Barrio in Las Vegas*. In it, the author provides an ethnographic examination of barrio urbanism in Barrio 28th Street of Las Vegas. Castrejón describes a predominantly Latinx barrio struggling to resist the forces and effects of gentrification, crumbling infrastructure, and a lack of state and local investment. The piece specifically examines Southern Nevada Strong (SNS), a federally recognized regional redevelopment plan, and its failure to include Barrio 28th Street in its redevelopment plan due to the fact that the community was seen as not conducive to investment opportunities. Castrejón masterfully weaves together the story of SNS with first-hand accounts of community members from Barrio 28th Street. In these accounts, one sees self-sufficient individuals forced to come to terms with the rising tide of gentrification and the failure of state and local governments to adequately invest in their community. Castrejón, a former Barrio 28th Street resident, details

several recommendations for bridging the gap between state/local urban renewal projects and communities of color like those found in Barrio 28th Street.

Bianca Carvajal's *Combatting California's Notario Fraud* shows us the effect that federal immigration laws and policies can have on local immigrant communities. Carvajal provides a detailed history of a specific type of insidious exploitation targeting immigrants in the U.S. known as notario fraud. Notario fraud is committed by individuals who unlawfully hold themselves out as immigration lawyers and file fraudulent and incorrect applications for immigration benefits on behalf of undocumented immigrants who hold little knowledge of the U.S. legal system. Carvajal showcases the destructive effects notario fraud has on vulnerable immigrant communities in California. As a result of these notarios, undocumented immigrants have been robbed of thousands of dollars and put at risk of deportation. Through her work, Carvajal illustrates the shortcomings of state laws in addressing notario fraud, namely California's Immigration Consultants Act (ICA), and contrasts the ICA with more successful initiatives by other states like New York. Finally, Carvajal focuses her scholarship on how to address this issue in Los Angeles. She reviews Los Angeles County Supervisor Hilda Solis' recent efforts to combat notario fraud, and then proposes recommendations for Los Angeles County, and ultimately all of California, to effectively combat notario fraud.

It is our hope that CLLR's Volume 35 will provide a useful framework that practitioners and scholars alike can rely upon to combat the rising wave of anti-immigrant and anti-civil rights policies across the U.S. In particular, we hope that practitioners and scholars can apply the recommendations described by our authors to combat local laws and policies that have a disproportionately negative impact on marginalized communities. Among others, these include the promotion of gentrification framed as urban renewal and the civic failure to adequately protect vulnerable immigrant populations whose exploitation can result in devastating consequences, such as deportation. Lastly, we hope that the work of our featured authors will serve as proof that thoughtful resistance to our current, oppressive political climate is indeed possible, vital, and can ensure that marginalized communities not only survive, but thrive.

In Solidarity,
Viviana Arcia & Natalie Petrucci