

EDITOR'S NOTE

For twenty seven years the National Black Law Journal has provided a forum for scholarly discourse of legal issues facing the African American community. In this installment, we present three pieces that address three distinct issues of great importance to our community.

In our lead article, *A Critique of the California Civil Rights Initiative*, Professor Winkfield F. Thomas Jr. offers a timely case against the California ballot initiative, Proposition 209. Professor Tywman reviews the re-trenchment and backlash that have historically followed periods of civil rights advances, and examines how that trend has now set the stage for the California Civil Rights Initiative (CCRI) and its proponents' characterization of affirmative action as racial preference. He argues that CCRI is unsound as a matter of public policy; that it is suspect under the constitutional guarantee of equal protection; and that it infringes upon the fundamental right to participate in the political process.

In the following article, *Back on the Auction Block: A Discussion of Black Women and Pornography*, Jewel Amoah argues that pornography inflicts particular harm on Black women. The way in which Black women are portrayed in pornographic material incorporates not only the sexual politics associated with pornography, but also racial politics compounded by the issue of class. Amoah argues further that a feminist critique of pornography is incomplete without a discussion of the harm that pornography inflicts on Black women.

In *Disparate Effects in the Criminal Justice System: A Response to Randall Kennedy's Comment and Its Legacy*, Janai Nelson addresses the paradox of the black community as both victim and beneficiary of the criminal justice system. She examines this issue in the context of a response to Randall Kennedy's comment regarding race and law enforcement. In particular, she addresses the crack cocaine versus powder cocaine distinction in criminal statutes and the selective prosecution claims arising from disparate sentencing schemes.

Finally, due to administrative holdups, this volume 14, issue 2 is well overdue. On behalf of the 1995-1996 and 1996-1997 National Board of Editors I apologize for the delay, and I thank the authors and subscribers for their patience and continued support of the National Black Law Journal and its commitment to legal discourse by and about African Americans.

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Editor in Chief 1996-1997

