

Law & Social Inquiry

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Law & Social Inquiry

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Publication Policy

The American Bar Foundation is an independent research institute committed to socio-legal research. Consistent with its mandate to create and disseminate knowledge about law, the legal profession, and legal institutions, *Law and Social Inquiry: Journal of the American Bar Foundation* invites the submission of articles that make original contributions to understanding of sociolegal processes. *Law and Social Inquiry* publishes both empirical and theoretical studies from a variety of disciplinary perspectives. The analyses, conclusions, and opinions are those of the authors alone.

Manuscript Evaluation: *Law and Social Inquiry* is a refereed journal. Manuscripts that the Editors deem appropriate for the journal are evaluated by two or more reviewers with expertise in the relevant subject matter and methodology. Manuscripts produced by ABF research fellows are evaluated by the same process as outside manuscripts and are not accorded priority in publication.

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From the Editors

From time to time, questions arise regarding the relationship between the articles section of *Law & Social Inquiry* and the American Bar Foundation, the journal's home institution. At its inception in 1976, the journal was an in-house publication, serving primarily as an outlet for the sociolegal research produced by scholars at the Foundation. And the relationship was reciprocal; ABF-affiliated scholars were expected to publish a fair bit of their output in the journal. As Spencer Kimball, the journal's first Editor, wrote: "This is . . . a journal that will publish much of the research product of the American Bar Foundation." (ABFRJ 1976, No. 1, iii). At that time the journal was known, appropriately enough, as the *American Bar Foundation Research Journal*. In 1983, under the direction of Editor Tom Davies, the journal began an "open refereed publication policy," which began to "attract a substantial number of submissions from scholars with no institutional ties to the ABF." (ABFRJ 1984, No. 4). This trend continued when Terry Halliday and Ray Solomon became joint Editors of the *Journal* in 1985.

In 1988, under Terry Halliday's editorship, the *Journal* was renamed *Law & Social Inquiry*, in recognition of its emerging status as an independent refereed publication in the growing field of sociolegal studies—a status that was reinforced when in 1990 *LSI* entered into a publication agreement with the University of Chicago Press. Just as it benefitted the journal during this time to reach beyond the ABF, so that *LSI* could establish its identity as a leading journal in its area, it also benefitted the ABF researchers to place more of their work in other journals, so that much of the ABF research product began to appear in leading social science and legal publications.

However, in reflecting on the journal's history and trajectory, the Editors in recent years began to think that this trend of mutual independence had gone too far. We had reached the point where a great deal of the leading work in the area of sociolegal studies, produced at the Foundation, was appearing elsewhere. The journal had surely established itself as a leading independent site for the publication of work in its field; ABF-affiliated researchers had a firmly-grounded and growing reputation for fine work, work that could and did meet the highest standards of other publications in the area. Thus, begrudging so much of this work to other outlets, we began encouraging ABF-affiliated scholars to submit more of their articles to *LSI*. Work by ABF-affiliated researchers is always subjected to the same level of scrutiny required of any other submission to this journal. Indeed, a recent ABF'er who published with us felt that the work received heightened scrutiny beyond that normally required by most refereed journals. We take every available precaution to ensure that all work receives objective and dispassionate review. Editors who have strong connections with authors who have submitted work to us (whether from within or outside of the Foundation)

recuse themselves from consideration of those pieces. We can and will turn down articles from ABF researchers if the reviewers feel that they are not up to standard. But we remain committed to publishing top-rate work, whatever its source.

The review section of the journal, edited separately by Howard Erlanger at the University of Wisconsin Law School, similarly maintains independence from the ABF, but accepts work from ABF scholars using the same guidelines and procedures as are used for all review essay authors.

We would also like to take this opportunity to announce a style change for the journal; the Editors have decided that *Law & Social Inquiry* will now be using the author-date citation form delineated in *The Chicago Manual of Style, 14th Edition*. Details will be available on LSI's Web site, and can also be obtained from the journal by request.