EDITOR’S NOTE

In the lead article in this issue, court consultant Roger Hanson examines the implications of the changing role of the judge. He rightly notes that judging today is not exactly what it was 30 years ago and asks how changes in the perceptions of the proper judicial role have affected the behavior of judges. For most of us, we tend to do our jobs on a daily basis without conscious thought about the various roles we play (e.g., law applier, mediator, policy maker), let alone the expectations of others about our performance of each of those roles. Although Hanson draws no final conclusions in this article, I think you will enjoy joining him in giving some structured thought to these issues, including how they may impact your own work. If you see impacts in your own court, please consider sharing your views through a letter to the editor for publication in our next issue.

Perceptions also are the focus of our next article—this time how the perceptions of family court judges affect their decisions. Psychology professor Leighton Stamps found significant age-related differences in judges’ attitudes about whether mothers or fathers should have custody of children. In most states, of course, statutes now prohibit use of the maternal-preference doctrine. Accordingly, this article also gives food for thought: how can we keep alert to our own biases so that we follow the law and not merely our biases?

Two other articles round out the issue. Arthur Garrison, a criminal justice planner with the Delaware Criminal Justice Council, reviews some of the problems involved in drug-treatment programs, including considerations that judges must keep in mind. Garrison's article is based on detailed research on a treatment program in Delaware. Pamela Richardson, a third-year law student at the Catholic University of America won the American Judges Association’s 2001 writing competition with her article on Illinois v. Wardlow, the Supreme Court decision upholding the stopping of a pedestrian solely on the basis that he ran from police in a high-crime area. Each year, we print the winning entry in our writing competition, and Richardson's review of the Wardlow decision is a well-written review of a very interesting decision.

Last, we invite your attention to the annual index of the past four issues of Court Review. All of the articles listed are available on our website at http://aja.ncsc dni.us/courtrv/review.html. —SL