The issue begins with an examination of the development of drug courts, the most highly visible of the many “problem-solving courts” developed in recent years. The first drug court was created little more than a decade ago in 1989; today, there are more than 1,200. No doubt there have been many lessons learned along the way, and we try to find—and explore—those lessons in the lead piece in this issue.

New York’s Center for Court Innovation convened a group of 19 judges, court administrators, and others involved with drug courts to discuss what has worked, what hasn’t worked, and where drug courts may go from here. Aubrey Fox and Greg Berman of the Center for Court Innovation have provided an introduction to the discussion, which is followed by an edited transcript of the full-day discussion that took place. We think you’ll find it of interest.

The issue includes three other articles. United States Magistrate Judge Morton Denlow explains how to make sure that a settlement conference results in a settled case, not additional disputes over what was agreed upon. He includes a helpful checklist a judge can use to make sure that everything that should be covered actually has been discussed and agreed upon.

The last two articles were runner-up entries in the American Judges Association’s law student writing competition over the past two years. Victoria Cecil reviews the judicial selection process in Florida, and then proposes several changes that might make merit selection more useful there. Benjamin Berger discusses the use of metaphor in judicial opinions, including review of some specific cases from Canada in which metaphor has been effectively used as a tool of persuasion.

We close with two reminders about Court Review. First, we welcome letters to the editor, book reviews, essays, and articles from our readers. You can contact me at sleben@ix.netcom.com to discuss any potential contributions. Second, we remind you that all Court Review issues from 1998 to the present are available on the web at http://aja.ncsc.dni.us/courtrv/review.html. In addition, our articles from 1998 to the present are available in full text on LEXIS in their combined law reviews database. —SL