

Court Review

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EDITOR'S NOTE

This special issue of *Court Review* focuses on media matters. One provocative question related to media is the purported impact of an iconic television show, *Crime Scene Investigation (CSI)*, on the judicial process. In the past few years, it has been frequently suggested, especially in the media, that judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys, and jurors have become influenced by *CSI*. The allegation is that the “CSI-effect” has resulted in an expectation that forensic evidence is required for successful criminal prosecutions. But is there (apologies to Gertrude Stein) a there there? Three articles in the special issue examine the so-called CSI-effect. Professors Steven Smith, Veronica Stinson, and Marc Patry of Saint Mary’s University (Halifax, Nova Scotia) find evidence there is, but they wonder whether the effect is not a juror-problem but rather manifests itself in the ways that attorneys behave. Judge Donald Shelton (also an adjunct professor, Thomas Cooley Law School and Eastern Michigan University) and his colleagues, Professors Gregg Barak and Young Kim (Eastern Michigan University), have found something is going on, but suggest it is a “tech effect” rather than a specific effect of television shows such as *CSI* or *Law and Order*. Professors Cole (University of California, Irvine) and Dioso-Villa (Griffith University, Brisbane, Australia) are skeptical but provide valuable guidance for protecting the judicial system against any impacts from real or imagined effects.

Media issues are more than just reactions to TV shows, of course. Media are often the leading edge of the public in how they view or understand law and the courts. Judge Alsdorf (now jurist-in-residence at Seattle University School of Law and private practice arbitrator/mediator) offers a comprehensive view of how judges might think about handling cases, including communications in orders, decisions, and otherwise in working with the media. His tips stem from high-profile-case management, but are applicable as well for judicial interactions in many cases. Judge Leben offers 10 tips for judges culled from his time on the bench and his background and contacts in the communications field. Also relevant to the special issue is the book review of *Courts and Judges on Trial* by an Australian academic and jurist, Dr. Cannon; the book is authored by Pamela Schulz, an Australian scholar, and it analyzes judicial and media relationships, as well as judicial relationships with elected officials. The last item in the issue is an AJA bylaws amendment for membership to review.

Stay tuned!—Alan J. Tomkins, Co-Editor



Court Review, the quarterly journal of the American Judges Association, invites the submission of unsolicited, original articles, essays, and book reviews. *Court Review* seeks to provide practical, useful information to the working judges of the United States and Canada. In each issue, we hope to provide information that will be of use to judges in their everyday work, whether in highlighting new procedures or methods of trial, court, or case management, providing substantive information regarding an area of law likely to be encountered by many judges, or by providing background information (such as psychology or other social science research) that can be used by judges in their work. Guidelines for the submission of manuscripts for *Court Review* are set forth on page 45. *Court Review* reserves the right to edit, condense, or reject material submitted for publication.

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Photo credit: Mary Watkins (mayrswatkinsphoto@earthlink.net). The cover photo is the Charles Evans Whittaker United States Courthouse in Kansas City, Missouri. The 12-story, crescent-shaped courthouse is named for Justice Charles Evans Whittaker, who served on the United States Supreme Court from 1957 to 1962. Before that, Whittaker had been a federal district judge in Kansas City and a judge on the United States Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit.

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