The 2014 edition of Trends in State Courts is out, containing its usual collection of concise but authoritative articles. This year’s issue focuses on issues involving juvenile justice and the elderly. Six articles cover juvenile-justice issues, beginning with one that discusses the Models for Change Juvenile Justice Reform Initiative of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. Other articles include one on the need for early appointment of counsel in juvenile court, one on judicial leadership in addressing adolescent mental-health needs, and one on reducing racial and ethnic disparities in the juvenile-justice system.

The section on elders begins with a national review of reform efforts related to elder abuse and adult guardianships. Other articles include ones on how to address the challenge of self-represented litigation; and the erosion of judicial-retirement benefits during the recent economic recession.


The Norwegian Association of Judges published a book on judicial independence to celebrate its 100th anniversary in 2012. With adaptations for an international audience, the book, originally issued in Norwegian, has been issued in English, containing 22 essays on various aspects of judicial independence. Authors include judges, lawyers, law professors, social scientists, and government officials. For those interested in cross-national perspectives on judicial independence, the book would be of interest.

Essays cover topics such as the origins of judicial independence, considerations of the tension between judicial independence and administrative efficiency, international standards on the protection of judicial autonomy, special considerations for judicial independence within the European Union, the establishment of an independent judiciary in Bosnia and Herzegovina, judicial independence and public trust in courts in the Russian Federation, the independence of judges in international tribunals, considerations that arise in a multicultural society, the responsibility of judges serving under an oppressive government, and the relationship between judicial independence and the independence of the legal profession.

The book closes with an interesting essay on the relationship of judges with the media. Law professor Ragna Aarli notes that public confidence in Norwegian courts has risen steadily from 2001 (62% with fairly high or very high confidence) to 2006 (79%) to 2012 (85%). Aarli contends that this increase “coincides with the introduction and circulation of the Media Handbook for Judges,” an effort of the Norwegian Association of Judges to have judges more directly interact with the media and the public.