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SEVENTH CIRCUIT REVIEW

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Volume 11, Issue 2

Spring 2016

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SEVENTH CIRCUIT REVIEW

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Volume 11, Issue 2

Spring 2016

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ABOUT THE SEVENTH CIRCUIT REVIEW

Purpose

The SEVENTH CIRCUIT REVIEW is a semiannual, online journal dedicated to the analysis of recent opinions published by the United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit. The SEVENTH CIRCUIT REVIEW seeks to keep the legal community abreast of developments and trends within the Seventh Circuit and their impact on contemporary jurisprudence. The articles appearing within the SEVENTH CIRCUIT REVIEW are written and edited by Chicago-Kent College of Law students enrolled in the SEVENTH CIRCUIT REVIEW Honors Seminar.

The SEVENTH CIRCUIT REVIEW Honors Seminar

In this seminar, students author, edit, and publish the SEVENTH CIRCUIT REVIEW. The REVIEW is entirely student written and edited. During each semester, students identify cases recently decided by the Seventh Circuit to be included in the REVIEW, prepare initial drafts of case comments or case notes based on in-depth analysis of the identified cases and background research, edit these drafts, prepare final, publishable articles, integrate the individual articles into the online journal, and “defend” their case analysis at a semester-end roundtable. Each seminar student is an editor of the REVIEW and responsible for extensive editing of other articles. Substantial assistance is provided by the seminar teaching assistant, who acts as the executive editor.

The areas of case law that will be covered in each journal issue will vary, depending on those areas of law represented in the court's recently published opinions, and may include:

- Americans with Disabilities Act
- antitrust
- bankruptcy
- civil procedure
- civil rights
- constitutional law
- copyright
- corporations
- criminal law and procedure
- environmental
- ERISA
- employment law
- evidence
- immigration
- insurance
- products liability
- public welfare
- securities

This is an honors seminar. To enroll, students must meet *one* of the following criteria: (1) cumulative GPA in previous legal writing courses of 3.5 and class rank at the time of registration within top 50% of class, (2) recommendation of Legal Writing 1 and 2 professor and/or Legal Writing 4 professor, (3) Law Review membership, (4) Moot Court Honor Society membership, or (5) approval of the course instructor.

PREFACE

It has been my honor and privilege to serve as the Executive Editor of the SEVENTH CIRCUIT REVIEW during the 2015–16 academic year. I will admit, however, that when I started my tenure as Executive Editor, I was a skeptic. I did not entirely appreciate the value of academic legal journals, which in recent years had taken a beating in the mainstream media.¹ After a year editing the SEVENTH CIRCUIT REVIEW, I am happy to report that I am a convert. That is not to say that I entirely disagree with the criticisms levied by those who harbor a distaste for legal academic journals; I just now see the value for the individuals who write the articles, the students who edit them, and the larger legal community that hopefully reads them. There is, nevertheless, one criticism that I would like to highlight.

Critics of law reviews often argue that many of the articles have little to do with the actual practice of law. Chief Justice John G. Roberts, Jr., for instance, once voiced this criticism when he said, “Pick up a copy of any law review that you see and the first article is likely to be, you know, the influence of Immanuel Kant on evidentiary approaches in 18th-century Bulgaria, or something, which I’m sure was of great interest to the academic that wrote it, but isn’t of much help to the bar.”² While I do not entirely agree with Chief Justice Roberts about the lack of usefulness of such an article, I do understand the critique. For those in the profession looking to law reviews for practical assistance, legal articles that have no basis in practical reality are of little help. It is in response to criticisms such as this one that journals like the SEVENTH CIRCUIT REVIEW shine.

¹ The most notorious commentary in recent years is likely from Adam Liptak, *The Lackluster Reviews That Lawyers Love to Hate*, N.Y. TIMES, Oct. 21, 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/10/22/us/law-scholarships-lackluster-reviews.html>.

² *Id.*

The self-proclaimed purpose of the SEVENTH CIRCUIT REVIEW is “to keep the legal community abreast of developments and trends within the Seventh Circuit and their impact on contemporary jurisprudence.” That goal, in and of itself, keeps the SEVENTH CIRCUIT REVIEW from falling prey to Chief Justice Roberts’ critique. Every semester talented students self-select cases recently decided by the Seventh Circuit. As a result, the topics of the student articles are directly relevant to the practice of law within the Seventh Circuit. But, the REVIEW goes further than topical relevancy. The REVIEW remains on the forefront of legal technology, assuring its place in the future. For example, the REVIEW was an early industry leader in its adoption of the online only format and remains among the few, if not the only, law review that publishes a podcast-type audio synopsis to accompany each article.

The continued success and relevance of the SEVENTH CIRCUIT REVIEW is due largely to one man: Professor Hal Morris. The REVIEW would not be what it is today without the stewardship of Professor Morris. I, and the student writers and editors of the REVIEW, appreciate his continued dedication. As I sign off as Executive Editor of the REVIEW, I have a final request: keep reading the SEVENTH CIRCUIT REVIEW and keep writing legal academic articles; critics be damned.

Respectfully,

Matthew Smart
Executive Editor, SEVENTH CIRCUIT REVIEW