



EMORY  
LAW

Emory International Law Review

---

Volume 25 | Issue 1

---

2011

## 25 Years of Student Scholarship and Editorship for the Emory International Law Review

David J. Bederman

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarlycommons.law.emory.edu/eilr>

---

### Recommended Citation

David J. Bederman, *25 Years of Student Scholarship and Editorship for the Emory International Law Review*, 25 Emory Int'l L. Rev. 1 (2011).

Available at: <https://scholarlycommons.law.emory.edu/eilr/vol25/iss1/1>

This Introduction is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at Emory Law Scholarly Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Emory International Law Review by an authorized editor of Emory Law Scholarly Commons. For more information, please contact [law-scholarly-commons@emory.edu](mailto:law-scholarly-commons@emory.edu).

## 25 YEARS OF STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP AND EDITORSHIP FOR THE *EMORY INTERNATIONAL LAW REVIEW*

David J. Bederman\*

While I have written elsewhere about the influence of both student-edited and professional journals of international law,<sup>1</sup> it is a distinct honor and privilege for me to write this forward of the twenty-fifth volume of the *Emory International Law Review*. I have served as the faculty advisor for the *Review* since I joined the Emory Law School faculty in the summer of 1991. I have advised the *Review*, its editorial leadership, and its candidate-members writing their Comments for most of the years that it has been publishing.<sup>2</sup> I have seen lots of changes in the way this student-edited international law journal has approached its subject—and its audience—for a quarter of a century.

I could write at length about the professional voices of international law that have appeared in the pages of the *Review* over the past twenty-five years. These have included the articles of leading practitioners, distinguished jurists, and (of course) prominent legal academics. Many of these articles have contributed significantly to international legal discourse and have advanced debate in a number of important areas of public and private international law, U.S. foreign relations law, comparative law, and trade and international economic law.

Most of the attention that law reviews receive is attributed to their publication of “professional” pieces by established scholars and practitioners in the field. This is profoundly mistaken and assumes two things. The first is that law reviews are mere conduits for the dissemination of fully-formed and realized practitioner pieces. This premise holds that there is no real “value added” in the student editorial process that is the hallmark of student-edited

---

\* K.H. Gyr Professor in Private International Law, Emory University School of Law; Faculty Advisor, *Emory International Law Review* (1991–present).

<sup>1</sup> See, e.g., David J. Bederman, *Appraising a Century of Scholarship in the American Journal of International Law*, 100 AM. J. INT’L L. 20 (2006); see also David J. Bederman & Jonathan C. Hamilton, *Agents of International Discourse: A Conspectus on the Future of International Law Journals*, 40 VA. J. INT’L L. 817 (2000); David J. Bederman, *I Hate International Law Scholarship (Sort Of)*, 1 CHI. J. INT’L L. 75 (2000).

<sup>2</sup> The *Emory International Law Review* began its publishing life under the title *Emory Journal of International Dispute Resolution* for its first three volumes (1986–89). See 1 EMORY J. INT’L DISP. RESOL. 1 (1986); 2 EMORY J. INT’L DISP. RESOL. 1 (1987); 3 EMORY J. INT’L DISP. RESOL. 1 (1988).

legal serials. The second assumption is that student-edited law reviews are really indifferent to the publication of student-generated works—that Notes and Comments are a mere side-show for the “main event” of professional Articles. In short, we tend to ignore the true worth of student law reviews (especially those with an international or transnational focus): the scholarly connoisseurship that comes with the editing process and the development of young cohorts of international lawyers through the writing of Notes and Comments.

Today, we are seeing a real revolution in international legal scholarship—the conversation has gone global. Practitioners and scholars from around the world are truly engaging with one another. European, African, Asian, and Latin American views on international law subjects are now routinely featured in student-edited law journals in the United States. And the *Emory International Law Review* has been a leader in this respect.<sup>3</sup> In part, this phenomenon is attributed to the power of the internet (and the ease of electronic submission of manuscripts), but there is also something far more basic. In order to maintain a cross-border scholarly dialogue, certain substantive, stylistic, and editorial conventions need to be followed. I am mindful that some of these—the length of legal argumentation and the fetishistic regard for citations—have been subject to criticism, and even ridicule. Putting aside these concerns, there needs to be an established baseline of the forms and parameters of international law scholarship, including acceptable modes of argument and citation of authorities in support of legal, factual, and policy propositions.

A generation of student editors at the *Emory International Law Review* has provided just such editorial guidance and standards, in order to advance the quality of the transnational dialogue on international law subjects. Whether it is in the care of selection of manuscripts, the substantive editing for coherence of argumentation, or the verification (and supplementation) of citations and authorities, the editors of this *Review* have been diligent and faithful in their responsibilities to the larger interests of stakeholders in international legal discourse.

But that is not all, of course. Connoisseurship comes not just with mastering the fine details of collecting and managing the dissemination of

---

<sup>3</sup> In an admittedly unscientific survey, I examined all the articles published by the *Review* in its volumes nineteen to twenty-three (2005–09). Thirty-seven pieces were published which had been authored (in whole or in part) by writers with an overseas (non-North American) residence or professional affiliation.

knowledge; there must also be a creative spark. The editors of this *Review* have accomplished this with their decisions as to what topics in international law are worthy of discussion and the promotion of debate. This can be particularly seen as part of what has become a hallmark of the *Review*'s scholarly thrust: the publication of proceedings and papers from symposia arranged by the *Review*'s editors around timely and provocative themes. As an avid reader of international law writing, I have found the *Emory International Law Review*'s annual (or even more frequent) colloquia issues to be amongst the most comprehensive and engaging set of scholarly projects in the entire field.

But what of the humble student Note or Comment, the preparation of which is a *rite de passage* for second-year law students who have the privilege (if that is what it can be called) of being candidate-members for law review editorial boards? As a professor at Emory, I quickly discovered that it was challenging and exciting to instruct my courses on international law. My greatest satisfaction as a teacher, however, came with the individualized work I did with those candidate-members of the *Review* who honored me by asking me to serve as their faculty advisor on their Comments. I have truly treasured the time spent to help develop Comment topics, to guide students in their research and analysis of international legal subjects, and then to watch as these efforts have resulted in well-polished pieces—many of which appeared in the pages of the *Review* after a rigorous selection process.

I came to learn that much of the advanced research on international law that goes on in legal academia today is accomplished through writing Notes and Comments, and in fulfilling the *Review*'s editorial responsibilities. I am pleased that the *Emory International Law Review* has emphasized the publication of student work. I am proud that I, along with my faculty colleagues at Emory Law School, have assisted in the *Review*'s remarkable record of editorial achievement, while always respecting the *Review*'s editorial autonomy. I truly believe that this is the real legacy that the *Emory International Law Review* has produced for the past quarter-century and will continue to do so for the next generation of international law practitioners and scholars.