

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

Ellen Spencer Mussey and Emma Gillett founded both the Washington College of Law (“WCL”) and D.C.’s Women’s Bar Association (“WBA”) at a time when women did not receive full and equal participation in society, a time when women were not allowed to participate on a jury, practice law, or even vote in elections. Over a hundred years later, a lot of progress has been done, but our society has yet to create total equality; as Hillary Clinton stated in her concession speech for the Democratic nomination, “[a]lthough we weren’t able to shatter that highest, hardest glass ceiling this time, it’s got 18 million cracks in it.”

By challenging oppressive norms and educating our community on diversity and the law, *The Modern American* continues to chip away at the glass ceiling. In recognition of these continuing struggles, we proudly dedicate this issue to women in the law. To celebrate the legacy of our founders and honor our shared history, our magazine hosted a Women’s Bar Association event on October 16th, 2008, and welcomed the WBA’s historic archives to the law school’s Pence Law Library.

This issue features the winning essay of a joint WBA-TMA writing competition, as well as an article describing the shared history of the WBA and WCL, and interviews with notable women in the legal profession.

This issue also presents an array of topics such as the death penalty and its racial undertones, the rights of transgendered individuals, the rights of parents to teach hate speech to their children, and the rights of Native American communities, to name a few.

We have a lot to look forward to in 2009. On April 2009, *The Modern American’s* Fourth Annual Symposium will gather renowned scholars, who will address the separation of church and state and the regulation of morality as it affects cross-cultural relations in our community. Additionally, we will welcome a new Executive Board. And, beginning with this issue, our publication will be printed in an environmentally friendly manner. Finally, subscribers will now be able to access *The Modern American* through V.lex, LexisNexis, and the Westlaw database.

In closing, we hope our issue inspires you to continue fostering the discourse on diversity and embracing everyday change in your community.

Sincerely,

The Executive Board
The Modern American

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