

FOREWORD

I am privileged to be a part of the inaugural issue of George Mason's Civil Rights Law Journal (CRLJ). With this edition comes a sense of pride, accomplishment, and gratitude to all those who helped make the CRLJ a reality.

But as I reflect on the many days and nights of hard work that was put into creating this journal, I am sadly reminded of what was overheard between (ironically) two *law* students, one of whom seemed puzzled that the other was involved with *this* particular journal. The naiveté of the statement bothers me so much that I feel compelled to pose a question:

When I write that I am an advocate of civil rights, can one determine the color of my skin from these words? While it should be of no consequence, I am proud to say that I am an African-American. For me to make such a pronouncement would not raise many eyebrows, because civil rights are deeply rooted in the African-American experience. But should it be puzzling if I were to say that I am caucasian? Oddly enough, there are people who believe that civil rights deal with "only black issues," and thus believe that civil rights organizations "are for black people."

Those beliefs can never be so wrong. As we enter into a new decade, never before have the challenges and responsibilities for *all* people been greater. Recent Supreme Court decisions are sending a chill throughout America as the High Court has weakened a number of civil rights statutes and constitutional provisions, erecting new barriers for minorities and women. As the CRLJ helps to provide new insights to various legal issues, I hope that it will also show that the quest for civil rights is the blood which courses through *all* our veins.

So, as I welcome the readership to George Mason Law School's newest publication, I will conclude with a quote from Martin Luther King, Jr.:

Our cultural patterns are an amalgam of black and white. Our destinies are tied together. There is no separate black path to power and fulfillment that

does not have to intersect with white roots. Somewhere along the way the two must join together, black and white together, we shall overcome, and I believe it.

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