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## In Appreciation of Fifty Years of Legal Scholarship

Peter B. Rutledge

*University of Georgia School of Law*

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# IN APPRECIATION OF FIFTY YEARS OF LEGAL SCHOLARSHIP

*Peter B. Rutledge\**

Over fifty years, the *Georgia Law Review* has provided a platform for students and scholars to help shape legal discourse in the state and nation. Throughout my career as an academic and, more recently, an administrator, I have had the privilege of working with groups of individuals who have helped shape its reputation over that half-century. In this brief reflection, I thank those three groups.

The first are the student editors. In 2004, I published my first full-length piece of academic legal writing in the pages of the *Law Review*.<sup>1</sup> Though I had served enthusiastically as a student editor my own alma mater's law journal, the student-editing process gave me great concern as an author. Would these students understand the topic? Would their suggested edits dilute the argument? Would they insert meaningless parentheticals to my footnotes? Yet the work of the student editors of Volume 39 quickly allayed all these fears. Students like Christopher Frost and Adam Conrad tackled the project with gusto and, in the process, meaningfully enhanced the final version. The ultimate piece was far stronger than the original draft, and the entire process cemented my belief in the intellectual value of the dialogue between author and student editor in the production of legal scholarship.

The second are the student contributors. Since 2008, when I joined the faculty at the law school, I have had the privilege of advising nearly two-dozen student notes. Students I advised wrote on a wide range of topics such as corporate liability under the Alien Tort Statute<sup>2</sup> to the effect of Georgia's apportionment statute

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\* Dean & Herman E. Talmadge Chair of Law, University of Georgia School of Law.

<sup>1</sup> Peter B. Rutledge, *Toward a Contractual Approach for Arbitral Immunity*, 39 GA. L. REV. 151 (2004).

<sup>2</sup> Lauren Elizabeth Holtzclaw, Note, *Finding a Balance: Creating an International Exhaustion Requirement for the Alien Tort Statute*, 43 GA. L. REV. 1245 (2009).

on respondeat superior in direct negligence claims.<sup>3</sup> Through that process of idea generation, drafting and revision, those students were not pupils but intellectual peers. We sparred over the ideas, and they grew intellectually. Seeing them now leverage that intellectual growth into the careers, whether large-firm attorneys or capital defenders, illustrated the importance of that intellectual dialogue in a lawyer's professional development.

The third are the alumni and alumnae. Since commencing service as dean in January 2015, I have met countless professionals around the country who served on the *Law Review* during their time at law school. Occupying positions at high levels of practice, the judiciary and government, many of them today speak reverently of the impact of their *Law Review* experiences on their professional success. These accomplished individuals, many of whom gathered in Atlanta to commemorate the journal's fiftieth anniversary, serve as ambassadors not only for the journal but also for the law school and, indeed, the entire university.

To each of these groups, I offer my heartfelt thanks. When Lindsay Cowan articulated a vision of a flagship state school with national impact, the *Georgia Law Review* was a keystone of that vision. The three groups acknowledged here—the student editors, the student contributors and the loyal alums—surely have exceeded Cowan's expectations and have brought honor to a great institution.

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<sup>3</sup> Michael David Alfano, Jr., Note, *Employer Escape Hatch Closed in Georgia: How the Interpretation of Georgia's Apportionment Statute in Zaldivar Prohibits Employers from Using Respondeat Superior to Eschew Direct Negligence Claims*, 50 GA. L. REV. (forthcoming July 2016).