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Introduction

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INTRODUCTION

SIDNEY D. WATSON*

This symposium explores the frontiers of legal advocacy on behalf of those who are poor and the homeless. The contributors are advocates and scholars who have dedicated their lives to working on behalf of economic and social justice. We asked them to come together to re-examine the role that advocates and advocacy can play in the light of welfare reform, declining public housing, and restrictions on Legal Services Corporation-funded activities. The results show the complexity and cross cutting nature of advocacy needed on behalf of those who are poor and homeless.

These articles are part of a project on advocacy sponsored by the American Bar Association's Commission on Homelessness and Poverty. The Commission, which consists of thirteen members, is the ABA entity charged with responsibility for matters affecting the needs and concerns of those who are poor and homeless and the impact of laws, litigation, and the legal profession on them. This symposium is the basis for a book on advocacy to be published by the Commission.

This symposium is the result of the hard work of the authors, the members of the Commission on Homeless and Poverty, and the editors and staff of the Public Law Review all of whom came together for a full day of discussion of the articles as works in progress. The members of the Commission during this project were Josephine McNeil, chair, Jonathan D. Asher, William Hoch, Hon. Jeremiah S. Jeremiah, Jr., Susan R. Jones, Della Mitchell, Clare Pastore, Florence Roisman, Mark Tilden, Sidney D. Watson, Pauline Weaver, and Tracy Robinson Whitaker. Liasons from other sections of the ABA were Nancy M. Ambler, Hon. Sylvia Bacon, Roger A. Clay, Jr., Thomas G. Collins, Judith A. Dowd, James L. Forman, Patricia M. Hanrahan, Otto J. Hetzel, Ron Johnson, Myles V. Lynk, Joseph D. O'Connor, John H. Pickering, Peter W. Salsich, Jr., and Karen J. Sarjeant. The staff director was Elizabeth M. Yang. My thanks to all for their insights and encouragement. My thanks to everyone who made this issue possible.

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