

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF'S INTRODUCTION: TRIBUTE TO THE LATE MARY HARTER MITCHELL

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American novelist Henry Brooks Adams once noted that “[a] teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops.”¹ This quotation indubitably applies to Professor Mary Harter Mitchell, whose influence on this law school’s most recent graduating class began on August 23, 2008. It was during our “Call to the Profession” ceremony that Professor Mitchell provided a breath of fresh air after days of mounting fear of the Socratic method and three-hour exams. Exuding joy and hope, she reassured us that we were following a very noble path from which we would emerge as better persons. The following spring, she continued providing intelligent and compassionate instruction to one section of our class as a contracts instructor. She also influenced our class through her constant involvement in student activities, her visibility on campus, her mentoring of law review students, and her upper-level seminars. Having majored in religious studies, I was extremely disappointed not to have made it off the waiting list for her church and state class and had planned to enroll the following semester. But on November 4, 2009, I knew I would never be so fortunate. That day, all of the students, faculty, and staff of the Indiana University School of Law—Indianapolis realized that a woman whose influence we had perhaps taken for granted had left us too soon.

Not content to say farewell once, the 2011 class of the *Indiana Law Review* hoped to honor our beloved Professor Mitchell’s life in the most appropriate way we knew how: a tribute issue devoted to topics that deeply moved her. Executive Articles Editors Charles Daugherty and Mac Schilling, assisted by Senior Executive Editor Jennifer Ekblaw, sought out esteemed professors to write articles specifically for this issue. To that end, we are delighted to feature articles from Professors Theresa Beiner, Lynn Branham, Lauren Carasik, James Robertson, and Christopher Smith. Their impressive scholarship adds to the legal discourse in ways we are certain Professor Mitchell would have respected: Professor Beiner with a “snapshot of the state of women lawyers”; Professor Branham with five steps for transforming prison cultures; Professor Carasik with a critique of modern legal education; Professor Robertson with a proposed amendment to the Prison Rape Elimination Act; and Professor Smith with a discussion of recent Supreme Court changes that may impact prisoners’ rights. We also feature student notes discussing Indiana’s foster care system, the rights of sex offenders to access public libraries, and Indiana’s “three strikes” law for prisoner lawsuits—quite fittingly, authored by the last *Indiana Law Review* student for whom Professor Mitchell served as a mentor.

Professor Mitchell left an indelible mark outside the academy as well. To that end, we feature tribute pieces by three members of the Indiana University

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1. Henry B. Adams, QUOTATIONREFERENCE, <http://www.quotationreference.com/quotefinder.php?byax=1&strt=1&subj=Henry+B.+Adams> (last visited June 20, 2011).

faculty: Professors Susanah Mead, Florence Roisman, and Joan Ruhtenberg. The *Indiana Law Review* Executive Board would like to extend a special word of thanks to Professor Roisman, who graciously helped us off the ground during the brainstorming phase of this issue. She provided invaluable assistance in terms of topic selection and making the issue truly personal through the inclusion of Professor Mitchell's poetry. Consequently, we are honored to share a sampling of Professor Mitchell's creative work in this issue, and we also thank Professor Mitchell's family for their permission to publish these beautifully written pieces.

Saying goodbye is never easy, and an untimely goodbye is even more difficult to grasp. We offer our heartfelt condolences to Professor Mitchell's loved ones; we cannot imagine the pain of your loss. But we can promise one thing: Professor Mitchell inspired the class of 2011 to become worthy stewards of the law. We may not have known her well, but we all benefited from the great sense of community she inculcated at Inlow Hall. We may never have tasted her famous pies, but we were touched by the sweetness of her demeanor and words. Most of all, we all answered her call to something higher when we entered this profession. To the extent that our future remains unwritten, we can say one thing emphatically: we may never truly know where Professor Mitchell's influence ends.