

# Public Interest Law Reporter

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Article 1

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Public Interest Law Reporter

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***From the Editor. . .***

Welcome to Volume 21 of the Public Interest Law Reporter! PILR's Fall 2015 issue is entitled "Whose 'Broad Shoulders'? Law and Identity in Chicago." The title is inspired by Carl Sandburg's 1914 poem "Chicago," which celebrated Chicago and its distinctly working-class character. This edition examines Chicago's (and Illinois') intersection of social movements, legislation, and public interest lawyering along the praxes of race, ethnicity, gender, class, sexual orientation, gender identity, immigration status, and ability.

From its inception, Chicago has witnessed both the perpetuation and protest of oppression. From the Haymarket massacre to the Pullman Strike; from the 1919 race riot to the Great Migration; from *The Jungle* to Saul Alinsky; from the Contract Buyers' League to Martin Luther King Jr.'s Chicago Freedom Movement; from the Rainbow Coalition to Fred Hampton's assassination; from the Puerto Rican nationalist movement to the Albany Park anti-gentrification movement; Chicago student protests from the 60s and 90s to the present; from the Chicano Movement to the United Neighborhood Organization; from Occupy Chicago to the 2012 NATO protests; and the intersectional Black Lives Matter movement and Fight for 15—these and many other campaigns affirm Chicago's long, multifaceted resistance to injustice and marginalization.

Public interest law is deeply implicated in these struggles. In Chicago, as elsewhere in the U.S., the *experience* of the law can be profoundly unequal, disparate, and oppressive based on one's identity within the above-mentioned praxes. To this end, PILR seeks a nuanced understanding of law and policy—one that builds solidarity between law students, legal workers, activists, and communities working to dismantle social inequality.

In this edition, we present articles that explore important cases, legislation, and movements in Chicago. Our contributing authors, attorney Alan Mills and education activist David Stovall, respectively examine the politics and ethics of public interest class actions and apply critical race theory to the policies that culminated in the 34-day Dyett High School hunger strike.

From our staff writers, you will read about Chicago's support system for undocumented high school students to attend college, the Cook County Board of Elections' work with Chicago disability activists to implement ADA polling place accommodations for visually-impaired voters, the challenges and disproportionate effects of the state's budget impasse on free legal services under the Illinois Equal Justice Act, Illinois state prisons and Cook County

jails' responsiveness to the medical and psychological needs of transgender inmates, city and state anti-discrimination legislation for transgender employees, civil asset forfeiture reform and collateral consequences in Chicago, and the political interplay between Chicago Democratic politicians and the local Black Lives Matter movement in the wake of Laquan McDonald.

Staff writers selected to write feature articles wrote in-depth pieces on the tension (and potential for coexistence) between public housing desegregation and accelerating gentrification, the relationship between lawsuits brought to loosen Chicago's gun ordinances and those brought to restrict the illegal flow of guns from outside municipalities, sexual assault policies on Illinois college campus and the extent to which they procedurally support female victims' reproductive rights, and Chicago homeless people's rampant criminalization and the parameters of "homeless courts" as a decriminalized alternative.

As we enter a new era of activism, lawyering, and the struggle for a more equitable world, PILR remains a critical space for discussing the social, legal, and policy forces that will challenge us as practitioners in law and beyond. We thank you for joining us in this endeavor.

Nickolas Kaplan  
Editor-in-Chief

*This issue is dedicated to the memory of:*

- Rekia Boyd, 22  
Dakota Bright, 15  
Cedrick Chatman, 17  
Alfontish Cockerham, 23  
Philip Coleman, 38  
Miguel Flores, 22  
Denzel Ford, 19  
Dominique “Damo” Franklin, Jr., 23  
Heriberto Godinez, Jr., 24  
Pedro Gonzalez III, 21  
William Hope, Jr., 25  
Ronald “Ronnieman” Johnson III, 25  
Bettie Jones, 55  
Erick Lagunas, 21  
George Lash, 19  
Quintonio LeGrier, 19  
Laquan McDonald, 17  
Roshad McIntosh, 19  
Willie Miller, 25  
Jamaal Moore, 23  
Darius Pinex, 27  
Desean Pittman, 17  
Pedro Rios, Jr., 14  
Warren Robinson, 16  
Angelique Styles, 60

And all of the victims, living and deceased, of Chicago police violence.

***#BlackLivesMatter #BrownLivesMatter #SayHerName #RestInPower***

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The *Public Interest Law Reporter* (PILR) is an innovative legal publication that focuses on current issues in public interest law and policy. Founded in 1995, PILR provides students, educators, and practitioners with information about, and thoughtful analysis of, contemporary issues in the areas of human rights, economic equity, criminal justice, the environment, and both small and large-scale governance. The publication is produced, managed, and edited by Loyola law students. Staff writers are selected through a write-on process and collaborate with editors to determine specific areas to research and write about. Feature articles provide more in-depth exploration of some particularly poignant or difficult issues. Additionally, selected articles from contributing authors are accepted for publication.

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