FOREWORD

On October 9-10, 1998, the *Duke Journal of Gender Law & Policy* invited a distinguished panel of individuals—including academics, practitioners, military officials, and university officials—to attend and participate in a conference at Duke University entitled *Sexual Harassment: Beyond the Myth & Media.* The conference focused on four distinct subject areas: sexual harassment within the context of the military experience, the educational setting, and at the workplace, as well as the more amorphous area of same-sex sexual harassment. The panelists debated the legal, policy, and social forces impacting sexual harassment and sexual harassment law. The articles in this symposium issue continue that debate and expand upon the discussions that began at the conference.

The current focus of the public, the media, and even the Supreme Court on the issue of sexual harassment and sexual misconduct was the driving force behind our decision to hold this conference. Recent allegations of sexual impropriety and harassment involving the President have dominated political and social discourse over the past year. This, combined with media coverage of well-known incidents such as Tailhook and the Anita Hill/Clarence Thomas imbroglio, have raised the level of social awareness of the germaneness and prevalence of sexual harassment in today's society. In addition, the 1997-1998 Supreme Court docket contained three cases that had a direct impact on the role of the law in addressing sexual harassment.

These recent events have raised new issues and concerns relating to sexual harassment, while at the same time underscoring the influence of established definitions and core concepts in the continuously developing area of sexual harassment law and policy. While the contours of sexual harassment law have expanded and the focus has shifted over time, the core questions remain the same: What is sexual harassment? How is it defined? What are the appropriate legal, social and policy responses to this issue?

The articles in this volume, submitted by six conference participants, focus on topics including employer responses to sexual harassment in the workplace both before and after the recent Supreme Court decisions; the appropriate response to sexual harassment in the education setting; how disparate power positions impact the incidence of sexual harassment; the effect of the legal recognition of same sex harassment on homosexual employees; and the difficulty of transferring Title VII definitions and standards to the military justice environment. The *Journal* presents its sixth volume in the hope that the articles contained herein will spark further discussion and will play an important role in shaping the future of sexual harassment law and policy.

The *Duke Journal of Gender Law & Policy* is indebted to the tireless work of Rebecca Springer, David Dummer and Eric Ritvo, the conference co-coordinators, who brought the panelists to Duke from across the country and whose extraordinary efforts made the conference a resounding success. The

Journal is deeply grateful to all of the conference participants for their contributions to the ongoing effort to promote new dialogues that will engender broader understanding of the complexities of this issue.