

A brief history of the *International Journal of Discrimination and the Law* -

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The idea for the *International Journal of Discrimination and the Law* was first conceived in the early 1990s. At that time I had introduced a new interdisciplinary Masters course on Law and Discrimination at Brunel University, drawing from law and sociology and covering a range of dimensions of discrimination and ways of addressing it. I was approached by Alison Lovejoy, a representative of AB Academic Publishers, an independent publisher run by the redoubtable Ena Adam, which was then publishing journals on a range of topics including medical law and criminology. Alison and Ena thought that there was a gap in the market for this developing area of law and for socio-legal approaches to the subject matter. At that time, there were several journals focusing on employment law which did include material on discrimination in the workplace, but it was clear that discrimination arose in many other contexts which were not being considered. Following our initial discussions, we met with academics and leading practitioners in the field to gauge interest in the new project. A decision was taken to proceed so we established an editorial board of leading scholars and lawyers working in the area of equality and anti-discrimination law. The first issue was published in 1995 with articles on sexual harassment in Ireland, race and gender bias in the South African court system, the role of regulatory agencies in promoting and enforcing anti-discrimination law and on human rights and the peace process in Northern Ireland. The focus of the journal was to explore the limits and potential of law in achieving equality and addressing the complexities of discrimination and to broaden the scope from the UK to consider how these problems were addressed in other jurisdictions.

Subsequently, we published papers on a range of topics, usually four times a year, but sometimes published double issues, and also included book reviews and Case Notes. In the early days before Scholar One and Manuscript Central, the process of production was organised in what would be seen now as a very quaint and old fashioned way, when contributors submitted hard copies of their paper or emailed word files directly to the editor which were then passed on to reviewers and proofs were returned by post. Today, of course, the process is much more streamlined and accessible to authors, reviewers and editors, using Sage Track. But while the production process has changed, the challenges facing the journal today are similar. The unique selling point of the *International Journal of Discrimination and the Law* was that it covered a wide range of jurisdictions which distinguished it from other journals, as well as a wide range of areas of discrimination. Given

this international dimension. we received a very wide range of contributions, occasionally in areas which made it challenging to find expert reviewers in those particular fields. So I was very grateful to colleagues and editorial board members for their contributions to the review process and for suggestions on possible reviewers. We also received lots of material which was on discrimination per se, rather than the use of law to protect individuals and groups from discrimination, so we would refer authors to other appropriate journals. However, we were able to proceed and publish regularly and we included work from early career and established researchers and covered a wide range of topics. We also published special issues, often based on conference proceedings, and with guest editors, on themes including sexual harassment, constitutionalising equality, reviews of the Equality Act 2010, EU equality law, reasonable accommodation of religious claims in workplaces and (il)legitimate differential treatment. The journal remained with AB Academic Publishers for sixteen years, and then migrated to Sage in 2011, along with other selected titles from the AB portfolio, including the *International Review of Victimology*, when Ena Adam retired. The publishing and production editors at Sage were very helpful in negotiating the transition to the new home and onto Sage Track, the online submission and peer review system. Over the years I worked with several publishing editors and assistant editors who were very helpful with the transition to the new format, including Caroline Moors, Livia Melandri, Amy Ellis-Thompson, Elle Aspell-Sheppard and Laura Toogood and on the production team, Pooja Khatri, Saksham Munjhal, Sneha Rawat and Karuna Rana. This move gave fresh impetus to the journal, improved its processing and future proofed it, as Sage had additional resources for marketing. It also meant the complete archive was digitised which preserves its content and makes it much more accessible to scholars and professionals.

I stepped down as editor in the spring of 2019 after the second issue of Volume 19. I was confident that the journal was in safe hands with my successors Nicole Busby and Grace James, who served as editors for the next four years. Subsequently the baton passed to the current team of Laura Carlson, James Hand and Panos Kapotas. I have continued my involvement with the journal as a member of the editorial board and watched its progress with interest. New additions to the Editorial Board across areas previously unrepresented have enhanced its international scope. The *International Journal of Discrimination and the Law* still provides an outlet for new writers and new areas, as well as for established scholars in the area. Founding the journal and editing it for twenty-four years was a demanding but rewarding role and my only disappointment is that discrimination has persisted in so many

areas of society and in so many jurisdictions and the law has often fallen short in protecting individuals and groups from discrimination. But journals like the *International Journal of Discrimination and the Law* can play an important role in shedding light on these issues as illustrated by the contributions to this special issue of the journal. The journal has gone from strength to strength and it is heartening to see it reach its thirtieth birthday. I look forward to seeing the journal develop further in the future.