

PATRICIA GUERRERO, CHIEF JUSTICE OF CALIFORNIA

# Foreword

This 2025 issue of *California Legal History* celebrates the 175th anniversary of the California Supreme Court. Since its inception more than thirty years ago, this publication has developed and drawn upon the history of the California Supreme Court and other courts to help us better understand where we have been, where we are, and what might yet be accomplished.

These contributions were anticipated back in 1994 by one of my predecessors as Chief Justice of California, Malcolm Lucas. In providing the foreword to the first edition of *California Legal History*, he explained that “[a]s we look ahead, we can look to the past.”

As Chief Justice Lucas recognized, by engaging with the past from modern perspectives, legal histories can offer valuable lessons for the future. These insights might come from an analysis of a case or a line of cases; a description of the circumstances that led to litigation; or the social or political environment that surrounded it; biographical sketches of litigants and their attorneys; an examination of how individual judges approached their work; or other methods of exploring the past. In all their forms, by placing the law in a broader context, legal histories can illuminate the durability and wisdom of some ideas and the impermanence and flaws of others, while also telling stories about human struggle, resilience, and progress that can be drawn upon for inspiration and direction.

Many such articles within *California Legal History* have concerned the California Supreme Court. These histories have shed light on how the court has approached its essential role in interpreting the law. Some of these articles have captured the thoughts of individual justices through oral histories or the publication of speeches the public might otherwise be unaware of. Other contributions have involved in-depth treatments of cases decided by the court and other pivotal moments in the court’s history. Still other articles have offered broader retrospectives regarding patterns or themes gleaned from our case law.

Some of the stories that have appeared on these pages have reinforced my pride in the court's work. I have also drawn different lessons, no less vital, from articles describing times in which this court has fallen short of the ideals I associate with it.

In short, by providing us with grounds for insight, reflection, and resolve, this journal has brought Chief Justice Lucas's words to life. With appreciation to the California Supreme Court Historical Society for its ongoing work in producing this journal and its other efforts to preserve this state's legal legacy and carry it forward into the future, I now look forward to more of our history being told.

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