

Editor's note

I welcome you to the ninth edition of the *Court of Conscience*.

In 2015, we are proud to publish a selection of high quality articles on the theme of 'Rights + Freedoms'. This is the second year running that we have published a themed issue, featuring contributions from legal academics, commentators and, most importantly, UNSW Law students. The theme for this edition was chosen by the popular vote of students at UNSW Law. This year, *Court of Conscience* also facilitated relationships between student writers and academic mentors through the Social Justice Writers' Workshop and some of the articles in this Issue represent the fruits of that program.

This year's Issue on 'Rights + Freedoms' is a timely addition to rights discourse in Australia, as it coincides with the United Nations' Universal Periodic Review on Human Rights in Australia. The importance and currency of this topic is made clear through the diverse subject matter in this edition. George Williams tackles the same-sex marriage debate, while Eleanor Wood and Morgan Carpenter explore the developing landscape of transgender and intersex rights, respectively. Fifty years after the atrocities that occurred in Indonesia under the Suharto regime, Nikki Edwards reminds us of the ongoing significance of these events in contemporary international law.

But *Court of Conscience* also prides itself on amplifying new voices and going beyond the boundaries of traditional legal commentary. I invite you to turn to the contribution by Michaela Vaughan which blends her own personal account with analysis of the law of protest. We are especially honoured to include in this edition the story of Aasiya Amin*, an asylum seeker who is currently resident at Villawood Detention Centre.

My heartfelt thanks go to the marvellous editorial team for their creativity and dedication in pulling this Issue together. This group of remarkable women have sourced contributions, created artworks and meticulously edited each article. Finally, to Nicholas Watts, whose skill and generosity have made this publication beautiful, we are eternally indebted.

I am confident that each of the articles in this Issue offers the reader a deeper appreciation of the subjects they traverse. These conversations are ones which will have surely cropped up in the news — if not at the dinner table — over the past year. We hope that this Issue will carry those conversations forward; that these articles will engage, inform and inspire.

**Aasiya Amin is not her real name.*

Amila Perera
Editor-in-Chief