

EDITOR'S BRIEF

In this issue of *The Colonial Lawyer: A Journal of Virginia Law and Public Policy*, five authors present insightful commentary on a number of diverse and changing areas of the law.

Ms. Naegele's article explores the relationship between medical malpractice law and the increasing frequency of court-ordered obstetrical interventions. She argues that a serious erosion of women's rights to reproductive autonomy occurs when a court compels a physician to perform medical procedures that are contrary to the intention of the pregnant woman. Ms. Naegele suggests that the court order is the result of conflicting messages sent by courts in abortion cases and medical malpractice cases in obstetrics.

Ms. I'Anson addresses the issue of surrogate motherhood in Virginia by analyzing various Virginia statutes which could be used as a basis for testing the validity of surrogate contracts. Additionally, she reviews case law from other jurisdictions and the public policy reasons for and against surrogate contracts. Ms. I'Anson concludes that the legislature of Virginia ought to outlaw surrogacy contracts or bar a surrogate mother from being compensated for her services.

On a separate front, Mr. Thomas presents a comprehensive analysis of the doctrine of constructive possession in Virginia. He provides both a discussion of the requisite elements of the doctrine and surveys the vast amount of case law on the issue. Additionally, Mr. Thomas provides the practitioner with a creative method for determining the application of the doctrine of constructive possession to relevant factual scenarios.

In our final article *The Practitioner's Guide*, Mr. Jordan and Mr. Nachman, the Research Editors for the publication, introduce a new and hopefully permanent section of the publication. *The Practitioner's Guide* is designed to touch upon current legal subjects confronting the practitioner in Virginia. Mr. Jordan and Mr. Nachman have focused on *The Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act*, DNA "Fingerprinting", and *Reconstruction Evidence* in this issue. Our goal is to present a general overview to the subject and a list of sources which we feel will aid the practitioner in mastering the subject.

The Editors and the Staff of *The Colonial Lawyer: A Journal of Virginia Law and Public Policy* hope that you, the practitioner and the scholar, find the articles of Volume 18, Number 2 insightful and stimulating, and we welcome any comments you might have for this or future issues.

Thomas Paul Sotelo
Editor-in-Chief