Racial Capitalism: An Elaboration in Legal Scholarship

As a journal dedicated to social, racial, and economic justice, the *Journal of Civil Rights & Economic Development* (JCRED) is soliciting articles for *Racial Capitalism: An Elaboration in Legal Scholarship*, our forthcoming symposium issue. This issue will explore the legal dimensions of our capitalist political economy and its systemically racist nature. We find that the multiple crises experienced in the United States today are uniquely driven by our capitalist system in which racism—anti-Black and anti-indigenous racism in particular—compounds economic, class-based oppression. We also see an opportunity for broader articulation and analysis of Racial Capitalism within legal scholarship.

The multiple and varied definitions of Racial Capitalism provide a broad foundation from which legal scholars can elaborate. The concept of Racial Capitalism was first used to describe the specific political economy of apartheid South Africa. But later, Cedric J. Robinson’s *Black Marxism* globalized the term, deploying it to describe our modern international political economic system, imbued with racism and white supremacy since its emergence. The Combahee River Collective’s 1977 Statement, known for coining the term “identity politics,” also criticized the capitalist political economy and how it perpetuated racial, class, and sexual oppression, calling for an accounting of the specific economic conditions of Black women. Also, Racial Capitalism has been recently used by law professor Nancy Leong to describe the commodification of race and diversity by universities and corporations and how they entrench inequality in the process. And last year, the monumental *1619 Project* also helped popularize discussion of Racial Capitalism by connecting the historic phenomena and legacies of slavery, anti-Black racism, white supremacy, and capitalism in the United States.

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Needless to say, we are in a moment which calls for a legal analysis that grapples with the reality of Racial Capitalism in our society. From the racially disparate harms of the COVID-19 pandemic\(^6\) to the mass protests calling to #DefundPolice in response to the latest series of police killings of Black citizens,\(^7\) the racialized nature of our capitalist political economy has become impossible to overlook. To advance this conversation in legal scholarship, the *Journal* seeks to publish the work of scholars who creatively and incisively explore the legal dimensions of Racial Capitalism and what lies beyond its horizon.

**Possible topics for submissions and questions to explore include:**

- The total mismanagement and racially disparate deadliness of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Recent uprisings against police brutality and the calls to defund the police.
- Pandemic evictions and the racial dynamics of market-based housing and gentrification.
- Racial harms of the present and impending climate catastrophe.
- What does anti-racist, anti-capitalist lawyering look like?
- How may an analysis of Racial Capitalism incorporate gender and sexuality oppression?

**Instructions for Submissions**

We welcome full-length traditional law review articles with a maximum of 75 pages, as well as shorter essays and commentaries with a minimum of 8 pages. Authors will be selected based on brief abstracts of their articles, essays, or commentaries. We aim to ensure an array of perspectives, methodologies, and expertise. Thus, interdisciplinary approaches and perspectives from outside the legal academy are welcome.

In addition, the *Journal* is thrilled to announce that along with publication in this symposium issue, a handful of authors will be selected for a JCRED Symposium Panel. The authors will each receive a $500 honorarium and will participate in a virtual panel discussion on Racial Capitalism. The Symposium will take place in the Spring 2021 semester, and we will coordinate with the authors’ schedules.

The deadline to submit an abstract for consideration is **October 1st, 2020**, with full length articles from selected authors to be due January 6th, 2021.

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\(^7\) See *The Rebellion Against Racial Capitalism*, Intercepted, INTERCEPT (June 24, 2020), https://theintercept.com/2020/06/24/the-rebellion-against-racial-capitalism/.
To Submit, Please Send:
- Abstract with a minimum length of two pages;
- Your name, title, and professional affiliation;
- Your Curriculum Vitae/Resume;
- Your contact details including phone number and email address.

Optional: Full Manuscripts are also welcome
- Manuscript between 25 and 75 pages for full-length articles and between 8 and 20 pages for essays and commentaries.

Please submit your abstract (or manuscript/essay/commentary) for consideration to: jcred@stjohns.edu.

Submission Deadlines:
Abstract Deadline: October 1st, 2020
Selected Authors Notification Date: October 15th, 2020
Final Article Submission Deadline: January 6th, 2021

If you have any questions about this call for papers, please contact the Research & Symposium Director, Jay Hedges, jay.hedges18@stjohns.edu.

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Founded in 1985 as the Journal of Legal Commentary, the Journal of Civil Rights and Economic Development is committed to publishing high-quality scholarship and hosting innovative symposia on issues of social, racial, and economic justice.

In 2010, the Journal became the official journal of the Ronald H. Brown Center for Civil Rights at St. John’s University School of Law in Queens, New York.

The Journal publishes four issues each year, calling for submissions from scholars, practitioners, and students on a range of social, racial, and economic topics.