

INTRODUCTION

*Robert F. Williams**

This is our twenty-seventh Annual Issue on State Constitutional Law. The *Rutgers University Law Review* is proud to continue the tradition established in 1989 by the *Rutgers Law Journal*. This year's first Article is authored by an exclusively-practicing attorney—Mary Bonauto.¹ Mary is best known for arguing successfully in the Supreme Court of the United States for same-sex marriage under the *Federal Constitution*.² Her law practice, however, led up to that landmark decision through a series of carefully-conceived cases in the states under *state constitutions*.³ In her Article, she explains the nature of that successful state-to-federal litigation strategy. In continuing the *Law Review's* coverage of comparative subnational constitutional law,⁴ the analysis and comparison of state—or subnational—constitutions in other federal countries,⁵ Christophe Van der Beken analyzed the state constitutions of Ethiopia.⁶ Most people do not even know that Ethiopia utilizes state constitutions. That Article adds significantly to this new subfield of comparative constitutional law.⁷ Finally, this year's Issue continues the tradition of student-written comments on some of the most important state constitutional decisions by the state high courts around the country. These comments seek to locate the decisions both

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1. Mary L. Bonauto, *Equality and the Impossible—State Constitutions and Marriage*, 68 RUTGERS U. L. REV. 1481 (2016).

2. *Obergefell v. Hodges*, 135 U.S. 2584 (2015).

3. See, e.g., Mary L. Bonauto, *Goodridge in Context*, 40 HARV. C.R.-C.L. L. REV. 1 (2005).

4. For an explanation of subnational constitutional law, see Robert F. Williams, *Teaching and Researching Comparative Subnational Constitutional Law*, 115 PENN ST. L. REV. 1109 (2011).

5. Robert F. Williams & G. Alan Tarr, *Rutgers Law Journal: Twenty-Five Years of State Constitutionalism*, 44 RUTGERS L.J. 547, 548 n.8 (2014).

6. Christophe Van der Beken, *Subnational Constitutional Autonomy and the Accommodation of Diversity in Ethiopia*, 68 RUTGERS U. L. REV. 1535 (2016).

7. Professor Van der Beken's paper was first delivered at the World Congress of the International Association of Constitutional Law (IACL) in Oslo, Norway, at the Workshop of the IACL Research Group on Subnational Constitutions in Federal and Quasi-Federal Constitutional States.

within the state constitutional jurisprudence of the individual state and also within the national context of litigation in their particular fields of state constitutional law. When we embarked on these publications back in 1989, we hoped to build a literature on state constitutional law as well as to provide a focused learning environment for students in this field. We believe we have succeeded in those goals, and we plan to continue to do so in the future.