

# Your Collection

## New Literary Journal Examines Justice

by Scott Snipes

Published by the John Jay College of Criminal Justice at the City University of New York, *J Journal* is a new literary publication on law, law enforcement, criminal justice, and crime. The journal's editors came up with the idea and set the tone and theme of the journal one afternoon in a New York City bar—to “expand the question: What is Justice?”

The journal's content is presented not through scholarly work, but creative writing. Contributions include fiction, first-person narratives, and real-life experiences of the authors. Journal contributors include teachers, poets, law professors, writers, artists, prison inmates, and law enforcement officials. The first issue's 19 poems and seven short stories touch on topics dealing with suicide, parole, and the long-term rehabilitation of prisoners.

In keeping with the literary tone of the journal, there is neither an index nor footnotes. The journal will be published twice a year in soft-cover format. The first issue, spring 2008, runs 124 pages. One-year subscriptions are \$20 for individuals and \$30 for libraries and institutions.

Examples of writing include the short story, “any reason,” which opens with a passage from Allen Ginsburg's “Howl” and chronicles the female author's experience as a juror on a high school teacher-student relationship case. The author uses flashbacks to show the character's own experience as a student and the “improper” relationship she had with a female teacher. Not thinking of her own self as a victim, the juror wants any reason to acquit.

The poem, “First Date,” chronicles a young girl's decision to become a prostitute. After the transaction is set, she feels as though her only recourse is to continue, all the while wanting any excuse to stop.

Any institution or law library with an interest in criminal justice from a literary aspect and with budget to spare would welcome this as a new addition. If, like most libraries, budget constraints are a priority, this publication could be passed for a more scholarly work. ■

**Scott Snipes** ([scottsnipes@paulhastings.com](mailto:scottsnipes@paulhastings.com)) is research librarian for Paul, Hastings' Atlanta office.



*J Journal*. John Jay College of Criminal Justice at the City University of New York. \$20 for individuals and \$30 for libraries and institutions.