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Carmel Rickard

Columnist

Legal Columnist.

Editor in Chief of the Newsletter of the [Judicial Institute for Africa](#) [1] at UCT

Since she began working as a journalist in 1981, Carmel Rickard has specialised in writing about legal affairs. She has won widespread recognition (local and international) as well as a number of awards for her work, and in 1992/3 was awarded a Nieman Fellowship to Harvard.

Before that landmark experience, she had effectively operated a one-person news service on legal and political events in South Africa, reporting for the Mail and Guardian and the Natal Witness (as Bureau Chief and legal columnist for both), as well as Reuters, the BBC's Africa Service (Network Africa and Focus on Africa), Capital Radio and others.

On her return from Harvard she became legal editor of the Sunday Times (South Africa's biggest newspaper), a position she held until 2002 when she left the paper to write a syndicated column on legal matters for the Independent Group. In 1998 she completed an LLM in Constitutional Law (cum laude).

She now writes a weekly column on legal issues for the Financial Mail, and a second weekly column, “A Matter of Justice” for Legalbriefs, a daily online legal newspaper. The latter column is supported by the International Bar Association, and focuses on judicial decisions and legal developments across the African continent.

She is also editor-in-chief of publications for the Judicial Institute for Africa (Jifa), writing newsletters for circulation to African judges on new judicial decisions from around the continent. This is intended to keep them up to date with judicial thinking and developments elsewhere in Africa, particularly given the shortage of resources like law reports.

She has a special interest in issues of justice and human rights; judicial independence and its significance in Africa as well as systems of judicial appointment (in 2003 she was invited to give a paper reflecting on the SA post-apartheid experience of judicial appointment at a conference in Cambridge, UK, on judicial reform).

She is the author of several books including “Thank you, Judge Mostert”, a biography of the life and times of the judge who blew the whistle on a major incident of apartheid-era government corruption.

Carmel lives in the Free State, close to the border with Lesotho, and has written extensively about the corruption trials in Lesotho over the Katse Dam as well as the continuing instability on that country’s court of appeal.

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[1] <http://www.jifa.uct.ac.za/>