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Symposium Introduction

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Symposium Introduction

*Peter C. Marshall, Jr.**

The last ten years have been the warmest on record. During 2007, Arctic sea ice dropped to the lowest levels since measurements began in 1979. Valuable natural resources in the Arctic, including gas and oil, are becoming more accessible to exploitation. The Northwest Passage—a highly desirable shipping route connecting Europe and Asia—is increasingly navigable during the summers. These changes have highlighted new and unresolved legal issues as the nations bordering the Arctic vie for control of these new waters and the resources that lie beneath them.

In February 2009, the *Vanderbilt Journal of Transnational Law* invited some of the most prominent thinkers in their respective fields to explore the multitude of legal and political issues created by the melting of the Arctic. The participants analyzed how to reconcile the rights and interests of competing nations and how the fragile Arctic environment and indigenous populations will be affected by the melting ice and increased activity in the region.

This issue of the *Vanderbilt Journal of Transnational Law* reflects work by symposium participants in light of their preparation for and contribution to the symposium. We hope this issue provides our readers with a glimpse of our wonderful Arctic Symposium.

*As the Executive Development Editor for the *Vanderbilt Journal of Transnational Law*, Peter Marshall organized the Arctic Symposium hosted by Vanderbilt University Law School in February 2009. Peter graduated from Vanderbilt Law School in May 2009 and is currently practicing at Kirkland & Ellis LLP in Chicago, Illinois.
