

**HAMLIN JOURNAL OF PUBLIC LAW AND POLICY PRESENTS:
2015 SPRING SYMPOSIUM
CALL FOR PAPER AND SPEAKING ABSTRACTS**

The *Journal of Public Law and Policy* at Hamline University School of Law in Saint Paul, Minnesota, will host a symposium on **Friday, March 27, 2015**, tentatively entitled, “The Death Penalty Debate in America: Effectiveness, Fairness, Constitutionality, and Other Considerations.”

This symposium will gather scholars, policy makers, activists, and community members to discuss capital punishment in America both at the state and federal level. Some of the central issues to be addressed at the symposium include the constitutional ban against cruel and unusual punishment; the death penalty’s deterrent effect; whether the death penalty is fairly administered; how the death penalty compares financially to alternative forms of punishment; executing individuals despite doubts of guilt; crime in Minnesota before and after abolishing the death penalty; and the future of the death penalty in America.

The death penalty has deep roots in the United States. In 32 states, it still serves as the ultimate penalty for criminals who have committed the most heinous of crimes. Minnesota abolished the death penalty in 1911, choosing to no longer equate justice with death. Declining public support for capital punishment in recent years, coupled with several botched executions by lethal injection, has brought the death penalty debate to the forefront of both scholarly and popular discussion.

Through a well-balanced symposium, we seek to explore whether Minnesota is on the appropriate side of the death penalty debate, and whether the death penalty’s roots will remain firmly planted in this country. The non-definitive list of proposed topics includes:

- The history of the death penalty in America and in Minnesota
- Crime deterrence
- Retributive justice
- The death penalty in relation to race and sex
- The financial cost of the death penalty
- Innocence on death row
- The constitutionality of the death penalty

This list is non-exhaustive, and we encourage speakers to develop their own topic and share their personal oral histories. **We invite individuals to submit abstracts of papers and/or personal memoirs/oral histories for an opportunity to present at the symposium.** The revised and edited submissions may subsequently be published in the Fall 2015 edition of the *Hamline Journal of Public Law and Policy*. In what has become a core component of the *Journal of Public Law and Policy* tradition, the symposium and its subsequent issue will be interdisciplinary, and will be of use not only to legal scholars, but also to practicing attorneys, law students, policymakers, and other professionals. The symposium is intended to be intellectually engaging and serve as a source of inspiration for future scholarly and practical endeavors.

Please send an abstract of **up to 250 words** in which you outline your topic and frame your analysis in terms that address an interdisciplinary audience. We welcome and encourage submissions from across all disciplines. **Interest in publication is not a pre-requisite for speaking at the symposium; we encourage all speakers to submit an article for consideration, but it is not required.** The abstract should include your name, affiliation, references, and email contact, and should be accompanied by a current curriculum vitae or resume.

Abstracts should be submitted to **Jennie Nepstad, Symposium Editor**, by **October 27, 2014** via e-mail at jnepstad01@hamline.edu (please use the subject line 2015 Symposium Abstract Submission), or via U.S. mail at the address below:

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Academic institutions are considered to be marketplaces of ideas, and in that role, they serve as places of conversation and debate. We believe it is the duty of academic institutions like Hamline University School of Law to host these scholarly conversations and encourage dialogue about important topics such as capital punishment. We hope you consider participating in such an important and timely conversation. Thank you for your consideration.