## St. Thomas Law Review

Volume 26 Issue 3 Spring 2014

Article 1

2014

## **Front Matter**

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#### **Recommended Citation**

Front Matter, 26 St. Thomas L. Rev. i (2014).

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# ST. THOMAS LAW REVIEW

VOLUME 26 SPRING 2014 NUMBER 3

### **CRIMINAL LAW ISSUE:**

#### **ARTICLES**

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#### **PREFACE**

If one looks at the practice of law as a gemstone, every facet representing an area of the law, criminal law is but one of those facets. In the eyes of the public at large, however, there can be no doubt that criminal law is the facet that most often catches the light, reflecting the values of society as the daily drama of crime and punishment, guilt or innocence, is played out in the courtrooms of America. The Criminal Law Section of The Florida Bar is cognizant of the crucial role we in the criminal justice system play in our state. That sense of responsibility has led us, once again, to partner with the *St. Thomas Law Review* to present this annual issue devoted exclusively to criminal law topics.

As this issue of the law review goes to print, Russian troops are massing at the borders of Ukraine. This international crisis is a reminder that even in countries that purport to value the rule of law, the iron hand of a dictatorial leader can trump all. In the United States, we lawyers are tasked with standing guard over freedom within our borders so that democracy remains democratic. There is no better illustration to the world of the American commitment to justice than our judicial system, with its checks and balances and rights afforded to the accused and to victims. An American dictator could not exist, largely because American lawyers would not allow it.

This issue of the St. Thomas Law Review contains provocative articles that cut to the heart of civil liberties, investigative procedures, trial tactics, and even the politics of defending the indigent. The Criminal Law Section, with its judges, defenders, prosecutors, and academics, is proud to partner with the St. Thomas Law Review to foster free thought and dialogue. The conversation about the issues that surround our profession, the issues of fairness, justice, conduct, regulation, and ethics, is forever relevant as we continue to refine our shining facet of the law. That effort will never cease.

Susan Odzer Hugentugler

Chair of the Criminal Law Section of The Florida Bar

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VOLUME 26

**SPRING 2014** 

Issue 3

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William S. Hein & Co., Inc. 1285 Main Street Buffalo, NY 14209 (800) 828-7571

Citation. All references to materials included in the St. Thomas Law Review conform to The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation (19th ed. 2010), published by the Harvard Law Review Association.

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