

John D. Bessler

Associate Professor

University of Baltimore School of Law

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CURRENT POSITIONS

Associate Professor, University of Baltimore School of Law

- First-Year Courses: Civil Procedure I, Contracts II, Introduction to Lawyering Skills
- Committees: Faculty Research and Development, Introduction to Advocacy Advisory Committee

Adjunct Professor, The Georgetown University Law Center

- Taught Capital Punishment Seminar in 2010, 2011, and 2012, and slated to teach the same course in Spring 2013

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE

Visiting Associate Professor (2007 – 2009)

The George Washington University Law School, Washington, D.C.

- First-Year Courses: Civil Procedure I, Civil Procedure II
- Upper-Level Courses: Death Penalty Seminar, Writing Fellows course
- Writing Center Director, Legal Research and Writing Program

Adjunct Professor, University of Minnesota Law School

- Taught Death Penalty Seminar (1998 – 2006)
- Organized independent study course for students to work on death penalty cases

LAW FIRM EXPERIENCE

Partner, Kelly & Berens, P.A.

- Attorney at firm (1998 – 2007) handling complex civil litigation matters
- Co-counsel for plaintiff in high-profile case over television broadcast rights for Major League Baseball team. *See* Fox Sports Net North, L.L.C. v. Minnesota Twins Partnership, 319 F.3d 329 (8th Cir. 2003)
- Represented broker in action against insurer to recover under fidelity bond. *See* RBC Dain Rauscher, Inc. v. Federal Ins. Co., 370 F. Supp.2d 886 (D. Minn. 2005)
- Named “Rising Star” by *Minnesota Law & Politics*

Associate, Faegre & Benson, LLP

- Member of labor and employment and construction law groups (1991-1996)
- Assisted in *pro bono* representation of Texas death row inmates, homeless clinic volunteer, and represented asylum applicants in INS proceedings

JUDICIAL CLERKSHIP

Law Clerk, U.S. Magistrate Judge John M. Mason

- United States District Court, District of Minnesota (1996 – 1998)

EDUCATION

University of Oxford, England, M.St. 2008

- Master of Studies, International Human Rights Law (High Pass)

Indiana University School of Law - Bloomington, J.D. 1991, cum laude

- **Senior Managing Editor, *Indiana Law Journal***
- Student Attorney, Indiana University Student Legal Services

University of Minnesota, College of Liberal Arts, Minneapolis, Minnesota

- B.A. 1988 (political science; history minor). Graduated in three years.
- Intern, Minneapolis Mayor Donald M. Fraser (former U.S. Congressman)
- Participant, Minnesota Studies in International Development (overseas work for development agency in Kingston, Jamaica and Blue Mountains)

Hamline University, St. Paul, Minnesota

- Master of Fine Arts in Writing, 2005

BOOKS

CRUEL AND UNUSUAL: THE AMERICAN DEATH PENALTY AND THE FOUNDERS' EIGHTH AMENDMENT (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2012)

WRITING FOR LIFE: THE CRAFT OF WRITING FOR EVERYDAY LIVING
(Minneapolis: Bottlecap Books, 2007)

- Winner, 2007 *Independent Publisher* Book Award (Writing/Publishing category)
- Silver, 2007 *ForeWord Magazine* Book of the Year Award (Writing category)
- 2007 Midwest Book Awards finalist (Reference/How-to categories)

LEGACY OF VIOLENCE: LYNCH MOBS AND EXECUTIONS IN MINNESOTA
(Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003)

- 2004 Minnesota Book Award finalist

KISS OF DEATH: AMERICA'S LOVE AFFAIR WITH THE DEATH PENALTY
(Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2003)

DEATH IN THE DARK: MIDNIGHT EXECUTIONS IN AMERICA
(Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1997)

- 1998 Minnesota Book Award finalist
- Honorable Mention, Outstanding Books – The Gustavus Myers Program for the Study of Bigotry and Human Rights in North America

LAW REVIEW ARTICLES

Revisiting Beccaria's Vision: The Enlightenment, America's Death Penalty and the Abolition Movement, 4 NW. J. L. & SOC. POL'Y 195 (2009)

In the Spirit of Ubuntu: Enforcing the Rights of Orphans and Vulnerable Children Affected by HIV/AIDS in South Africa, 31 HAST. INT'L & COMP. L. REV. 33 (2008)

The "Midnight Assassination Law" and Minnesota's Anti-Death Penalty Movement, 1849-1911, 22 WM. MITCHELL L. REV. 577 (1996)

The Public Interest and the Unconstitutionality of Private Prosecutors, 47 ARK. L. REV. 511 (1994)

Televised Executions and the Constitution: Recognizing a First Amendment Right of Access to State Executions, 45 FED. COMM. L.J. 355 (1993)

Defining "Co-Party" Within Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 13(g): Are Cross-Claims Between Original Defendants and Third-Party Defendants Allowable?, 66 IND. L.J. 549 (1991)

- BOOK REVIEWS** *All Executions Are Local* (forthcoming in 2012 in THE AMERICAN HISTORICAL REVIEW)
(reviewing David Garland, *Peculiar Institution: America's Death Penalty in an Age
of Abolition* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010))
- 'Til Death Do Us Part: A Battered Woman's Capital Murder Case Reexamined*,
H-NET REVIEWS IN THE HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES (published on H-Law, Jan. 2008)
(reviewing Kathleen A. Cairns, *The Enigma Woman: The Death Sentence of
Nellie May Madison* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007))
- OTHER** *The Botched Hanging of William Williams: How Too Much Rope and Minnesota's
PUBLICATIONS *Newspapers Brought an End to the Death Penalty in Minnesota*, THE RAKE (Mar. 2004)*
- Injustice Casts Shadow on History of State Executions*, STARTRIBUNE (Minneapolis),
Dec. 3, 2003
- America's Death Penalty: Just Another Form of Violence*, 82 PHI KAPPA PHI FORUM 13
(Winter 2002)
- VOLUNTEER** Death Penalty Project, The Advocates for Human Rights
ACTIVITIES Advisory Board Member, Books for Africa, Law and Democracy Initiative
- ADMITTED** Minnesota, District of Columbia, U.S. Supreme Court, Eighth Circuit
- FAMILY** Married to U.S. Senator Amy Klobuchar (D - Minnesota); daughter Abigail, 16