

W. ROBERT (WILL) THOMAS

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ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN STEPHEN M. ROSS SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

2019– Assistant Professor of Business Law

HARVARD LAW SCHOOL

2017–19 Climenko Fellow & Lecturer in Law

EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

2015 PhD in Philosophy

2012 JD *magna cum laude*

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

2006 BA *cum laude* in Philosophy, Economics

PUBLICATIONS

- 2022 *But We Haven't Got Corporate Criminal Law!* (w/ Mihailis E. Diamantis) ([pdf](#))
46 J. CORP. L. 991 (symposium issue)
- 2022 *A Marketing Pitch for Corporate Criminal Law* (w/ Mihailis E. Diamantis) ([SSRN](#))
1 STETSON BUS. L. REV. __ (inaugural symposium issue)
associated coverage on CLS BLUE SKY BLOG (Aug. 25, 2022) ([link](#))
- 2021 *Corporate Criminal Law Is Too Broad—Worse, It's Too Narrow* ([pdf](#))
53 ARIZ. ST. L.J. 199
reprinted in 70 DEF. L.J. __ (forthcoming 2022)
- 2021 *The Conventional Problem with Corporate Sentencing (and One Unconventional Solution)* ([pdf](#))
24 NEW CRIM. L. REV. 397 (symposium issue)
- 2019 *Incapacitating Criminal Corporations* ([pdf](#))
72 VAND. L. REV. 905
- 2019 *Making Sense of Corporate Criminals: A Tentative Taxonomy* ([pdf](#))
45 GEO. J.L. & PUB. POL'Y 775 (symposium issue)
- 2018 *How and Why Corporations Became (and Remain) Persons Under the Criminal Law* ([pdf](#))
45 FLA. ST. U. L. REV. 479
- 2017 *The Ability and Responsibility of Corporate Law to Improve Criminal Fines* ([pdf](#))
78 OHIO ST. L.J. 601

2012 *On Strict Liability Crimes: Preserving Criminal Intent in an Intent-Free Moral World* ([pdf](#))
110 MICH. L. REV. 647 (student note)

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS & INVITED TALKS

Branding Corporate Criminals

Sep 2022 Chicagoland Junior Scholars Conference; Loyola University Chicago School of Law
Jun 2022 Big Ten & Friends Colloquium; Michigan Ross School of Business (co-organizer)
Jun 2022 National Business Law Scholars Conference; University of Oklahoma College of Law
Apr 2022 Faculty Workshop; University of Iowa College of Law
Feb 2022 Symposium: White Collar Crime: A Look into The Past, Present, and Future; Stetson College of Law *
Jan 2022 Young Scholars Legal Research Workshop *

Corporate Shame and Criminal Punishment

Jul 2022 Crimfest! Annual Conference; Cardozo School of Law
Jul 2022 Junior Scholars in Legal Studies Series; University of Georgia Terry College of Business *
Jun 2022 National Business Law Scholars Conference; University of Oklahoma College of Law
May 2022 Marquell Memorial Criminal Justice Colloquium; New York Law School

But We Haven't Got Corporate Criminal Law!

Feb 2022 Hosmer-Hall Interdisciplinary Research Presentation; Ross School of Business
Oct 2021 Symposium: Imagining a World Without Corporate Criminal Law; Georgetown Law & the Wharton School of Business

Is Shareholder Wealth Maximization a Decision-Making Procedure?

Aug 2022 Young Scholars Legal Research Workshop *

Corporate Punishment and the Limits of Stigma

Aug 2021 Legal Philosophy Workshop; Southeastern Association of Law Schools Annual Conference
Jul 2021 Crimfest! Annual Conference; Brooklyn Law School *
Jan 2021 Symposium: New Topics in Sentencing Theory; New Criminal Law Review *

What is the SEC Doing If Not Punishing Bad Actors?

Aug 2021 Academy of Legal Studies in Business Annual Conference *
Jun 2021 National Business Law Scholars Conference; University of Tennessee Law School *

Corporate Criminal Law is Too Broad—Worse, It's Too Narrow

Jan 2021 Works in Progress Panel; Criminal Justice Section, American Association of Law Schools *
Oct 2020 Normative Business Ethics Workshop; Carol and Lawrence Zicklin Center for Business Ethics Research, Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania *
Aug 2020 Academy of Legal Studies in Business Annual Conference *
July 2020 Crimfest! Annual Conference; Cardozo School of Law *
Jun 2020 National Business Law Scholars Conference; University of Tennessee Law School *

* *Virtual event*

- Feb 2020 Big Ten & Friends Colloquium; University of Indiana Kelley School of Business
- Jan 2020 Blue Bag Lunch Series; University of Michigan Center on Finance, Law, and Policy
- Aug 2019 Legal Philosophy Workshop; Southeastern Association of Law Schools Annual Conference
- Stakeholder Governance Through Corporate Punishment*
- Jun 2020 Junior Scholars in Legal Studies Series; University of Georgia Terry College of Business *
- Jun 2020 National Business Law Scholars Conference; University of Tennessee Law School *
- Aug 2019 Academy of Legal Studies in Business Annual Conference
- July 2019 Criminal Law and Theory Workshop; University of Toronto Faculty of Law
- Towards a Political Philosophy of Corporate Crime*
- Jul 2019 Crimfest! Annual Conference; Brooklyn Law School
- Jul 2019 Criminal Law and Theory Workshop; University of Toronto Faculty of Law
- Incapacitating Criminal Corporations*
- Jan 2019 Faculty Workshop; University of Michigan Ross School of Business
- Dec 2018 Faculty Workshop; University of South Carolina Law School
- Dec 2018 Criminal Law and Corporate Theory Workshop; University of Iowa Law School
- Nov 2018 Faculty Workshop; University of Wyoming School of Law School
- Aug 2018 Prospective Faculty Workshop; Southeastern Association of Law Schools Annual Conference
- Jun 2018 National Conference of Business Law Scholars; University of Georgia Law School
- Jan 2018 Junior Faculty Law Workshop; New England School of Law
- Criminal Persons and Moral Agents*
- Nov 2018 Symposium: Ethics of Corporate Moral Agency; Institute for Study of Markets and Ethics, Georgetown University McDonough School of Business
- Fictionalism About Corporations*
- Jul 2022 Legal Philosophy Workshop; Southeastern Association of Law Schools Annual Conference
- May 2018 Symposium on Multinational Entities; American Society of International Law
- Oct 2017 Corporate Personhood Workshop; University of Iowa Law School
- June 2017 National Conference of Business Law Scholars; University of Utah Law School
- How and Why Corporations Became Persons Under the Criminal Law*
- Dec 2016 Faculty Workshop; Boston University School of Law
- Nov 2016 Faculty Workshop; Villanova University Charles Widger School of Law
- Aug 2016 Workshop, Institute for the Study of Markets and Ethics; Georgetown University McDonough School of Business
- The Ability and Responsibility of Corporate Law to Improve Criminal Fines*
- Jun 2016 National Conference of Business Law Scholars; University of Chicago Law School
- Nov 2015 Faculty Workshop; Wharton School of Business
- Does the State Have an Obligation Not to Obey the Law?*
- Oct 2015 IPSA/SciencesPo Joint Conference; Paris Institute of Political Studies

SELECTED MEDIA COVERAGE

COMMENTARY ON TRUMP ORGANIZATION, PRESIDENT TRUMP

- Sep 2022 Michael R. Sisak & Larry Neumeister., *'Art of the Steal' Trump Accused of Vast Fraud in NY Suit*, ASSOCIATED PRESS, Sep. 22, 2022 ([link](#))
- Sep 2022 Rick Newman, *Why New York State is Suing Trump Instead of Charging Him With Crimes*, YAHOO! FINANCE, Sep. 23, 2022 ([link](#))
- Jan 2022 Michael R. Sisak et al., *A Fraud Case Against Trump? Not a Slam Dunk, Experts Say*, ASSOCIATED PRESS, Jan. 20, 2022 ([link](#))
- Jul 2021 Katherine Bang, *Trump Organization & Allen Weisselberg Indicted on Tax Fraud Charges*, PUBLIC RADIO BUSAN, July 6, 2021 ([link](#))
- Jul 2021 Chris Megerian et al., *Prosecutors: Trump Organization and CFO Allen Weisselberg Dodged Taxes for 15 Years*, L.A. TIMES, July 1, 2021 ([link](#))
- Jul 2021 Rebecca Jarvis, *Trump Organization, CFO Facing Criminal Charges*, ABC WORLD NEWS TONIGHT, July 1, 2021
- Jul 2021 Kris Reyes, *Trump Organization and Its Chief Financial Officer Indicted on Tax Fraud Charges*, CBC NEWS: THE NATIONAL, July 1, 2021 ([link](#))
- Jun 2021 Chris Megerian & Del Wilber, *What Could Happen to Donald Trump's Company If It's Indicted?*, L.A. TIMES, June 30, 2021 ([link](#))
- Jan 2021 Mihailis Diamantis & Will Thomas, Opinion, *The Impeachment Trial Doesn't Have to Be Pointless—Provided It's Not All About Trump*, THE HILL, Feb. 9, 2021 ([link](#))

COMMENTARY ON CORPORATE AND WHITE-COLLAR CRIME

- Oct 2022 Nick Muscavage, *DOJ Talks Tough After Enforcement Ticks Down*, FIN. TIMES AGENDA, Oct. 3, 2022 ([link](#))
- Aug 2022 Lateshia Beachum, *Visa Could Be Liable in Suit Over Child Sexual Abuse Material on Pornhub, Other Sites*, WASH. POST, Aug. 1, 2022 ([link](#))
- Mar 2022 Aaron Pressman, *Bizarre Harassment of Natick Couple by eBay was 'Clearly Criminal,' Company Admitted*, BOSTON GLOBE, Mar. 17, 2022 ([link](#))
- Jun 2020 Will Thomas, Opinion, *PG&E's Conviction Takes Corporate Crime Seriously—Its Punishment Doesn't*, THE HILL, June 20, 2020 ([link](#))
- Mar 2020 Katherine Blunt, *PG&E to Plead Guilty to Involuntary Manslaughter Charges in Deadly California Wildfire*, WALL ST. J., Mar 23, 2020 ([link](#))
- Feb 2020 Michael Hobbs, *The Golden Age of White-Collar Crime*, HUFFINGTON POST, Feb. 10, 2020 ([link](#))

COVERAGE OF ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIP

- Sep 2022 Jeff Karoub, *Allegations in NY Civil Suit Against Trump Detailed, Though Delays Likely*, MICH. ROSS FACULTY NEWS & RESEARCH, Sep. 29, 2022 ([link](#))
- Aug 2022 Featured Guest, In Lieu of Fun Podcast, AUG. 1, 2022 ([link](#))
- Oct 2021 Bob Needham, *There's No Such Thing as Corporate Criminal Law, Michigan Ross Professor Says*, MICH. ROSS FACULTY NEWS & RESEARCH, Oct. 21, 2021 ([link](#))
- Oct 2021 *Corporate Criminal Law Doesn't Exist*, CORPORATE CRIME REPORTER, Oct. 12, 2021 ([link](#))
- Jul 2021 Russell Mokhier, *To Strengthen Corporate Criminal Law, Get Rid of the Doctrine of Respondeat Superior*, CORPORATE CRIME REPORTER, July 26, 2021 ([link](#))

- Mar 2021 Bob Needham, *We Need a New Approach to Corporate Crime, Ross Professor Argues*, MICH. ROSS FACULTY NEWS & RESEARCH, Mar. 9, 2021 ([link](#))
- Apr 2020 Australian Law Reform Commission, Final Report: Corporate Criminal Responsibility, Apr. 1, 2020 ([link](#))
- Feb 2019 Russell Mokhier, *William Robert Thomas on Rehabilitating Corporate Retribution and Incapacitation*, CORPORATE CRIME REPORTER, FEB. 5, 2019 ([link](#))

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- 2015–17 CLEARY GOTTlieb STEEN & HAMILTON LLP
Associate, Corporate and White-Collar Investigations
- 2013–15 OFFICE OF THE FEDERAL PUBLIC DEFENDER
Appellate Litigation Fellow to the Northern District of Ohio
- 2012–13 U.S. COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE SIXTH CIRCUIT
Law Clerk to the Honorable Karen Nelson Moore
- 2007–08 THE HUFFINGTON POST
Political Reporter; Associate Editor
- 2006–07 TALKING POINTS MEMO
Front Page Editor; Investigative Researcher

ACADEMIC SERVICE

- SERVICE TO MICHIGAN ROSS SCHOOL OF BUSINESS
- 2022– Area Representative, Community Values Committee
- 2021– Course Coordinator, Business Law & Ethics (BL 300)
RIS Representative, Business Law & Ethics (BL 300)
- 2021 Keynote Speaker, Ross All Access Weekend
- 2019– Affiliated Research Fellow, University of Michigan Center on Finance, Law, and Policy

EXTERNAL SERVICE

- 2021– Founder & Lead Organizer, Junior Scholars Legal Research Workshop ([link](#))
National organization formed to provide a supporting research environment for pre-tenure legal scholars. Responsible for hosting three seminar series per year for 25+ participants.
- recurring* *Ad hoc* Reviewer, CRIMINAL LAW AND PHILOSOPHY (2021), ISRAEL LAW REVIEW (2022), JOURNAL OF MANAGEMENT REVIEW (2019, 2020), SYNTHESIS (2021)

TEACHING

- UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN, STEPHEN M. ROSS SCHOOL OF BUSINESS
- 2022– Business Law and Ethics (BL 533), OMBA Program
- 2019– Business Law and Ethics (BL 300), BBA Program
- HARVARD LAW SCHOOL
- 2018 Theories of Punishment (reading group)

- 2017–19 First Year Legal Research & Writing
- UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN, PHILOSOPHY DEPARTMENT
- 2014 Contemporary Moral Problems: The Corporation and Society
- 2014 Types of Philosophy (graduate student instructor w/ V. Caston)
- 2012 Introduction to Moral Principles and Problems
- 2010 Introduction to Informal Logic (graduate student instructor w/ D. Jacobson)

SELECTED HONORS

- 2013–15 Rackham Graduate School Dissertation Fellowship
- 2012 Order of the Coif
- 2012 Allan Lewis Kaufman Award (selected by faculty for best student publication)
- 2010–12 Executive Articles Editor, *Michigan Law Review*
- 2010–11 Coordinator, Henry M. Campbell Moot Court Competition (selected by faculty)
- 2010–11 Center for Ethics in Public Life Predoctoral Fellowship (university-wide)
- 2011 Raymond K. and John R. Dykema Scholarship Award (selected by faculty)
- 2008–15 University of Michigan Philosophy Department Fellowship