

# First International Conference of

## Center for Death Penalty Studies at Lamar University

### First International Annual Conference

# The Future of Death Penalty

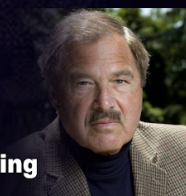
April 12  
2022



Lamar University  
Center for Death Penalty Studies  
Keynote Speakers & Organizers:



**Dr. Sanaz Alasti**  
Director of Center  
for Death Penalty Studies



**Professor Franklin Zimring**  
UC Berkeley Law School



**Amir Fakhravar, JD**  
Senate Chairman  
National Iranian Congress



**Dr. Brenda Nichols**  
Provost & Vice President  
of Academic Affairs



**Dr. Lynn Maurer**  
Dean of College  
of Arts & Sciences



**Dr. Stuart Wright**  
Chair of Department of  
Sociology and Criminal Justice



**Dr. Jim Mann**  
Associate Professor of  
Criminal Justice & Ombudsman



**Dr. Stefan Andrei**  
Chair of Computer Science  
Department

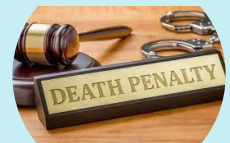
**Speakers**

Dr. Cheng-Hsien Lin  
Justice Manmohan Singh  
Krishna Sarma  
Shadi Rasadi  
Vanina Sucharitskul  
Jesse Dolron  
Dr. Mitchell Roth  
Raphael Chenail-Hazan  
Abraham J. Bonowitz  
Dr. Stefan Andrei  
Ali Abuzaid  
Stephen Reeves  
Sergey Dikman  
Dr. Patricia Stuewe  
Mathijssen-  
Rigoberto Paredes  
Dr. Andrew Novak  
Nick Bell  
Dr. Jimmy Bryan  
Kennedy Ratcliff  
Michael Laurence  
Ana Otero  
Dr. Vidisha Worley  
Tessie Castillo  
Terry Robinson  
Dr. Talla Harmon  
Dr. Corina Schulze  
Dr. Gavin Lee  
Sister Misty Kain  
Chris Castillo  
Karen Roebuck  
Mark Broome  
Sarah Scott

Mary and John Gray Library  
10AM to 5PM



**Keynote Speaker:**  
**Professor**  
**Franklin Zimring,**  
**UC Berkeley Law**  
**Professor and**  
**Pioneer**  
**Criminologist**



**"The Long  
Goodbye of State  
Execution in the  
American  
Federal System"**



**The speakers  
stated their  
opinions on either  
their support for  
abolition or the  
use of death  
penalty.**

THE CONFERENCE ACHIEVEMENTS

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SUMMARY OF PANELS

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LIST OF SPEAKERS

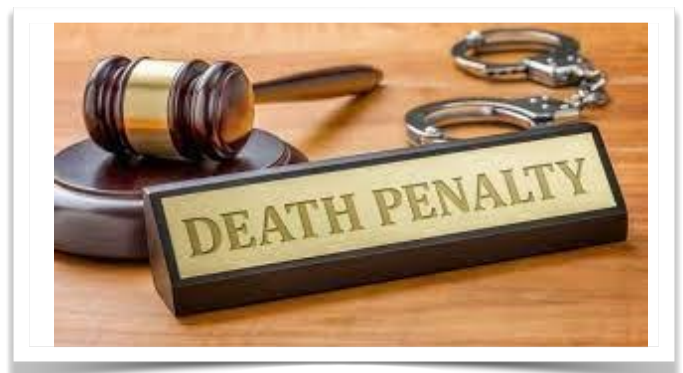
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## The Future of Death Penalty

### LU Center for Death Penalty Studies hosts first international conference

On Tuesday, April 12, the LU Center for Death Penalty Studies hosts its first international conference that embodies this year's theme: "The Future of the Death Penalty." The Center for Death Penalty Studies, based within the LU Criminal Justice Department, was founded in 2013 by Dr. Alasti and Dr. Eric Bronson, director of Strategic Planning and Development.

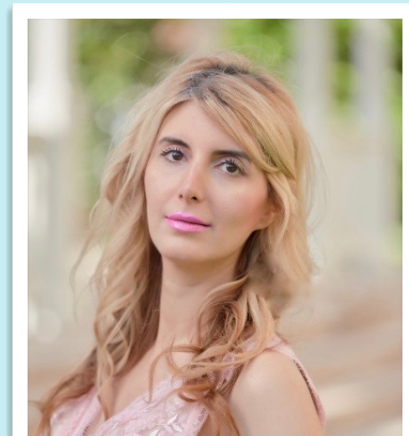
Since its establishment, the center has worked on a wide range of projects around the world and the 2022 Center for Death Penalty Studies Annual Conference brought together politicians, activists, lawyers, researchers and communities to focus on death penalty research and cases. "This conference was the first annual meeting of the center and it happened here at Lamar University," Alasti said. The keynote speaker for this year's conference was Franklin Zimring, professor and pioneer in the



field of death penalty studies at University of California, Berkeley, School of Law. "We were able to bring in famous criminologist Franklin Zimring and in addition to our keynote speaker, we also have a series of great speakers across the board — some come from Europe and some from other states to attend the conference. Each of our speakers talks about the death penalty and share their experience of using this punishment in their country or state. At the end of this conference, we hope that when our participants leave, they feel like, 'ok, this punishment is necessary for the society,' or, 'no, this punishment is not necessary.' The conference, was open to the public, and it was hosted on Tuesday, April 12 at 10 a.m. on the 8th floor of the Mary and John Gray Library.

### A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF CENTER FOR DEATH PENALTY STUDIES

"Texas has the highest rate of executions and death penalty rates compared to other states. Our center here at LU is to educate our students and others on the death penalty and whether it is an effective punishment or not." "This conference is not one-sided -- we are not working to persuade anyone one way or the other. We are considering both sides - whether to retain this punishment in the criminal justice system or to abolish it - and we want to spark conversation among our attendees." The keynote speaker for this year's conference is Franklin Zimring, professor and pioneer in the field of death penalty studies at University of California, Berkeley, School of Law.





# Welcome & Opening Remarks by Lamar Administration

**Dr. Brenda Nichols**  
Provost & Vice President of  
Academic Affairs

**Dr. Lynn Maurer,**  
Dean of College of Arts &  
Sciences

**Dr. Stuart Wright,**  
Chair of Department of  
Sociology, Criminal Justice &  
Social Work

**Dr. Cheng-Hsien Lin,**  
Director of Criminal Justice  
Program

**Dr. Stefan Andrei**  
Chair of Computer Science  
Department & Professor of  
Computer Science



**Panel 1 A: 10:45 am – 12:15 pm, Plummer Room**

## **Deadly Justice: Death Penalty in India, Iran, Thailand and Saudi Arabia**



Dr. Sanaz Alasti, the moderator, explained the key differences between the use of the death penalty in Islamic criminal justice systems and secular criminal justice systems. In Islamic criminal justice systems, the first difference is that there are different levels of punishment for the types of crimes committed. There are prescribed punishments (Hudud), retaliation (Qisas), and discretionary punishments (Taazir). The second major difference is the use of the mandatory death penalty in Islamic criminal justice systems.

Another huge difference is the execution methods used; therefore, the Islamic criminal justice system methods are much harsher. The fourth big difference is the number of capital crimes, such as a variety of capital crimes for non-serious crimes. Also, In Islamic criminal justice systems, there is not any proportionality between crime and punishment. Another issue is the violation of human rights in Islamic criminal justice systems. To abolish the death penalty, Islamic countries must change their entire legal system.

The next speaker was Justice Manmohan Singh. He is a Chairman & Retired Judge of High Court of Delhi. His presentation spoke about the Death Penalty in India. The abolition of the death penalty is one of the most controversial arguments in India. The main execution method used in India is hanging by the neck. The death penalty often results in injustice. Justice Singh believes that the death penalty should be eliminated in India. The third speaker was Krishna Sarma, who is an Attorney at Law in India.





Her presentation was based on The Extant of Substantive Law and the Development of Jurisprudence on Death Penalty in India. Krishna believes that the death penalty should be abolished in India as well. The founding fathers of the Constitution of India were against the death penalty. Capital punishment is mostly used for aggravating circumstances, with life imprisonment being the first choice. The states have different laws and provisions under the death penalty. Five different judgments were shown to expose whether the death penalty is unconstitutional, and if it also took away the fundamental rights of a human being. All types of reformatory efforts are extremely important. Lethal injection should be used rather than botched hangings, in India. There is a law commission report for the abolition of the death penalty in India.

The fourth speaker was Shadi Rasadi, who is a capital defense attorney in Tehran, Iran. Her presentation was based on Death Penalty for Murder: Qisas (Retaliation) and forgiveness in Iran. She spoke about an intentional murder in Iran and the retaliation that followed. Based on Iran's Penal Code when a murder is intentional, the criminal is eligible for the death penalty. In this case presented a murderer was charged with the death penalty. According to Islamic law, the family of the victim can either choose the death penalty for the defendant or blood money as the punishment. Blood money is paying the victim's family for the crime, the money amount is decided in the court. Discrimination in Iran is also touched on. If a father or the grandfather is the murderer; there is no retaliation including the death penalty. The blood money for women is also half of a men. In Islamic law there is much forgiveness for the death penalty. The Penal Code of Iran has private rights that leaves the punishment of forgiveness of the murderer up to the victim's family.

Lastly, Vanina Sucharitkul, who is a lecturer at L'Université Paris Descartes (Paris V) and Attorney at Law in California spoke about Capital Punishment in Monarchy of Thailand. Capital punishment in Thailand started in 1352, then in 1435 offenses punishable by death expanded. The torture era in Thailand also began in 1435, which included the cracking of the skull and filling it with hot water, allowing starving dogs to attack you, and much more. In 1908 beheading was the sole method of execution. In 1934 beheading was declared inhuman. Execution was banned for 9 years, until lethal injection was deemed humane for executions. The kingdom of Thailand continues the death penalty with their royal pardon.

## Panel 1 B: 10:45 am – 12 pm, Lamar Room

### The Future and the Past of the Death Penalty in Asia, Europe, Middle East and the United States



This panel was on the future and the past of the death penalty in Asia, Europe, Middle East and the United States. The moderator for this room was Dr. Mitchel P. Roth (Professor of Criminal Justice at Sam Houston State University). Dr. Roth was also the speaker for the Death Penalty in China. He gave a historical overview of crime and punishment in China. He also talked about how it is significantly easier to deal with their criminal justice system if you are an upper-class citizen rather than someone from the bottom of the social ladder.

Another key point in his discussion was how centuries ago in China if women were to kill their husband, it would be an automatic death sentence. Now, instead of a death sentence, they will receive life in prison.

The next speaker was Raphael Chenuil-Hazan (Executive Director ECPM - Together Against the Death Penalty and President-Founder PDH - French Platform for Human Rights, Paris, France). He briefly gave the audience information about his organization against the death penalty. He explained how twenty years ago it was very difficult to talk about abolition in most countries rather than today.

The third speaker, Ali Abuzaid, (LLB, Omar Al- Mukhtar University, Al-Bayada, Libya; LLM, Criminal Law Institution of Libyan Academy, Tripoli, Libya) talked about the death penalty in Libya. Abuzaid also told the audience about the story of Qisas and Diyat. After explaining the differences between Qisas and Diyat, Abuzaid concluded with explaining how the laws on the death penalty have changed over the years.



The final speaker, Stephen Reeves, (Executive Director of Fellowship Southwest and Director of Advocacy for the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, Austin TX) gave a religious perspective on the death penalty. In his discussion, he explains how the majority of his career has been in between faith and public policy. He has one foot in the church and another as a registered lobbyist in Austin, Texas and Washington, D.C. Being on the opposition of the death penalty, his goal is to promote compassion and justice around the country. Reeves stated that his motivation for being on the opposition of the death penalty came from reading “Dead Man Walking” by sister Helen Prejean as an undergraduate student. He concluded his discussion by stating the majority of Christians in the Southern United States are for the death penalty which contradicts the 6th Commandment: thou shalt not kill.



## Keynote Presentation & Lunch, 12:10pm–1:10pm, Spindletop Room

### Professor Franklin Zimring



The keynote speaker for the first annual conference of Center for Death Penalty Studies at Lamar University, was Professor Franklin Zimring. He is a pioneer American criminologist and a law professor at the UC Berkeley School of Law. The title of his presentation was “The Long Goodbye of State Execution in the American Federal System.” Professor Zimring emphasized the strenuous era that capital punishment has faced in the United State since the dawn of the twenty-first century.

There is inspiration behind capital punishment in the United States as well as lack of harmony regarding the efforts set in place to put an end to capital punishment. He made several points about executions in the country and the history behind them. In the last century there have been fifty executions led by the federal government. Sixteen of the executions were by former president Donald Trump. The annual volume of executions has dramatically decreased since the turn of the 21st century. In 2021 there were eleven executions. Only three of these executions were performed by the federal government. Compared to the United States, in 2000 Texas alone had forty executions. This is much more compared to the 11 executions conducted in 2021. In comparison, California has not executed anyone in over sixteen years. Since COVID in 2020, only seven of the fifty states have made a death sentence execution. These numbers show significant growth in the battle against capital punishment. This form of punishment is seen as inhumane, unpredictable, and disgusting.

Professor Zimring also made note of the legal struggles of the death penalty. It continues to be a multi-billion dollar public expense in both federal and state courts. He stated that capital punishment is a “deadly dance for people in a very unprincipled way.” He also proposed two important questions regarding the death penalty during his presentation, “why do executions persist in this country and why so few?” He stated that capital punishment was not in danger of failing, but that it had already failed, and its failure was widely recognized. Nearly everyone agrees that the current punishment systems that are in place in the United States, are unethical as well as expensive.





Nearly everyone agrees that the current punishment systems that are in place in the United States, are unethical as well as expensive. Even though there does not seem to be a realistic plan to reform the mess in the country, there have been efforts set in motion for the future. Professor Zimring said that 2022 was the “begin of the endgame for capital punishment in the United States”. Although no one may have a clear answer as to how long this struggle will be or what acts of government will bring a failed system to an end, it is clear there is a wave of reform for the future.

The question then shifts is focus from whether or not capital punishment will be abolished, to rather when. This discussion of when and how is a set of many questions and possibilities. Capital punishment does not seem to be instituted on any states, lately, but rather abolished. It seems like the only thing that sustains the practice of state executions is traditional beliefs. This is a subject matter that needs to be addressed. Professor Zimring ended his presentation by stating that the death penalty would not go quietly in the U.S. It is a lengthy battle that is waiting to be overcome.





## Panel 2-A 1:20 pm – 2:40 pm - Plummer Room

### Abolition Challenges in Europe, Oceania and South America

Panel 2A discussed abolition challenges in Europe, Oceania and South America. The presenters in this panel included Sergey Dikman, Dr. Patricia Stuewe-Mathijssen, Dr. Hakan Can, Rigoberto Paredes, Dr. Andrew Novak and Nick Bell. The moderator was Raphael Chenuil-Hazan, Executive Director of ECPM.

Sergey Dikman was one of the speakers in the death penalty conference, he is the head of innovation of development unit, focal point of the death penalty matters, directorate general of human rights and rule of law, and also part of the council of Europe. In his speech at the conference he talks about how Europe has played a huge pioneer role in the abolishment in the death penalty. And for the most part Europe is a death penalty free all except for Belarus. With the efforts of the European court of human rights and himself, he continues to work to promote the abolishment of the death penalty beyond European borders. Dr. Patricia Stuewe- Mathijssen is a German trial lawyer and is also a senior partner practicing criminal and civil law in the vicinity of Frankfurt/Main. At the death penalty conference, she talks about the history of Germany and how they view the death penalty currently. She gave us a fresh idea on how Germany views the death penalty and also gives examples on how both sides of the argument are justifiable.

Dr. Hakan Can is the former Chief Superintendent at the Turkish National Police and currently resides as a professor of criminal justice at Pennsylvania State University. Dr. Can discussed the abolition of the death penalty in Turkey. Turkey chose to abolish the death penalty to gain membership into the Council of Europe. President Erdogan has stated he supports the return of the death penalty. However, protocols 6 and 13 of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms prevents the death penalty from coming back to Turkey. Rigoberto Paredes is a criminal defense attorney in Bolivia. He discussed the state of the death penalty in Bolivia and other South American and Latin American countries. In rural areas of Bolivia and other South American countries, “community justice” is used to punish perpetrators. This involves lynching, and burning to death. However, urban areas of South America respect the law and do not use the death penalty.

Dr. Andrew Novak is an assistant professor of criminology, law and society at George Mason University. He discussed the abolition of the death penalty in Papua New Guinea and the future of the death penalty in the South Pacific.



In Dr. Novak's paper, with Daniel Pascoe, he uses a comparative method to explain why Papua New Guinea and the Tonga took a different route with the death penalty compared to their seven neighboring countries who abolished the death penalty decades ago.

Nick Bell explained the abolition of the death penalty in Switzerland, and he discussed Lifespark organization. This organization is a non-profit organization that stands firmly against the death penalty.

They do this by arranging penpalships with death row inmates in the United States of America. The goal is to offer companionship and a means to exchange with the outside world. Lifespark also financially supports other organizations that are against the death penalty.





## Panel 2-B 1:20 pm – 2:40 pm - Lamar Room

### Capital Punishment in Texas, California & Beyond



This panel was on capital punishment in the United States and mainly about the use of death penalty in Texas and California. The moderator for this room was Dr. Jimmy Bryan (Professor of History at Lamar University). The first panelist was Kennedy Ratcliff, former Graduate student of Criminal justice department at Lamar University. In her presentation she talked about the death penalty in Texas. Kennedy explained out of all fifty states in the United States, Texas incorporates the death penalty the most, exceedingly more than the other “tough on crime” states. This presentation then discusses why Texas executes so many people, and there are a number of possible reasons why. It then concludes with the recent declining rate of executions in Texas and the reasons for that.

The next speaker was Michael Laurence, Capital Defense Attorney in California & Former Executive Director of the Habeas Corpus Resource Center in San Francisco. He said since 1972, when the Supreme Court in *Furman v. Georgia* invalidated existing capital punishment statutes, the Court has insisted that capital punishment (1) must be narrowly confined to a circumscribed set of murderers (“The worst of the worst”), and (2) may not be imposed in an arbitrary manner. Mr. Laurence explained how he has examined whether California’s death penalty scheme complies with these requirements by analyzing 27,453 California murder and voluntary manslaughter convictions. He found that, contrary to the narrowing requirement, the death-eligibility rate among California homicide cases is the highest in the nation; indeed, 95% of all first-degree murder convictions were death eligible under California’s statute. Equally important, a death sentence is imposed in only a small fraction of the death-eligible cases; California death sentencing rate of 4.4% among all death-eligible cases is among the lowest in the nation. Mr. Laurence discussed the legal and political ramifications of these findings.



Dr. Ana Otero, Law Professor at Thurgood Marshal Law School in Houston talked about her recent article on “Bobby James Moore case. She said Bobby was a capital defendant with intellectual disability sentenced to death in Texas in 1980 and released on parole in 2020. She examine the endemic flaws of the Texas capital punishment system that directly impacted his case, including ineffective assistance of counsel, racism, and political entrenchment of the Texas courts. The United States Supreme Court ruled on Moore’s case twice, both times admonishing the CCA for its refusal to abide by current scientific methods in the assessment of intellectual disability. She discussed about the landmark legal decisions during this 40-year span that invariably affected the outcome of his case and the ultimate impact the case has had on death row defendants with intellectual disability in our country, but particularly in Texas.

The last speaker was Dr. Charles MacLean, Associate Professor of Criminal Justice at Metropolitan State University in Minnesota. He talked about the Roberts Court’s Devolving Standards of Capital Punishment Decency. The Supreme Court has emphasized that the death penalty must not be arbitrarily imposed and must be reserved for a narrow category of offenders: the “worst of the worst.” However, the Supreme Court, lower courts, and legislatures have not yet identified with precision the factors relevant to who is – and what constitutes – the “worst of the worst.”

Thus, the death penalty continues to be imposed arbitrarily and disproportionately on the basis of race and socioeconomics, sentencing to death the “unluckiest of the unluckiest” not the “worst of the worst.” This presentation (1) described the Roberts Court’s recent death penalty record as elevating the Court majority’s “devolving standards of decency” over the People’s “evolving standards of decency” trumpeted by the Court in 1958 , (2) discussed the fallacy of referring to the Court’s recent record as “jurisprudence,” and (3) proposed a path toward identifying who is the “worst of the worst”.





## Panel 3 A 2:45 pm – 4:10 pm - Plummer Room

### The American Death Penalty Attitudes: From Death Row Inmates to Discrimination in the Administration of the Death Penalty



The first speaker, Dr. Corina Schulze, Associate Professor of Criminal Justice of South Alabama discusses an empirical investigation about: What's so chivalrous about executing mothers? Her main points that she covers is; Gender & Criminal Justice, African American woman being over represented, Mellissa Celio the first female Latina to be executed, and the problems with the Espy study. Her presentation was a short briefing involving files and studies about woman being executing.

The Espy study she stated fails to account for the reality of women's lives/gendered contexts of executions. Another problem is that most cases only involve strippers and prostitutes or in other words "sex workers." The last problem with the Espy file is that most information is missing, misclassifications, misspellings, and several missing cases.

Others variables that she listed involving women being sentenced to death include: matricide/intimate partner homicide and maternal filicide, race and sexual orientation identity, region and time variables, and intellectual disabilities, mental health illness, and abuse history. She simply stated that women are overlooked and not seen as persons who commit crimes.

The second speaker was Dr. Talia Harmon. Her presentation was botched lethal injections. She mainly focused on Texas. She explains that lethal injections cause unnecessary pain and cruelty to the prisoner. Also, she explained that lethal injections have a higher botched rate than any other execution rate than any other execution method.

Dr. Harmon explained that she did a study on the 3 drug method vs. the 1 drug method. This study was done between 1982-2020. They wanted to see what the results were like. Some of the questions were did it hurt / sting, did you feel it, and if there was any occurrence or complications. The results could be related to the type of drug used and the way that the people administering the drug got it. Because she only focused on one state, Texas, her study was limited. Also, another limitation was they relied on media and news articles. Dr. Harmon helped us realize that maybe lethal injection is far worse than what it is described to be.

The final presentation was presented by Dr. Gavin Lee. He spoke about the future of the death penalty, a conversation with the experts. Now the term expert is vague. Anyone can say oh hey, they are an expert on xyz. He looked at the fact that the opinion of others is important. He says that many policy makers are ignorant to the facts of the death penalty.



What considers someone to be an expert? Well, they have to write at least 2 article, conduct a study in the U.S, email has to be able to be researched by google, has to be living and can't be a judge. These experts were asked if they thought that the death penalty is a deterrent.

Most of them didn't have an appetite for capital punishment and many were not supportive of the death penalty, and they didn't think it was a deterrent. Dr. Lee helped us understand that many people even experts don't have a clear understanding of what the death penalty entails.

## Lecture & Roundtable 1B 2:45pm 4:10pm - Lamar Room

### Lecture on Law Enforcement & the Death Penalty: 2:45 pm – 2:55 pm



This roundtable was centered around viewpoints regarding the death penalty. The panelist stated their opinions on either their support for abolition or the death penalty. The panelist used primarily personal testimonies yet offered great expertise and research to further elaborate on their viewpoint.

Dr. George Kain (police commissioner in Ridgefield and a professor of Justice and Law Administration of Western CT State University) discussed his support of the abolition of the death penalty. He discussed how he was originally a supporter of the death penalty and correlated how the police academy had a part in that position. Dr. Kain then elaborated the reason of his shift in opinion over the years and why he supports the abolition of the death penalty.

Chris Castillo (International Board of Journey of Hope from Violence to Healing and former National Organizer of Murder Victim's Families for Reconciliation) discussed his position in the International Board of Journey of Hope, as well as his experience and personal connection to the Murder Victim's Families for Reconciliation program. Chris Castillo explains that his mother died due to her being murdered, and how that shaped his opinion on the death penalty. To the surprise of many, he took a different route than seeking revenge. Instead, he is for the abolition of the death penalty.

Karen Roebuck (criminal justice professor at Lamar University & former Supervisor of United States Probation Officers in the Eastern District of Texas) discussed how she originally was for the death penalty due to the death of her best friend who was murdered. She explained how she wanted revenge for her friend but realized it wouldn't heal the wound she had. It would've only provided temporary satisfaction and she explained how capital punishment does not have a deterrent nor does it align with the goals of corrections.







Mark Broome (criminal justice professor at Lamar University & former Special Agent in the Federal Bureau of Investigation) explained how he discusses capital punishment in his classes and that it surprises him when he asks for students' opinions on the matter. He presents the question of their position on the death penalty. To his surprise, many hands go up in support of the death penalty. When he presents the possibility of an innocent person being tried, they still urge their support for the practice. He discusses how many do not believe in the inevitability of an innocent person being put to death.

Sister Misty Garriga (Diocesan Director of Criminal Justice Ministry) discussed her job towards rehabilitation of offenders, and how there should be more understanding of mitigating evidence so we can understand the offender's and where their mental state is.

Kennedy Ratcliff was one of the two student panelists. She was the only panelist who expressed her full support of the death penalty. She stated that she is pro-death penalty because the crimes that get the capital punishment charge are heinous. An eye for an eye ideology.

Sarah Scott was the other student panelist that discussed the necessary awareness of the many individuals who are falsely accused and their life after exoneration. She listed the various mental health issues derived from being in death row, and presented testimonies from people in death row that have claimed severe maltreatment. She reminds the audience that there is little to no compensation for exonerees and no repairing of the cognitive damage. Elaborating the inevitability of innocent people being charged and apprehended and the injustice within that alone.



## Closing Remarks & Award Ceremony 4:20 – 5 PM

### Spindletop Room

After a full day of listening to speakers from various countries, I have learned the different uses of the death penalty around the world. Amir Fakhravar provided the closing remarks of great importance on how governments can violate natural human rights. In his lecture *Abolition of the Death Penalty in the Constitutions*, Mr. Fakhravar provided a glimpse of the harsh punishments given to him from the Iranian government.



He was on death row for 14 months and tortured. This is known as “White Torture”, and his case was the first of this style recorded. His actions and those of his colleagues were not concurrent with the punishments received, some even put to death. He used those examples to show how the Iranian government uses violence and death to suppress those who speak against the ideals of the leaders in place. The experiences of Mr. Fakhravar and his colleagues have been recreated for others who speak up for their rights against Iran.

Everyone in America has heard of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness proposed by Thomas Jefferson. Yet Amir Fakhravar believes that life, liberty, and equality should be the statement for all nations. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights proposed by Eleanor Roosevelt objected to the unfair treatment and policies placed upon humans by national governments. Quickly, many nations understood that life and natural rights is of the utmost importance and abolished the death penalty. Currently fifty-five countries still use the death penalty as a form of punishment. The Iranian government is one of the fifty-five and has no issue with this, for their current constitution heavily references and enforces Sharia law. With the help of Mr. Fakhravar, a new constitution for Iran has been drafted free of religion and with great emphasis on life, liberty, and equality for all citizens.

Following Mr. Fakhravar’s speech, Lamar University and the Center for Death Penalty Studies recognized and awarded: Dr. Kevin Smith, former Associate Provost of Lamar University and Professor of Sociology, for his outstanding service and leadership. Dr. Brenda Nichols, Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs, for her exceptional service and leadership to the students at Lamar University. Sarah Scott (Junior) and JaCoby Brocks (Junior), Center for Death Penalty Studies students, for outstanding achievements and contributions to the conference.





Lastly, to Dr. Sanaz Alasti, Director of Center for Death Penalty Studies at Lamar University, was awarded for excellent leadership and development of the first annual conference for Death Penalty Studies.





## Conference Team Leaders & Event Managers

**Jacoby Brocks**

**Karen Campech-Flores**

**Robert Curewitz**

**Malori Douresseau**

**Amber Johnson**

**Melanie Ramirez**

**Sarah Scott**

**Madilynn Smith**

**Timothy Thomas**





# Countries, International Organizations and U.S. States Represented at the Conference





Professor Zimring, his wife and Michael Laurence attending the conference from San Francisco



Dr. Andrei & Dr. Lin listening to the keynote speaker



Dr. Smith (former associate provost) & his wife.



Dr. Nichols & Dr. Wright at the award ceremony.



Keynote presentation & Lunch



Dr. Alasti talks at the closing remarks

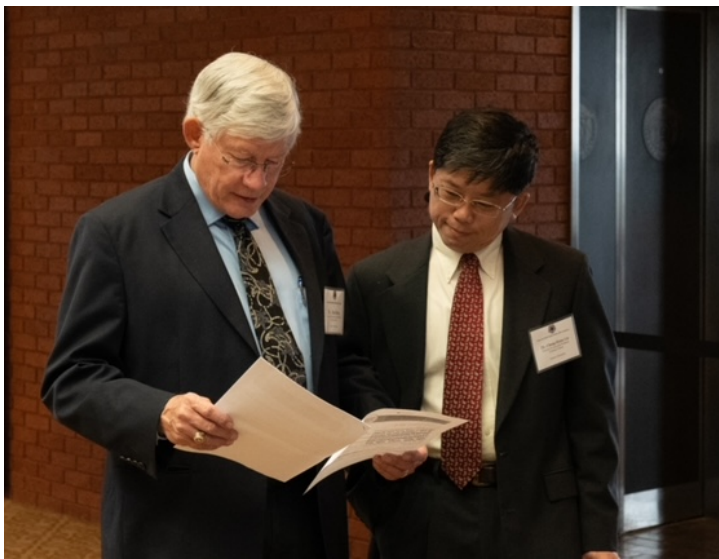




Dr. Alasti, Dr. Wright & student winner.



Amir Fakhrahar talks at the closing remarks.



Dr. Mann & Dr. Lin



Dr. Andrei talks at the lunch ceremony.



Sister Misty Garriga



Award ceremony





Award ceremony



Dr. Lin & Dr. Chang



Dr. Nichols receiving the award.



Sister Garriga & Jack Fitch



Dr. Smith talking at the award ceremony



Award ceremony





Dr. Roth, Dr. Wright & wife of Hank Skinner  
(death row inmate in Texas).



Dr. Kain, Professor Broome & Professor  
Roebuck

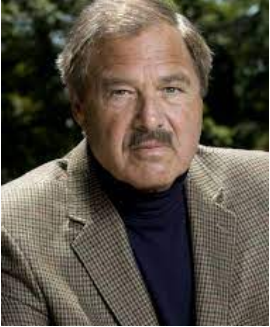


keynote presentation





# Keynote speaker, Speakers and Moderators Bio



**Professor Franklin Zimring** is the William G. Simon Professor of Law at the University of California at Berkeley. The main focus of his scholarly career has been the empirical study of crime and the institutions of criminal law and juvenile justice. Educated at Wayne State University and the University of Chicago, Professor Zimring became the only graduate of the Chicago Law School to be directly appointed to its faculty in 1967.

**Ali Abuzaid** received his LLB from Omar Al- Mukhtar University, Al- Bayada, Libya and his LLM in criminal law from Institution of Libyan Academy in Tripoli, Libya. He earned his master degree in criminal justice from Lamar University.

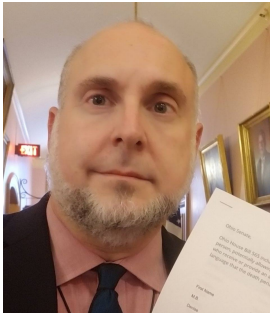


**Dr. Sanaz Alasti** is Associate Professor of Criminal Justice and Director of Center for Death Penalty Studies at Lamar University. Dr. She has completed her post-doctorate at Harvard Law School. Alasti has published seven books and several peer-reviewed articles on various aspects of the criminal justice system. She has researched, written about, and made presentations about the death penalty for the past 17 years. Dr. Alasti founded Center for Death Penalty Studies in 2013.

**Dr. Stefan Andrei** received his PhD from Hamburg University, Germany, in 2000 as a World Bank Scholarship Japan Graduate student. He was a recipient of a postdoctoral fellowship from Singapore-MIT Alliance between 2002 and 2005. He is currently a Professor and the Chair of Department of Computer Science with Lamar University. He has already been a co-author of more than 100 peer reviewed papers at international reputable journals and conferences.



**Professor Nick Bell** was a lecturer in English at the ZHAW in Winterthur and Wädenswil and has been investing his time in social projects since retirement. He was the former president and current board member of Lifespark Movement Against the Death Penalty in Switzerland. lifespark is a non-profit organization, founded in 1993, with no religious or political affiliation.



**Abraham J. Bonowitz**, Executive Director of Death Penalty Action, has been a leading abolitionist organizer since he changed his mind on the issue 30+ years ago. As Field Manager for New Jerseyans for Alternatives to the DP, in 2007 he helped pass the first post-Furman legislative repeal bill. He was also directly involved in the repeal victories in NM, IL and MD and to a lesser degree in CT, NE, NH, CO & VA.

**Professor Mark C. Broome** is a retired Special Agent of the Federal Bureau of Investigation having served the FBI for over 25 years. A native of Lubbock, Texas, Mr. Broome is a graduate of the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis where he received a B.S. degree in Naval Architecture. , Mr. Broome has served as an Instructor of Criminal Justice at Lamar University in Beaumont, Texas since 2015.



**Dr. Jimmy L. Bryan Jr.** is Professor of History and Director of the Center for Dr. History and Culture of Southeast Texas and the Upper Gulf Coast at Lamar University. He is most recently author of *The American Elsewhere: Adventure and Manliness in the Age of Expansion* (Kansas, 2017) and editor of *Inventing Destiny: Cultural Explorations of US Expansion* (Kansas, 2019).

**Dr. Hakan Can** began his career in law enforcement in 1984. He earned a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice and Law from the Police University in Ankara, Turkey and another in Political Science (International Politics) from Ankara University. During his 18 years in the police force, he worked with Interpol, Turkish National Central Bureau, Central Anti-Smuggling Department, Drugs sub-division, and Fiscal Crimes sub-division. Currently he is professor of criminal justice at Pennsylvania State University, Schuylkill.



**Chris Castillo** has worked as a reporter and a marketing specialist before taking a job with Murder Victim's Families for Reconciliation, where he created a dialogue with homicide survivors who were against the death penalty and showed an interested in speaking out against capital punishment. Chris is currently on the board of Journey of Hope: From Violence to Healing and served on a Restorative Justice Steering Committee for the Catholic Mobilizing Network.



**Tessie Castillo** is an author, journalist and public speaker who specializes in stories on prison reform, drug policy, restorative justice, and racial equity. She is the editor of *Crimson Letters: Voices from Death Row*, an original anthology of writings about the death penalty that features entries by Castillo as well as several current residents of North Carolina's Death Row.

**Raphael Chenuil-Hazan**, Executive Director ECPM - Together Against the Death Penalty and President-Founder PDH - French Platform for Human Rights. ECPM is the worldwide cornerstone organisation on the abolition of the death penalty, as founding member of the WCADP and organizer of the World Congresses Against the Death Penalty. Raphaël Chenuil-Hazan represents ECPM at the United Nations and develops an ongoing dialogue with ministers, diplomats and parliamentarians to advance abolitionist strategies.



**Sergey Dikman** is legal adviser/head of unit at the Council of Europe (Strasbourg, France). He has been working with the death penalty file since 2011, focusing on the efforts of its abolition in Belarus and monitoring the application of the capital punishment in European neighbourhood. Since 2021, he is the focal point on the death penalty matters at the Directorate General of Human Rights and Rule of Law.

**Professor Jesse Doiron** spent 13 years as an educational consultant in Europe, the Middle East, and Asia. At Lamar University, he has taught several literature and ethics courses focused on victims, criminals, and punishment. Jesse received the Texas Governor's Award for Restorative Justice and the Courage Award from the Texas Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty. He has been recognized by the Bureau of Prisons for his work at the Federal Correctional Complex – Beaumont.



**Professor Amir Fakhrafar** is an author and constitutional law scholar. He was an Iranian jailed dissident, award winning writer, and the recipient of the prestigious Annie Taylor Journalism Award. He is the Senate Chairman of National Iranian Congress. Fakhrafar serves as director of Iran Civil Society Outreach at the Center for the Study of Culture and Security at The Institute of World Politics.





**Sr. Misty Garriga** is the director of Criminal Justice for the Diocese of Beaumont and works with the death row inmates at the Polunsky unit in Livingston.

**Dr. Talia Roitberg Harmon** obtained her Ph.D. from the School of Criminal Justice at the State University of New York at Albany. She is currently a full professor and chair of the Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology at Niagara University. Her major research focus is on various issues surrounding the efficacy of capital punishment. She has published work on issues surrounding capital punishment including death qualification, capital commutations, wrongful convictions in capital cases, the current decline in death sentences, ineffective assistance of counsel and botched executions.



Since 1987, **Michael Laurence** has provided representation to death row inmates throughout the country in all levels of state and federal courts, including the United States Supreme Court. For seventeen years, he served as the Executive Director of the Habeas Corpus Resource Center, a California Judicial Branch agency representing death-row inmates in state and federal habeas proceedings. Since October 2015, he has been in private practice, providing assistance to capital defense attorneys nationwide.

**Dr. Gavin Lee** is an Associate Professor at the University of West Georgia. He has published on death penalty opinion and execution methods and has given invited lectures on the subject of capital punishment in the US and Europe. He also co-edited the Routledge Handbook of Capital Punishment with Robert Bohm.



**Dr. Cheng-Hsien Lin** is Associate Professor of Criminal Justice and Director of Criminal Justice Program at Lamar University. He obtained his Ph.D. from Department of Sociology of Texas A&M University in 2003 and his M.A. from Department of Sociology of San Diego State University in 1997. He has B.A. in Sociology from Catholic Fu Jen University in Taipei, Taiwan as well.



**Dr. George Kain** is a professor and former Chairman of the Justice and Law Administration (JLA) Division at Western CT State University in Danbury, CT (37 years) and a Police Commissioner in the Town of Ridgefield, CT (23 years). He has worked in the criminal justice system in various capacities for 40 years, and has been actively involved in the anti-death penalty movement for over 24 years.

Prior to arriving at Lamar University **Dr. Jim Mann** served as a Chief Psychologist with the several correctional institutions within the Federal Bureau of Prisons. At Lamar University he has actively been involved in teaching and doing research in corrections, forensic psychology, and criminal behavior. Currently, Dr. Mann is the Ombudsman for the university.



**Dr. Charles E. “Chuck” MacLean**, J.D., Ph.D., teaches Constitutional Law and Criminal Justice Ethics at Metropolitan State University in Minnesota and at the Eau Claire campus of the University of Wisconsin. He previously taught Death Penalty Seminars at the Duncan School of Law in Tennessee, submitted an amicus brief to the U.S. Supreme Court in *Hall v. Florida* (addressing executions of intellectually impaired defendants), and edited the book, *Perspectives on Capital Punishment in America* (2013).

**Dr. Lynn M. Maurer** serves as the Dean of Arts and Sciences. She leads the COAS Strategic Plan 2021-26 in Enrollment, Engaged Learning, Research, and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. She served as Dean of the College of Graduate and Professional Studies and Chief Research Officer at Indiana State University. She served at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville as Chair of Political Science, Associate Dean of the Graduate School, and Professor of Political Science. She earned the Ph.D. and M.A. in Comparative Politics of Europe at The Ohio State University, the B.A. in Spanish from Otterbein University in Spanish, and Certificat de Relations Internationales from l’Université de Dijon, Bourgogne.



**Dr. Brenda Nichols** is the Provost & Vice President of Academic Affairs at Lamar University. She was the former Dean of Arts & Sciences College. Dr. Nichols has previously served as Chair, School of Nursing at Old Dominion University and as Founding Dean, College of Health Sciences at Southern Cross University in Australia. She graduated from the University of Evansville and earned a doctoral degree from Indiana University in 1983.





**Dr. Andrew Novak** is Instructional Assistant Professor in the Department of Criminology, Law and Society, at George Mason University. He received his Juris Doctor from Boston University and his PhD in Law from Middlesex University. He is the editor, with Daniel Pascoe, of *Executive Clemency: Comparative and Empirical Perspectives* (Routledge 2021) and the author of *Transnational Human Rights Litigation* (Springer 2020).

**Ana Otero** is a law professor at Thurgood Marshall School of Law in Houston, Texas, and the former president of the Texas Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty. In addition, she teaches a Death Penalty Seminar, and her scholarship focuses on diverse issues of capital punishment.



**Rigoberto Parades** is Attorney at Law in Bolivia. He studied law at the Bolivian Catholic University. He was chosen beneficiary of the Fulbright Scholarship, pursuing his master's studies at University of New York obtaining the title of Master of Laws. He has a Diploma in Criminal Sciences from the University of Havana - Cuba. He has been a sponsor of criminal cases with national notoriety and has provided legal services in the criminal area to important public and private organizations.

**Shadi Rasadi**, Capital Defense Attorney, Tehran, Iran. She has received her LLB in Law from Tehran Azad University and her LLM in Civil law from Tehran Azad university. Shadi Rasadi is a member of Bar Association in Iran. She has practiced criminal law for 18 years in Iran and she has represented several death row inmates.



**Kennedy Suzette Ratcliff** received her BS in criminal justice from Lamar University in December 2020 and received her MS in criminal justice from Lamar University in December 2021. She is currently applying to criminal justice PhD programs in Texas. Kennedy is interested in all things criminal justice, but her particular research interests include terrorism and women in criminal justice.



**Stephen K. Reeves** serves as Executive Director of Fellowship Southwest and director of advocacy for the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. He is the co-author of *The Mission of Advocacy: A toolkit for congregations*. He previously served as Director of Public Policy for the Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission and as Staff Attorney for the Baptist Joint Committee in Washington, D.C. He is a member of the State Bar of Texas, a graduate of UT Austin, and Texas Tech School of Law.

**Terry Robinson**, also known as Chanton, is a writer incarcerated on North Carolina's Death Row and a coauthor of *Crimson Letters: Voices from Death Row*. Incarcerated since 2000, he uses his writing to tear down the walls meant to restrict and deter the expression of his humanity. His work is featured on the blog *Walk in Those Shoes*, where he is also an active member of the nonprofit organization.



**Professor Karen Roebuck** is instructor of criminal justice at Lamar University. She has been a probation officer and she has supervised probation officers since 1994 in Eastern District of Texas.

**Dr. Mitchel P. Roth** is a Professor of Criminal Justice at Sam Houston State University. He has written dozens of articles and many books on a variety of topics. He has been an instructor at the Zhejiang Police College from 2009 to 2019 and at the International Law Enforcement Academy (Roswell) from 2001-2009. Roth has appeared on or been featured on the Travel Channel, CNN, FOX, Al Jazeera, the History Channel, PBS and other media programs. In 2020 Dr. Roth was awarded the Frederic Milton Thrasher for excellence in gang research.



**Krishna Sarma** is the Managing Partner of Corporate Law Group (CLG), a New Delhi based Indian law firm. She joined the Bar in Delhi in 1993. She has a Bachelor's degree in law from University of Delhi, India. Krishna was Additional Advocate General for the State of Assam in the Supreme Court of India from 2011 till 2016 and her firm was Standing Counsels from 2001-2016. In this role, she has dealt with many aspects of criminal law such as death penalties, life imprisonments and under trials.





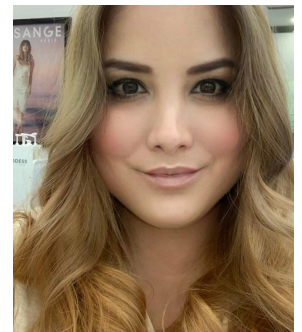
**Dr. Corina Schulze** is an Associate Professor at the University of South Alabama in the Department of Political Science & Criminal Justice. There, she teaches courses in Gender & Criminal Justice, Research Methods, and Race, Gender, & Politics. With her co-authors Drs. Koon-Magnin and Bryan, she has recently published the book *Gender Identity, Sexual Orientation, and Sexual Assault: Challenging the myths*.

**Justice Manmohan Singh** started his career as an intellectual property rights (IPR) attorney on August 12th, 1980. Over 500 of his cases have been reported in law journals. On April 11th, 2008, he became a Judge of the Delhi High Court. On September 21st, 2016, he became the chairman of the Appellate Tribunal (Prevention of Money Laundering Act), and on January 1st, 2018, took over as the Chairman of the Intellectual Property Appellate Board in India.



**Dr. Patricia Stuewe-Mathijssen, LL.M.**, is a German trial lawyer and as a senior partner practising criminal and civil law in the vicinity of Frankfurt/Main, Germany. Her research is concentrated on the relationship between liberty and safety, especially in the light of the ubiquitous threat of terrorism. she is furthermore the President of the House and Landowners Association Seligenstadt, concentrating on the development and implementation of tenancy law.

**Dr. Vanina Sucharitkul** is an international arbitrator and Senior Lecturer at University of Paris Descartes and has previously taught International Criminal Law at the Dr. Sompong Sucharitkul Center for International Legal Studies, Golden Gate University School of Law. Vanina completed her LL.M. thesis on Capital Punishment in Thailand and California and the Implementation of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations on Foreigners Convicted of Capital Crimes and undertook a death penalty seminar.



**Dr. Stuart A. Wright** is Professor of Sociology and Chair of the Department of Sociology, Social Work & Criminal Justice at Lamar University. He is a former NIMH Research Fellow at Yale, Rockefeller Foundation Scholar-in-Residence in Bellagio, Italy, and Visiting Fellow at the Center for Advanced Study in Oslo, Norway. He has authored over sixty publications. His most recent book is *The Demise of Religion: How Religions End, Die or Dissipate* (with Michael Stausberg and Carole Cusack, Bloomsbury Academic Publishers, 2020).