About the David G. Trager Public Policy Symposium

This symposium is named for the Honorable David G. Trager, Senior Judge, United States District Court for the Eastern District of New York, who served with great distinction as Dean of Brooklyn Law School from 1983 to 1993. Judge Trager continues to be a dedicated member of the Brooklyn Law School family through his active role on the Board of Trustees and as a member of the adjunct faculty.

About the Journal of Law and Policy

The Journal of Law and Policy is a scholarly journal of analysis and commentary whose mission is to promote the debate of law-related issues and public policy through the publication of articles written by legal scholars, law students, and distinguished members of the legal and policymaking communities.

About the Center for the Study of Law, Language and Cognition

Brooklyn Law School's Center for the Study of Law, Language and Cognition is devoted to exploring how developments in the cognitive sciences – including psychology, neuroscience and linguistics – have dramatic implications for the law at both theoretical and practical levels. The Center is the only one of its kind in the nation. Since its inception, prominent scholars and specialists from around the world have come to Brooklyn Law School to share their research and engage in discussion and debate.

Symposium Co-Chairs

Brooklyn Law School Professors Michael T. Cahill and Miriam H. Baer organized this symposium.
This Symposium will discuss the nature, ethics, and law of imposing punishment on collective entities. Does it make sense to impose blame on a group as a group, as opposed to its individual members? Even if blame is appropriate, how do we decide the proper form and amount of punishment? How do we even conceive of a group as having its own independent existence or identity? The answers to these questions have significant implications for the scope and enforcement of criminal law.

Over the course of several panels, the Symposium will seek to derive broad general insights from various academic disciplines and will consider the practical legal applications of those findings. It will address the psychological processes that lead people to treat groups as having independent existence, and the moral and philosophical consequences of doing so. Later discussion will apply these lessons to the specific legal context of corporate crime.