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The Journal of Law and Religion was initiated in 1982 as a collaborative effort of the Council on Religion and Law and the Hamline University School of Law. It was born of a sense of historical malaise. The modern age with its strong propensity toward the secularization of all areas of life, while not without merit in its liberating effects, nonetheless has its dark side.

We live, some say, in a time of profound historical crisis. Domestically and globally, we confront massive issues which force us to reconsider, in fundamental ways, the shape and quality of our common life. Yet many of the disciplines of thought and practice that should be a rich resource in such a time are found wanting—among them, law and religion. Law, a discipline presumably devoted to the ways of justice, has all too often become a set of complex, technical tools without concern for higher purpose. Religion, presumably given to the all-embracing promises and prescriptions implied in the sense of the sacred, has all too often become privatized and neglectful of our public life.

The Journal of Law and Religion is dedicated to a fundamental reappraisal of the disciplines of law and religion as they impinge on each other, might instruct each other, and taken in their conjunction, might offer a constructive response to the major issues of our times. As such its concerns are sixfold.

- Historical** The *Journal* intends to encourage the examination of historical developments, movements, thinkers, and issues to enrich our understanding of how law and religion have, in various ways, been mutually influential.
- Theoretical** The *Journal* intends to promote constructive work in religious and legal thought about fundamental theological and jurisprudential questions pertaining to professional practice and the structures of our public life.
- Ethical** The *Journal* intends to support explorations into the foundations of ethical judgment and normative critiques of our social life, particularly as they draw upon resources from the life of law and religion.
- Global** The *Journal* intends to be encompassing in its reach, seeking out voices from all the religious and legal traditions throughout the world and bringing them into conversations with each other.
- Professional** The *Journal* intends to stimulate collaboration between jurists and religious leaders given their respective commitments, as professionals, to the common good of all peoples.
- Spiritual** The *Journal* recognizes that human existence is grounded in the spiritual, which is represented in many forms and expressions.

The *Journal* is thus a forum within which the disciplines of law and religion might together consider with utmost seriousness their joint responsibility for the creation of a civilization of genuine peace and justice. Within the compass of that purpose, the *Journal* intends to be open-minded and non-prejudicial; it is receptive to submissions from all persuasions and perspectives.

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