

[Journal of Law and Public Policy Fall Symposium: Constitutionalism](#)

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Call for Papers

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Call For Papers: Constitutionalism

University of St. Thomas (MN) Journal of Law and Public Policy

November 18, 2022 (hybrid event: speakers are welcome to participate in-person or by Zoom)

Constitutionalism

Constitutionalism is the idea that government should be limited and that a sphere of autonomy should be open to individuals to pursue their own interests. There is a paradox embedded in the idea - and that is that government voluntarily keeps its powers within carefully circumscribed limited even if it possesses a monopoly of coercive force.

Paradoxical as it seems, however, the idea of constitutionalism is a sturdy one. Some have traced its roots to the conciliarist movement of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, while others to John Locke and other British thinkers.

Whatever its precise origins, constitutionalism as an organizing principle has withstood numerous challengers. In its early days, its chief competitors were theories of absolute monarchy; then totalitarianism; more recently still authoritarianism.

Constitutionalism, however, is not an idea without its own flaws. One can rightly ask, how can a system of constitutional government call itself restrained when it permitted slavery to flourish.

Constitutionalism, however, remains a fundamental characteristic of the American project. It is a cornerstone of American claims to be a democracy and a source of American legitimacy. The same holds true for many of the other nations of the world. Like the United States, most nations have adopted constitutions and strive to pattern their conduct according to the rules set forth in these founding charters.

This Call for Papers welcomes contributions on any aspect of constitutionalism. Topics include:

- a. The history of constitutional thought.
- b. Philosophical foundations of constitutionalism
- c. Congress and constitutional self-restraint
- d. The Supreme Court and constitutional self-restraint
- e. Constitutions and their place in the international order
- f. Comparative constitutionalism

Please submit proposals of no more than 500 words by September 15, 2022.

Contact Info:

Dr. Charles Reid

Professor of Law

University of St. Thomas School of Law, Minnesota

(651) 962-4974

cjreid@stthomas.edu

Contact Email:

cjreid@stthomas.edu