



William C. Costopoulos

Senior Counsel

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Services and Industries

- Attorney and Judicial Ethics and Discipline
- Litigation
- Investigations, White Collar and Criminal Defense

Education

Harvard University School of Law, LL.M., 1972

Duquesne University School of Law, J.D., *cum laude*, 1971

Dickinson College, B.A. in Political Science, 1966

Admissions

Pennsylvania

Federal

United States Supreme Court

Pennsylvania Supreme Court

William C. Costopoulos is considered one of the top criminal defense lawyers on the East Coast. As a member of the

[Investigations, White Collar and Criminal Defense](#) team, he represents clients in matters related to institutional and individual criminal investigations. Bill has unique experience handling high-profile criminal defense matters including those involving capital offenses, public figures and landmark criminal cases.

After serving briefly as a Dauphin County Assistant District Attorney, Bill began his career in private practice as a partner, handling many complex and infamous cases. His best-known cases include the defense of Dr. Jay Smith, who was eventually freed from prison by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court. That case was followed by three books and a CBS mini-series. He defended former Pennsylvania Supreme Court Justice Rolf Larsen in a historic impeachment trial on the state senate floor. In 2002, Bill obtained the acquittal of former City of York Mayor Charles Robinson, charged with murder during the 1969 riots in York, PA. He represented former Senate Whip Jane C. Orie, and former Speaker of the House, H. William DeWeese on public corruption charges. He also recently represented state Supreme Court Justice J. Michael Eakin before the Judicial Conduct Board.

Bill is an active lecturer on legal matters, speaking before bar associations, continuing legal education seminars and civic groups. He was formerly an adjunct professor at Dickinson School of Law. He is also an accomplished author of three non-fiction books and three novels. Bill earned a B.A. in political science from Dickinson College, his J.D. from Duquesne University School of Law, where he was valedictorian and editor in chief of the law journal and his LL.M. from Harvard University School of Law. Prior to attending college, Bill served as a sergeant in the U.S. Army from 1966 to 1968.

Experience

- Represented Jay Smith, an English teacher at Upper Merion school district, who spent six years on death row for the murder of Susan Reinert. The case was overturned by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court citing misconduct by prosecutors and state police for suppressing evidence. The book *Echoes in the Darkness* by Joseph Wambaugh was published based on the case and was followed by a television mini-series.
- Represented Pennsylvania Supreme Court Justice Rolf Larsen in a historic impeachment trial on the state senate floor.
- Obtained the acquittal of former City of York Mayor Charles Robinson, charged with murder during the 1969 riots in York, PA.
- Defended Pennsylvania Senator Jane C. Orie as well as former state House Speaker H. William DeWeese on separate allegations of corruption went to jury trials that spanned months.
- Represented state Supreme Court Justice J. Michael Eakin before the Judicial Conduct Board.

Recognitions

- Best Lawyers in America, Criminal Defense: General Practice, Criminal Defense: White Collar, 1983-2027
- Super Lawyers, Criminal Defense: White Collar, 2004-2006, 2008-2023, 2025
- *Legal Intelligencer*, Lifetime Achievement Award, 2015
- National Association of Distinguished Counsel (NADC), Nation's Top One Percent, 2015
- American Inns of Court, Legal Excellence and Professionalism, Master of the Bench, 2013
- Widener University School of Law, John Wherry, Jr. Trial Advocacy Award, 2003

Publications

- Costopoulos, William C. Soul Witness. Bloomington, IN: Xlibris, 2015
- Costopoulos, William C. Guilty of Innocence. Philadelphia: Camino Books, Inc., 2000
- Costopoulos, William C. and Brad Bumsted. Murder is the Charge: The True Story of Mayor Charlie Robertson and the York, Pennsylvania, Race Riots. Philadelphia: Camino Books, Inc., 2004
- Costopoulos, William C. Principal Suspect: The True Story of Dr. Jay Smith and the Main Line Murders. Philadelphia: Camino Books, Inc., 1996
- Costopoulos, William C. The White Lady War: A Novel. Ashley Books, April 1990
- Costopoulos, William C. Price of Acquittal. New York: Carlton Press, 1986

Professional Affiliations

- National Association Criminal Defense Lawyers (NADCL)
- Pennsylvania Trial Lawyers Association
- Order of Barristers

Media Mentions

- "Fighting for Justice." Brad Bumsted and Paula Knudsen, The Caucus. 2018
- ["In a Courtroom, Behind a Pen: For William Costopoulos, crime comes in 2 flavors-real and made-up."](#) Stephanie Kalina-Metzger, The Burg. August 31. 2015
- "In Bed Together: Advice for Media Savvy Lawyers." Don Sarvey, The Pennsylvania Lawyer Magazine - The Pennsylvania Bar Association. 2004
- "Big Fish in the Legal Pond: William Costopoulos, Roy Zimmerman and Richard Angino." Don Sarvey, Central PA Magazine. 1995
- "King of the Hill: William Costopoulos." Mubarak S. Dahir, Philadelphia Inquirer. 1993