Aggressive Newsgathering and The First Amendment

Friday, March 19, 1999
University of Richmond

SPONSORED BY
The George E. Allen Chair in Law at the University of Richmond School of Law
The University of Richmond School of Law is sponsoring "Aggressive Newsgathering and the First Amendment." The symposium will examine such topics as surreptitious newsgathering techniques, the constitutionality of recent proposed legislation regarding paparazzi, and the question of the appropriate dividing line—if any—between public and private life. The symposium will feature a mix of scholars, journalists, lawyers, judges, and public figures, who will discuss these issues in three sessions. Scholarly papers generated by the symposium will be published in the University of Richmond Law Review.

**SCHEDULE**

6 p.m.  
**Town Meeting**
In this session, Professor Smolla will lead all participants in a hypothetical role-playing exercise involving the use of surreptitious newsgathering techniques and paparazzi to obtain information about a celebrity. The journalists, lawyers, judges, and public figures participating in the program will make decisions and debate issues with one another, navigating through the fictional scenario. The fictional exercise will end with the parties going into litigation, in a suit brought by the celebrity.

7:30-7:45 p.m.  
**Break**

7:45-9 p.m.  
**Mock Trial/Moot Court Presentation**
This program will begin by presenting several mock trial episodes in the fictional litigation generated in the hypothetical scenario. A moot court will then follow the mock trial, followed by an appeal. Judges will openly vote and briefly explain the rationales for their rulings involving the First Amendment.

9 p.m.  
**Reception**

*MCLE credit has been applied for.*
The George E. Allen Chair in Law honors the late George E. Allen, distinguished Virginia trial lawyer. Allen was the first recipient of the Award for Courageous Advocacy made by the American College of Trial Lawyers in 1965. The award was presented for Allen's representation of an African-American law student from Harvard who, while serving as a summer intern with a firm in Virginia, was charged with felonious assault with intent to kill a police officer at a local courthouse where the young intern had gone to file legal documents. Serving without fee and at the request of Harvard Law School Dean Erwin Griswold and the Lawyer's Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, Allen successfully represented the student.

Rodney A. Smolla is the holder of The George E. Allen Chair in Law. He is widely known as one of the most important constitutional law scholars today. Smolla received his J.D. at Duke University School of Law, and his Bachelor of Arts, cum laude, from Yale University, with a major in American studies. His books include: *Free Speech in an Open Society*, which received the 1992 William O. Douglas Prize for Most Distinguished Monograph in Freedom of Expression; *Jerry Falwell v. Larry Flynn: The First Amendment on Trial, and Suing the Press: Libel, the Media, and Power*, which received the ABA Silver Gavel Award Certificate of Merit. He was editor of the book *A Year in the Life of the Supreme Court*, which won the ABA Silver Gavel Award, and he is the co-author of several treatises and casebooks in the fields of defamation, the First Amendment, civil rights, and constitutional law.

Smolla is the first full-time occupant of the Allen Chair, which was established with initial gifts from the late George E. Allen, Jr., Ashby B. Allen, and Wilbur Allen, sons of George E. Allen.

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**Participating Scholars**

**Professor Erwin Chemerinsky**, University of Southern California Law School. Professor Chemerinsky is the Legion Lex Professor of Law and Political Science, and is one of the nation's foremost constitutional law scholars. He was a regular television commentator during the O.J. Simpson trial, and is a leading scholarly supporter of legislation to curb paparazzi.

**Professor Robert O'Neil**, University of Virginia School of Law, and director of the Thomas Jefferson Center for the Protection of Freedom of Expression. Professor O'Neil is a distinguished American educator and scholar.

Among his many achievements, he served as president of the University of Wisconsin and the University of Virginia. He has long been one of the nation's leading defenders of freedom of speech and the press.

**Professor Diane Zimmerman**, New York University School of Law. Professor Zimmerman, a former journalist, is a leading scholarly figure in the First Amendment and mass media areas, having written extensively on issues relating to the press and privacy. Her many works include numerous strong defenses of the importance of providing constitutional protection for aggressive newsgathering efforts.

**Professor Robert Nagel**, University of Colorado School of Law. Professor Nagel is the Ira C. Rothgerber Professor of Constitutional Law. He is one of the most prolific and highly-respected constitutional law scholars in the nation. He is currently doing work on the role of celebrity in American life.

If you need further information, please call (804) 289-8740.

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