

SONJA R. WEST

University of Georgia School of Law
225 Herty Drive
Athens, GA 30602
(706) 542-5145

srwest@uga.edu
<http://law.uga.edu/>
http://works.bepress.com/sonja_west
<http://ssrn.com/author=518870>

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

The University of Georgia School of Law	Athens, Georgia
<i>Brumby Distinguished Professor of First Amendment Law</i>	2017 to present
<i>Professor of Law (Joint appointment with Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication)</i>	2016 to present
<i>Associate Professor of Law</i>	2010 to 2016
<i>Assistant Professor of Law</i>	2006 to 2010
<i>Courses: Constitutional Law I, Constitutional Law II, Media Law, The U.S. Supreme Court: Current Term, The Press & the Constitution</i>	

The University of Alabama School of Law	Tuscaloosa, Alabama
<i>Hugo Black Faculty Fellow</i>	Jan., 2005 to May, 2006
Teaching fellowship for former U.S. Supreme Court law clerks	
<i>Courses: Constitutional Law and Media Law</i>	

JUDICIAL CLERKSHIPS

Law Clerk – The Honorable John Paul Stevens, Supreme Court of the United States, Washington, D.C. *1999-2000*

Law Clerk – The Honorable Dorothy W. Nelson, United States Court of Appeals, Ninth Circuit; Pasadena, Cal. *1998-1999*

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Associate Attorney – Davis Wright Tremaine LLP, Los Angeles, Cal.
Represented media clients on a variety of First Amendment and intellectual property issues. *2003-2004*

Associate Attorney – Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP, Los Angeles, Cal.
Represented clients on appellate and media law cases. *2000 – 2002*

Reporter and Columnist – The Moline Dispatch Publishing Co., Moline, Ill.
Reported on political races in Illinois and Iowa. *1993-1995*

EDUCATION

University of Chicago Law School; J.D. with High Honors. *June 1998*

Honors: Order of the Coif; Executive Editor, *The University of Chicago Law Review*; John M. Olin Fellowship in Law and Economics; Tony Patiño Fellow

University of Iowa; B.A. with Honors and Distinction. *May 1993*

Double Major: Journalism and Communication Studies

Honors: Honors Collegiate Scholar; Honors Collegiate Scholar Student Speaker; Phi Beta Kappa, Omicron Delta Kappa and Mortar Board Honor Societies; inaugural recipient of *The Daily Iowan* journalism scholarship

AWARDS

National Communication Association's 2016 Franklyn S. Haiman Award for Distinguished Scholarship in Freedom of Expression for *Press Exceptionalism*, 127 Harv. L. Rev. 2434 (2014)

ARTICLES AND ESSAYS

Favoring the Press, 106 Calif. L. Rev. (forthcoming 2018)

The Supreme Court's Limited Public Forum, 73 WASH. & LEE L. REV. ONLINE 572 (2017)

The Problem with Free Press Absolutism, 50 NEW ENG. L. REV. 191 (2016) (invited symposium)

The Media Exemption Puzzle of Campaign Finance Laws, 164 U. PA. L. REV. ONLINE 253 (2016) (invited contribution for special issue)

The "Press," Then & Now, 77 Ohio St. L.J. 49 (2016)

Student Press Exceptionalism, 2 EDUC. L. & POL'Y REV. 130 (2015) (peer invited and reviewed symposium.)

Press Exceptionalism, 127 HARV. L. REV. 2434 (2014) (invited symposium)

The Stealth Press Clause, 48 GA. L. REV. 730 (2014) (invited symposium)

First Amendment Neighbors, 66 ALA. L. REV 357 (2014) (invited symposium)

Monster in the Courtroom, 2012 BYU L. REV. 1953 (invited symposium)

Awakening the Press Clause, 58 UCLA L. REV. 1025 (2011)

The Story of Us: Resolving the Face-off Between Autobiographical Speech and Privacy, 67 WASH. & LEE L. REV. 589 (2010)

No Civilized System of Justice, 11 GREEN BAG 521 (2008) (invited book review of *The Day Freedom Died*, Charles Lane)

Sanctionable Conduct: How the Supreme Court Stealthily Opened the Schoolhouse Gate, 12 LEWIS & CLARK L. REV. 27 (2008) (invited symposium)

The Story of Me: The Underprotection of Autobiographical Speech, 84 WASH. U. L. REV. 905 (2006)

Concurring in Part & Concurring in the Confusion, 104 MICH. L. REV. 1951 (2006)

“Possessing with Intent to Distribute” Under the Schoolyard Statute, 64 U. CHI. L. REV. 1399 (1997)

SHORTER WORKS

Op-Ed: Don’t Expect the First Amendment to Protect the Media, NEW YORK TIMES, Jan. 25, 2017, at A25 https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/25/opinion/dont-expect-the-first-amendment-to-protect-the-media.html?_r=0 (with RonNell Andersen Jones)

The Real Danger of Guns in Schools, SLATE, March 22, 2016, http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/jurisprudence/2016/03/georgia_s_campus_carry_bill_is_terrible.html

The Absurd Logic Behind Florida’s Docs v. Glocks Law, SLATE, Jan. 8, 2016, http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/jurisprudence/2016/01/florida_s_docs_vs_glocks_bans_doctors_from_discussing_guns.html (with Dahlia Lithwick)

The Supreme Court of the United States in PRIVACY RIGHTS IN THE DIGITAL AGE (2016)

The Second Amendment is Not Absolute, SLATE, Dec. 7, 2015, http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/jurisprudence/2015/12/second_a_mendment_allows_for_gun_control.html

Guerilla Warfare and the Constitution, WASHINGTON MONTHLY, July 1, 2015, http://www.washingtonmonthly.com/ten-miles-square/2015/07/guerilla_warfare_and_the_cons056373.php

A Constitutional Challenge to NYC’s Ban on Dancing, HUFFINGTON POST, April 30, 2015, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/sonja-west/a-constitutional-challeng_b_7181186.html

Shadow Trial, SLATE, Nov. 26, 2014, http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/jurisprudence/2014/11/ferguson_grand_jury_investigation_a_shadow_trial_violates_the_public_s_right.html (with Dahlia Lithwick)

Stop Draggin’ My Heart Around, SLATE, Oct. 9, 2014, http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/jurisprudence/2014/10/supreme

[court_gay_marriage_chaos_which_states_allow_same_sex_marriage.html](#) (with Dahlia Lithwick)

Advice for Ferguson from the Supreme Court, SLATE, Aug. 19, 2014, http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/jurisprudence/2014/08/ferguson_protesters_rebrand_yourselves_as_sidewalk_counselors.html (with Dahlia Lithwick)

Quick Change Justice, SLATE, July 4, 2014, http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/jurisprudence/2014/07/wheaton_college_injunction_the_supreme_court_just_sneakily_reversed_itself.html (with Dahlia Lithwick)

Censorship 101, SLATE, Dec. 6, 2013, http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/jurisprudence/2013/12/when_you_censor_student_speech_you_re_mostly_teaching_kids_to_live_with.html

Texas Hold 'Em, SLATE, Sept. 11, 2013, http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/jurisprudence/2013/09/texas_and_gay_marriage_will_texas_refusal_to_grant_divorces_to_same_sex.html (with Dahlia Lithwick)

What is Anthony Kennedy Thinking?, SLATE, June 12, 2013, http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/jurisprudence/2013/06/anthony_kennedy_s_gay_marriage_views_the_supreme_court_justice_may_see_banning.html

Rare Supreme Court photos offer brief connection to the Constitution in action, GEORGIA LAW ADVOCATE MAGAZINE 47:1 at 8-10 (2013)

Smile for the Camera: The long lost photos of the Supreme Court at work—and what they reveal, SLATE, Oct. 1, 2012, http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/jurisprudence/2012/10/the_supreme_court_forbids_cameras_in_the_courtroom_but_twice_rogue_photographers_have_snapped_a_picture_of_the_justices_at_work.html

Judge Not: Why won't progressives fight for federal judges?, SLATE, Oct. 24, 2011, http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/jurisprudence/2011/10/why_won_t_progressives_fight_for_federal_judges.html

Unplugged: When do Supreme Court justices need to just sit down and be quiet?, SLATE, Dec. 14, 2010, <http://www.slate.com/id/2277915/> (with Dahlia Lithwick)

The Law of Student Journalism in the Information Age, Education Law Association, Nov. 11, 2010 (with Frank LeMonte, et al)

Constitutional Interpretation: There's No App for That, SLATE, June 23, 2010, <http://www.slate.com/id/2257941/>

The Least Popular Dissent, SCOTUSblog, May 4, 2010,
<http://www.scotusblog.com/2010/05/the-least-popular-dissent/>

The Unsung Empathy of Justice Stevens, SLATE, April 9, 2010,
<http://www.slate.com/id/2250370/> (with Dahlia Lithwick)

Some Hot-Button Issues, 29 NAT'L L.J. 8 (2008)

A Conservative Shift, 29 NAT'L L.J. 32 (2007)

PRESENTATIONS AND PANELS

"Press Freedom's House of Cards," Freedom of Expression Scholars Conference, Yale Law School, New Haven, CT (April 29, 2017)

Panelist, "Modern First Amendment Issues: An Expert Discussion of Presidential Tweeting, Safe Spaces, Fake News & More!," Association of Business Trial Lawyers, Los Angeles, CA (Jan. 26, 2017)

Panelist, "President Trump and Freedom of the Press," American Association of Law Schools Annual Conference, San Francisco, CA (Jan. 4, 2017)

"Improving Press Coverage of the Courts through Communication," Annual European Conference on Courts and Communication, Budapest, Hungary (Oct. 13, 2016)

"The Press Clause and Speaker Discrimination," Southeastern Association of Law Schools Annual Conference, Amelia Island, FL (Aug. 7, 2016)

"The Press Clause and Speaker Discrimination," UGA-Emory Faculty Workshop, Atlanta, GA (July 18, 2016)

"What's Wrong with the Press Clause," Law & Society Annual Meeting, New Orleans, LA (June 3, 2016)

Panelist, "What is Newsworthy and of Public Interest: A World View," Law & Society Annual Meeting, New Orleans, LA (June 2, 2016)

"The Media Law Exemption to Campaign Finance Law," Money in Politics Legal Convening, University of Pennsylvania Law School, Philadelphia, PA (May 25, 2016)

"The Press Clause and Speaker Discrimination," Freedom of Expression Scholars Conference, Yale Law School, New Haven, CT (April 30, 2016)

"The Problem with Free Press Absolutism," *New England Law Review* Symposium on "The First Amendment Bubble," by Amy Gajda, New England Law School (via video) (Feb. 11, 2016)

Moderator, "Transparency in the Court," Georgia State University Law Review Symposium, Atlanta, FL (Feb. 11, 2016)

Panelist, "First Amendment Issues in Public Spaces," National Press Photographers Association University of Georgia's Grady College Symposium, Athens, GA (Jan. 22, 2016)

Organizer and moderator, "Neither the Purse Nor the Sword: Writing about the Court for the Public," American Association of Law Schools Annual Conference, New York, NY (Jan. 9, 2016)

Panelist, "Supreme Court Transparency (Or Lack Thereof)," Southeastern Association of Law Schools Annual Conference, Boca Raton, FL (July 29, 2015)

Panelist, "Supreme Court Update: Individual Rights," Southeastern Association of Law Schools Annual Conference, Boca Raton, FL (July 28, 2015)

Panelist, "Media Law in the Wake of Ferguson," Law & Society Annual Meeting, Seattle, WA (May 29, 2015)

Speaker, "Non-Media Speech: Is it Free?" Federalist Society Teleforum (May 15, 2015)

"The 'Press,' Then & Now," Freedom of Expression Scholars Conference, Yale Law School, New Haven, CT (May 2, 2015)

Panelist, "Important Cases of the United States Supreme Court's 2014 Term," Georgia Political Review, Athens, GA (March 30, 2015)

"The 'Press,' Then & Now," Tulane Law School, New Orleans, LA (Sept. 29, 2014)

Panelist, "The Press, the Supreme Court and the Constitution," Chicago-Kent Law School, Chicago, IL (Sept. 9, 2014)

Keynote speaker, Phi Beta Kappa Georgia chapter initiation, Athens, GA (April 29, 2014)

Panelist, "Supreme Sunshine: Shining a Light on the High Court," NYU-Washington, Washington, DC (March 21, 2014) (broadcast on C-SPAN)

"First Amendment Neighbors," *Alabama Law Review* Symposium on the 50th Anniversary of *New York Times v. Sullivan*, Tuscaloosa, AL (March 1, 2014)

"Press Exceptionalism," *Harvard Law Review* Symposium on Press Freedom, Cambridge, MA (Feb. 15, 2014)

"Press Exceptionalism," University of Georgia Law School, Athens, GA (Nov. 20, 2013)

"The Stealth Press Clause," *Georgia Law Review* Symposium on the 50th Anniversary of *New York Times v. Sullivan*, Athens, GA (Nov. 6, 2013) (broadcast on C-SPAN)

Introductory Speaker and Moderator, Justice John Paul Stevens' Key Note Address, *Georgia Law Review* Symposium on the 50th Anniversary of *New York Times v. Sullivan*, Athens, GA (Nov. 6, 2013)

Moderator, "Supreme Court Cases and Issues," SCOTUSblog conference, University of Georgia, Athens, GA (Sept. 9, 2013) (broadcast on C-SPAN)

"The Stealth Press Clause," the Southeastern Association of Law Schools Annual Conference, Palm Beach, FL (Aug. 9, 2013)

"Press Exceptionalism," Freedom of Expression Scholars Conference, Yale Law School, New Haven, CT (May 4, 2013)

"Press Exceptionalism," Association of American Law Schools Annual Conference, New Orleans, LA (Jan. 5, 2013) (winner of the Sections on Internet & Computer Law and Mass Communications Call for Papers)

"The Uneasy Relationship between United States Supreme Court Justices and Cameras," Israeli Law and Society Association Annual Conference, Tel Aviv, Israel (Dec. 19, 2012)

"The Obama Administration and Federal District Court Judgeships," on panel titled, "President Obama and the Courts," Southeastern Association of Law Schools Annual Conference, Amelia Island, FL (July 31, 2012)

"Press Exceptionalism," Emory Law School and the University of Georgia School of Law Works-in-Progress Conference (June 27, 2012)

"Monster in the Courtroom," University of Georgia Honors Lunchbox Lecture, Athens, GA (Feb. 16, 2012)

"Monster in the Courtroom" at Brigham Young University Law Review symposium titled "The Press, the Public, and the U.S. Supreme Court," Provo, UT (Jan. 24, 2012)

"In Support of a Narrow Interpretation of 'Press'," Southeastern Association of Law Schools Conference, Hilton Head, SC (July 24, 2011)

Panelist, "Game Over: Violent Video Games and Juvenile Crimes," Working in the Public Interest Conference, Athens, GA (April 2, 2011)

Speaker, "Hasta La Vista, Bloodshed: First Amendment Concerns with Schwarzenegger's Ban on Violent Games," American Constitution Society and the Entertainment Law Society, Athens, GA (Feb. 16, 2011)

Panelist, "Mortal Kombat: How Video Game Violence Could Shape the 21st Century First Amendment," Vance Forum, Atlanta, GA (Feb. 7, 2011)

Panelist, "The Law of Student Journalism in the Information Age," Education Law Association Annual Conference, Vancouver, BC (Nov. 11, 2010)

“The Empathy of Justice Stevens,” Southeastern Association of Law Schools Conference, Palm Beach, FL (Aug. 1, 2010)

“Awakening the Press Clause,” Emory Law School and the University of Georgia School of Law Works-in-Progress Conference, Atlanta, GA (July 13, 2010)

“Awakening the Press Clause,” Georgia State Law School, Atlanta, GA (April 2010)

Panelist, “Media and the Public Interest” for the UGA Law School Working in the Public Interest Conference, Athens, GA (Feb. 27, 2010)

“Fringe Protection Absolutism,” PrawfsFest!, Southwestern Law School, Los Angeles, CA (Dec. 4, 2009)

Speaker, “Issues in Reproductive Law,” UGA Law Students for Reproductive Justice (Nov. 11, 2009).

“The Story of Us: The Face-Off Between Autobiographical Speech and Privacy,” Southeastern Association of Law Schools Conference, Palm Beach, FL (July 28, 2008)

Speaker, Federalist Society’s Event with Alan Gura, Athens, GA (Feb. 24, 2009)

Panelist, “Law and Media,” Emory Public Interest Conference, Atlanta, GA (Oct. 13, 2007)

Panelist, “Race & Education: A Discussion on Diversity, Desegregation, and American Education Policy,” Athens, GA (Feb. 22, 2007)

Panelist, American Constitution Society and the Federalist Society’s joint event on Constitution Day discussing the importance of judicial independence (Sept. 19, 2006)

Speaker, “Scalia and Textualism” UGA Federalist Society program, Athens, GA (Sept. 1, 2006)

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS AND ACTIVITIES

American Association of Law Schools Section on Mass Communication Law (2013-2016) (Chair, Chair-Elect and Treasurer), *Education Law & Policy Review* Executive Advisory Board, Lead pro bono counsel for the Student Press Law Center, et al., as amicus curiae in the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals and the Supreme Court of the United States in the case of *Morse v. Frederick* (2007), Bar of the Supreme Court of the United States (2007 – present), State of California Bar (2001 – present)

UNIVERSITY AND LAW SCHOOL SERVICE AND COMMITTEES

Promotions and Tenure Ad-Hoc Committee (2014-2016), University of Georgia Women's Leadership Initiative Subcommittee on Faculty Retention (2015-2016), University of Georgia Libraries Committee (2015), Law Library Committee (2014-2015), Faculty Recruitment Committee (2012-2013, 2015-2016), Third-Year Review Committees (2013, 2014, 2016), University Program Review and Assessment Committee (2011-2013), Student Affairs Committee (2011-2012) (Chair), Law School Judicial Clerkship Program (2010-2011) (Faculty advisor), Student Affairs Committee (2008-2010), Law Library Director Search Committee (Spring, 2010), Peabody Awards (2007, 2011, 2012) (Faculty Judge), Russell Undergraduate Teaching Awards Committee (2010-2012), OUTLaws (2008-present) (Faculty Advisor), Brumby Chair Search Committee (2007), Facilities/ Law Library/Technology committee (2006-2007),

MEDIA

Commentator on legal issues for various news media outlets such as *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Washington Post*, *The Economist*, *The National Law Journal*, MSNBC's *The Last Word with Lawrence O'Donnell*, *Slate*, *Bloomberg News*, *Huffington Post*, *The Guardian*, *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, *The Boston Globe*, *The San Francisco Chronicle*, National Public Radio and Public Radio International.