



# **Speaking Our Minds: Conversations With the People Behind Landmark First Amendment Cases (Routledge Communication Series)**

*Joseph Russomanno*

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Tinker. R.A.V. Ollman. Hustler-Falwell. Reno-ACLU. Nebraska Press Association. These names are synonymous with contemporary First Amendment litigation. To explore these landmark cases more deeply, author Joseph Russomanno interviewed the people at the core of these and other influential First Amendment cases, and he presents their stories here in a personal, in-depth oral history of First Amendment law. Previously unavailable in other literature, these stories go beyond the "what" of the cases and answer the "why" and "how" of ten major cases from the latter part of the 20th century. Through their own words and photographs, plaintiffs, defendants, and their attorneys describe what it was like to be involved in the development of these historic First Amendment cases.

The issues addressed in these landmark cases cover crucial aspects of the First Amendment: freedom of expression, hate speech, libel, privacy, intentional infliction of emotional distress, promises of confidentiality to news sources, free press-fair trial, commercial speech, broadcast and cable television regulation, and new media. These narratives recount the events that initiated the court cases and follow the lead players through the various stages of the U.S. legal system. Excerpts of the court decisions are included at the conclusion of each chapter, and sidebars explain key terms, issues, and names that come up in the process. The cases highlighted here were often difficult and controversial--cases which, on their surface, raise questions about both the participants and their lawyers. A cross burner and a pornographer ask to be protected by the First Amendment; a measure intended to protect children from exposure to lewd content on the Internet is questioned. Through the words of the participants in these cases, the meaning, depth, and reach of the First Amendment becomes clear and demonstrates how the law functions to protect the rights of all individuals.

This unique chronicle will appeal to those studying First Amendment law, including mass communication, law, journalism, and political science scholars, and to lawyers, journalists, and political scientists with an interest in this area. The volume is also intended to serve as a supplemental text in a mass communication law course or as a text in advanced First Amendment theory course and political science courses exploring the law, decisions, and processes of the U. S. Supreme Court.

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