

Prof. C. Peter Erlinder
Professor of Constitutional Criminal Law
Wm. Mitchell College of Law
St. Paul, MN 55105

Bradley University, Bachelor of Science, 1970.
Georgetown University Law Center, 1971-72.
Illinois Institute of Technology/Chicago-Kent College of Law, J.D. 1979.
University of Chicago Law School, Bigelow Teaching Fellow, 1979- 80.

Background and Education

Professor Erlinder grew up on the South Side of Chicago and was the first in his family to go to college. Before completing college and law-school, he repaired garbage trucks, sold water coolers door-to-door and managed a small, family-owned, hydraulics repair and design shop. He began his legal studies at the Georgetown University Law Center in Washington, D.C., where he clerked for the D.C. Public Defenders Office, the ACLU National Prison Project and managed a congressional campaign in Indiana's 5th District in 1972. He graduated from the "night school" program at the Illinois Institute of Technology/Chicago-Kent College of Law, while working full-time in the Civil Rights Division of the Illinois Attorney General's Office and part-time at the Cook County Public Defender's Office and the People's Law Office in Chicago.

Academic Positions

Following graduation from law school, he joined the faculty of the University of Chicago Law School, as a Bigelow Teaching and Research Fellow, after which he returned to the IIT/Chicago-Kent College of Law Criminal Defense Clinic as a Clinical Fellow and Staff Attorney. He joined Wm. Mitchell College of Law faculty in 1982 and was appointed a Full Professor in 1986. Since arriving at Wm. Mitchell his teaching interests have included: Constitutional Criminal Law, Criminal Law, First Amendment, Civil Procedure, Evidence and International Criminal Law.

He has been a visiting faculty member, or visiting scholar, at Waseda University, Tokyo; Hitotsubashi University, Tokyo; and, Golden Gate University, San Francisco. He has lectured at the law schools of the University of Minnesota; University of Wisconsin; University of Iowa; Drake University; Hamline University; St. Thomas University (Mn.); University of N. Dakota; University of Nevada; Washington and Lee University; National University, Bogota Colombia; and others. He has also lectured at undergraduate institutions, including: Carleton College; Macalester College, Concordia College; St. Olaf College; University of Minnesota; St. Cloud State University, Hamline University, Minneapolis Technical College, Ehime University, Matsuyama, Japan, and elsewhere.

Publications and Media

Professor Erlinder is the author or co-author of several books and treatises, including: *Felony Sentencing in Minnesota* (with Stuart); *The Process of Legal Research* (with Kunz, Schmedemann, Downs, Bateson); *The Untold Story of the Ehime Maru* with Usui); and, a three-volume treatise found in most public and law school libraries, *Constitutional*

Criminal Law (with Rudstein and Thomas). His articles appear in more than a dozen of law reviews, including the University of Pennsylvania; Northwestern University; University of Texas; Boston College; Chicago-Kent College of Law; and Wm. Mitchell College of Law. Other professional journals in which his work appears include: the National Lawyers Guild's *Guild Practitioner* and *Police Misconduct Litigation Reporter*; *Minnesota Bench and Bar*; and, *Minnesota Lawyer*. His legal-academic writings have been cited by the United States Supreme Court; the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals; and the Supreme Courts of Illinois, Minnesota, Idaho and others.

Professor Erlinder's op-ed columns or commentary have appeared in: the *New York Times*; the *New York Sun*; *Newsday*; the *Washington Post*; the *Chicago Tribune*; *Le Monde*; *Associated Press*; *Reuters*; *le Monde*; *Agence Presse France*; *Asahi Shimbun*, *Yomiuri Shimbun*, and *Akahata Shimbun*, Tokyo and various Minnesota newspapers, including: *The St. Paul Pioneer Press*; *The Minneapolis Star-Tribune*; *the Duluth Tribune*; *City Pages*; *the Pulse*; *the Spokesman*; *the Minnesota Daily* and others. He provides commentary on legal issues to electronic media outlets, including: National Public Radio; Pacifica Radio; Democracy Now-TV; Minnesota Public TV; Minnesota Public Radio; Wisconsin Public Radio; WBAI-NY; KPFFK-Los Angeles; BBC, London; CBC; Toronto; Asahi-TV, Tokyo; al Jazeera TV and Radio; and WCCO; KSTP; KMSP; KFAI, in Minnesota, as well as cable and public access stations throughout Minnesota and the upper Midwest.

Since 9-11, he has been a regular commentator on the threat to civil liberties and the rule of law justified by the mis-named "the War on Terror." He was one of the first commentators to warn of the dangers of the Patriot Act in September 2001; to expose the attacks on the civil liberties of Minnesota Somalis and Muslims and to call for the repeal of the Patriot Act when it became clear that the Bush Administration had misled the American Public regarding their own failures in the 9-11 tragedy in 2002.

Domestic Criminal Defense and Litigation

In addition to his academic work, as a "peoples' lawyer" Professor Erlinder has litigated numerous cases involving issues of political, social or legal significance. Motivated by a deep commitment to democratic principles, fundamental fairness and the interests of those society least respects, Professor Erlinder has lent his professional expertise to numerous cases involving "unpopular" and powerless clients, whose fate determines the rights of all of us, in the long run.

Just after completing law school, he pioneered the understanding of *Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder* in American courtrooms in the first cases and articles that made the link between reactions to war-time combat and criminal charges. He has consulted or testified as an expert witness in numerous PTSD cases involving Vietnam Veterans, which are now an issue with returning Iraq and Afghanistan veterans, as well. He defended anti-nuclear activists, the "Sperry Pair," when Chief Federal Judge Miles Lord asked "who are the *real* criminals?" when making his famous statement in opposition to nuclear weapons. During the Midwest Farm Crisis, he defended farm activists from criminal charges arising from farm-foreclosure protests, including Darryl Ringer, the Democratic candidate for Congress who brought Jesse Jackson's presidential campaign to western Kansas.

He has successfully represented Vietnam veterans charged with death penalty offenses; animal rights activists called before grand juries; sex-offenders facing lifetime civil commitment violation of the constitution; anti-war demonstrators; political, civil rights and union activists; accused “police killers” and, most recently, Muslim, Somali and Palestinian victims of the “terrorism”-motivated prosecutions, including Omar Jamal, Director of Minnesota’s Somali Justice Advocacy; Dr. Sami al Arian, the Palestinian Professor/activist acquitted of “terrorism” charges in Tampa, Fla.; Muhammad Warsame, an alleged Minnesota confederate of Zacharias Moussaoui in the 9-11 plot. He authored the National Lawyers Guild *amicus* brief cited by the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals in finding a “perfect storm of bias” in the prosecution of the pro-Castro “Cuban-5,” who are considered anti-terrorist heroes in their homeland.

International Activities

In the international arena, Professor Erlinder has represented Dr. Abimael Guzman, leader of the Communist Party of Peru captured by the former Fujimori government, the Inter-American Human Rights Commission and consulted with the Notre Dame Human Rights Clinic on the Inter- American Human Rights Court case that successfully held the Peruvian government responsible for the massacre prisoners in Lima’s Canto Grande Prison. He worked with the team of Japanese and American lawyers representing the victims of the Ehime Maru/U.S.S. Greeneville maritime disaster in which 9 people were killed by a U.S. nuclear submarine off Hawaii in 2001.

Following the invasion of Afghanistan, Professor Erlinder sat as a “peoples’ jurist” in the International Criminal Tribunal for Afghanistan in Tokyo that was organized by Japanese NGO’s to make a public record of the crimes committed by U.S. and NATO invading forces. Professor Erlinder is also Lead Defense Counsel at the United Nations International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) in Arusha, Tanzania in which he is defending former Rwandan military officers, and is exposing foreign influence in the Rwanda War and the ICTR, itself, which has distorted the world’s understanding of the tragedy.

Professional Activities

Past-President of the National Lawyers Guild, NY; President of ADAD (the Defence Lawyers Bar Association at the UN-ICTR) Arusha, TZ; past-President of the Minnesota Chapter of the National Lawyers Guild, past-Regional Vice-President of the NLG; Minnesota NLG Steering Committee; Founder, Minnesota Lawyers for Jackson; founding Board Member, National Coalition to Protect Political Freedom; founding Board Member, NLG Police Accountability Project; founding Board Member, Society for Traumatic Stress Studies; National Lawyers Guild Foundation Board; Board Member, Somali Justice Advocacy Center, St. Paul, MN.

Contact:

Prof. Peter Erlinder

Wm. Mitchell College of Law

875 Summit Av.

St. Paul, MN 55105

(651) 290-6384/ peter.erlinder@wmitchell.edu