

# Media in the courtroom

[Law](#), [Court](#)



Media in the courtroom Cameras In the Courtrooms have been known to give an artificial element of what is really going on in the Courtroom, some parties tend to act differently when the cameras are rolling, cameras should be used with discretion while in the Courtroom.(Chance, 1995) Informing the Public: Even though the public wants to be informed cameras should use discretion while in the courtroom. Informing the public can be a very risky business, especially where credibility is concerned. " TV cameras in the courtroom leads to a cultural trivialization of such proceedings, reducing our judicial process to the level of petty reality shows. " We also find that cable TV play a large part in how the judicial system has allowed the media to weave their way into the courtroom. Judge Jane Marum Roush, of Fairfax County Va. was asked by several TV reporters if they could take still photos of a court case in which an 18 year old was accused of a vicious killing, Judge Roush declined by stating... [1] " The public's right to know" [is] a " right" that is not enunciated in the constitution, she also stated that these cameras could possibly have effects on the jurors. Not more than four states over Houston Prosecutors contend that a camera could corrupt jury deliberations, inhibiting some jurors, and bringing out the exhibitionist in others if the cameras were in the courtroom. Many feel that by televising trials would make the media and reporters strive to be more accurate in their reporting, because bad credibility could disrupt someone's life. The national center of state courts have reported that media coverage may be only permitted on a written order of a Judge, this Judge at his own discretion may permit , refuse, limit, or terminate media coverage Citizens Rights: Media in the courtroom should have a limit on how far they can go, when and if they are allowed into

certain court cases, media cameras have been known to portray an artificial element of what is really going on, some media cameras have focused only on the defendants when they are smiling throughout the trial, therefore portraying a picture of no remorse to the public even though this defendant still has yet to be convicted. Jan E. Dubois U. S. District Court Judge since 1988 Came up with the pilot program which was to allow media to view certain federal court cases in the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, after evaluating all the necessary judges who participated in this program they found that some approved others disapproved for cameras to be in the courtroom, those who disapproved were worried on how the cameras would affect all parties involved (witnesses, jurors.) 56% of these judges found that to some extent cameras violated witnesses rights (privacy.) Also defendants in court cases have showed concern of the accusations that the media in the courtrooms might present, so therefore the defendant made a settlement with prosecutors just to avoid being televised, witnesses also had concerns whereas they became nervous while the cameras were rolling so the judge would have the cameras removed from the courtroom or the media was told not to operate their cameras while a witness was speaking if that witness chose not to be filmed. Judge Jan E, Dubois has also stated that " The paramount responsibility of a district judge is to uphold the Constitution, which guarantees citizens the right to a fair and impartial trial. In my opinion, cameras in the district court could seriously jeopardize that right. " Bill Delmore of the Texas Bar Journal has made numerous comments concerning cameras in the courtroom, such as witnesses have problems with testifying on camera against mobsters and or gang members with the thought of being

retaliated upon in future dates, some witnesses may be shy and won't be able to function if the cameras are on them whereas other witnesses will put on a show for the cameras and public . Mr. Delmore also feels that there are attorneys that will not pass up the chance for free advertisement when handling a court case that is being televised by the media. These are some of the reasons I feel that cameras in the courtroom should be used with discretion, not only will lives be destroyed in some of these cases humiliation is not far away for some of these witnesses, victims, defendants and families, all parties should have a choice if they would like to have cameras in the courtroom, while court proceedings are in effect. Imagine if you were a Witness or Defendant would you want the Media in the Courtroom portraying you in a way that you know is really not you, would you want your loved ones face plastered on the television, with the look of hopelessness knowing you can do nothing for them. These are some of the questions we must ask ourselves whenever we see cameras in the courtroom because we must always think this could be us in this situation. References Chance, S. F. (1995). Considering cameras in the courtroom. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 39(4), 555, 7. Retrieved from <http://search.ebscohost.com.ezpro> Public access to court proceedings chapter 6. (2009). National Center of state courts. Retrieved from ebsco host database