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TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Associate Professor, West Virginia University College of Law

Morgantown, West Virginia. July 2024-present. Courses taught: Torts, Criminal Procedure I, Evidence, Trial Advocacy.

Adjunct Professor, West Virginia University College of Law

Morgantown, West Virginia. 2017-2018. Course taught: Appellate Advocacy.

PUBLICATIONS

Resisting Nullification in Excessive Force Prosecutions, 74.1 BUFF. L. REV. (forthcoming Jan. 2026).

SCHOLARLY AGENDA

My scholarly agenda is divided into two components: obstacles to the successful enforcement of criminal civil rights legislation and prosecutorial ethics. My first article examines the difficulties faced by prosecutors attempting to enforce criminal civil rights laws against law enforcement officers who engage in excessive uses of force. Even where there is compelling evidence of guilt, jurors often acquit officers rather than allow them to face criminal consequences for their actions. I examine suspected nullification verdicts in excessive force cases and theorize that nullification verdicts in those cases are a function of the presence of one or more authoritarian jurors, the measure of gaps left in the prosecution's story and the degree to which jurors understand the power of nullification and its appropriate and inappropriate uses. I propose that juries in excessive force cases be instructed on nullification and that prosecutors advance explicit anti-nullification arguments to minimize wrongful acquittals of law enforcement officers. In future articles, I hope to evaluate the effectiveness of the proposed instructions and arguments through jury research. I also hope to examine other obstacles to the successful enforcement of criminal civil rights legislation, including the failure of state actors to develop and implement enforcement mechanisms within their jurisdictions in light of the current administration's abrogation of its responsibility to enforce duly enacted federal civil rights legislation.

The second strand of my scholarship is focused on prosecutorial morality and ethics. I am currently working on an article that addresses the moral dilemma faced by prosecutors whose core values are inconsistent with the behavior of the administration they are working under. I plan to differentiate between the types of inconsistencies that might have historically arisen between a prosecutor's core values and an administration's political goals when the

administration is of a different political party than the prosecutor on the one hand, and inconsistencies between a prosecutor's core values and the immoral behavior of an administration on the other hand. I will also identify and explore the competing considerations: abandoning a position that carries with it the opportunity to yield power in the pursuit of justice versus standing firm in the official position but living with the turmoil generated by the inconsistency.

EDUCATION

West Virginia University College of Law, J.D., 2006

Executive Research Editor, WEST VIRGINIA LAW REVIEW. Order of the Coif. President, West Virginia Trial Lawyers Association Student Chapter. Member, Public Interest Advocates. Volunteer, Appalachian Center for Law and Public Service

West Virginia University, B.A., English, 2003

Summa cum laude. Phi Beta Kappa.

OTHER PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Assistant United States Attorney, United States Attorney's Office for the Northern District of West Virginia

Clarksburg, West Virginia. 2014-2024. Managed appellate and trial criminal case load with emphasis on criminal civil rights violations, white collar offenses, child exploitation crimes and firearms offenses.

Associate, Allan N. Karlin & Associates

Morgantown, West Virginia. 2007-2014. Managed all aspects of civil case load, including drafting pleadings, conducting depositions, writing and arguing summary judgment motions, preparing and conducting trial and drafting appeals with emphasis in employment discrimination and workplace death and injury.

Federal Judicial Law Clerk, Honorable Robert B. King, United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit

Charleston, West Virginia. 2006-2007. Served as law clerk to appellate judge, preparing bench memoranda and opinions in criminal and civil appeals on variety of issues, including death penalty review, sentencing guidelines, employment discrimination, immigration, and administrative cases.

BAR ADMISSION

West Virginia, 2006.

SERVICE

Committee Member, Judicial Clerkship Committee; Engagements Committee; Order of the Barristers Committee; Judicial Investigations Committee.

Current.

Faculty Advisor, Black Law Students Association; West Virginia Trial Lawyers Association Student Chapter; Criminal Law Society

Current.

Member, West Virginia Advisory Committee to the United States Commission on Civil Rights

April 2025-present.

Board Member, American Civil Liberties Union – West Virginia

March 2025-March 2026.

SIGNIFICANT LITIGATION

Criminal Civil Rights

United States v. Kuretza, Case No. 1:22CR52 (N.D. W. Va. 2023) – prosecuted a Monongalia County Sheriff’s deputy for unlawfully using excessive use against an individual who was asleep in a hotel room after spending a day drinking with his friends at a WVU basketball game. Despite the use of force being captured on video and multiple other deputies’ testimony that they did not see a need for the force used against the victim, and despite falsifying his report, turning off his own body worn camera and attempting to turn off the body worn camera of another deputy during the use of force, the defendant was acquitted of the charges against him.

Fourth Amendment

United States v. Cobb, 970 F.3d 319 (4th Cir. 2020) – successfully argued that the district court’s denial of the defendant’s motion to suppress child pornography seized from his computer pursuant to a search warrant was proper where the warrant confined the executing officer’s discretion by allowing him to search the computer and seize evidence of a specific illegal activity notwithstanding that it did not describe the types of files sought or their location on the computer.

United States v. Hardesty, 2023 U.S. App. LEXIS 7556 (4th Cir. 2023) – successfully argued that the district court’s denial of the defendant’s motion to suppress a firearm seized from his person was proper where the officer conducted a Terry stop on the defendant after an unknown

caller reported that the defendant was potentially overdosing or having a seizure based on her real time observations about his appearance, behavior and location.

Employment Discrimination

Knotts v. Grafton City Hospital, 786 S.E.2d 188 (W. Va. 2016) – briefed an ultimately successful appeal of the dismissal of the employment discrimination case of a 65-year-old housekeeper at the Grafton City Hospital who was terminated from her employment for purportedly violating the hospital’s confidentiality policy, even though other, younger employees were not dismissed for violations of that policy and she was replaced by two housekeepers who were younger than her but still over the age of 40. The Supreme Court of Appeals of West Virginia overturned its own precedent and adopted the “substantially younger” rule, meaning that victims of age discrimination can rely on comparators still within the protected class.

Sentencing

United States v. Groves, 65 F.4th 166 (4th Cir. 2023) – successfully argued before the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals that federal drug offense convictions remain “controlled substance offenses” under the United States Sentencing Guidelines.

White Collar

United States v. Leipham, 2023 U.S. App. LEXIS 23979 (4th Cir. 2023) – successfully prosecuted a Las Vegas, Nevada resident for wire fraud, mail fraud and money laundering in relation to a decades-long, nationwide elder fraud scheme. The defendant was convicted on all counts at trial and her convictions were upheld on the briefs by the Fourth Circuit.

Child Exploitation

United States v. Kokinda, 93 F.4th 635 (4th Cir. 2024) – successfully prosecuted a New Jersey transient living in various campgrounds near Elkins, West Virginia who purposely evaded sex offender registration laws and committed third degree sexual abuse against a 12-year-old girl at the Elkins City Park while in an unregistered status. Successfully argued on appeal that guidelines issued by Attorney General defining terms “reside” and “habitually live” in context of transient sex offenders had force and effect of law.