

UC SANTA BARBARA

THE Current

November 1, 1999

Edith Inta

NOTED SUPREME COURT EXPERT WILL DISCUSS NEW BOOK

Peter H. Irons, director of the Earl Warren Bill of Rights Project at the University of California, San Diego, will discuss on Nov. 8 his just-released book chronicling the history of the U.S. Supreme Court.

Iron's talk on "A People's History of the Supreme Court" will take place from 5:15 p.m. to 6:45 p.m. at the Cabrillo Pavilion Arts Center, 1118 E. Cabrillo Blvd., in Santa Barbara. A book-signing will follow.

Admission is \$7.50 and advanced reservations are suggested. The event is sponsored by the Interdisciplinary Humanities Center at the University of California, Santa Barbara.

Irons brings the human touch of first-person stories --- much like those in his classic book, "The Courage of Their Convictions," --- to the history of the Supreme Court. This sweeping account traces the Supreme Court's path from the 1787 Constitutional Convention to its controversial rulings on free speech, racial segregation, abortion and gay rights.

Irons, a professor of political science at UC San Diego, provides sketches of every justice from John Jay to Stephen Breyer and portraits of such legal giants as John Marshall, Roger Taney, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Hugo Black, Earl Warren and Thurgood Marshall.

But the people who stand in the foreground of this vivid historical mural are ordinary Americans like Dred Scott, Homer Plessy and Michael Hardwick. The cases they brought to the Supreme Court forced the justices to confront the U.S. Constitution's promise that every American deserves "the blessings of liberty." And in this fascinating work, Irons recounts the landmark decisions made during the span of more than two centuries that both honored and broke that constitutional promise.

Irons has written six other books on the Supreme Court and constitutional litigation: "The New Deal Lawyers," "Justice at War," "The Courage of Their Convictions," "Justice Delayed," "May It Please the Court" and "Brennan Vs. Rehnquist: The Battle for the Constitution." He has contributed to numerous law reviews and other journals.

Irons holds a Ph.D. from Boston University and a J.D. from Harvard Law School. In 1988, he was the first Raoul Wallenberg Distinguished Visiting Professor of Human Rights at Rutgers University. He has lectured on constitutional law and civil liberties at more than 20 law schools, including those at Harvard, Yale, Berkeley and Stanford.

In addition to his academic work, the political science professor is a practicing civil rights and liberties attorney. In the 1980s, he was lead counsel in the successful reversal of World War II criminal convictions of Japanese-Americans who challenged the curfew placed on these citizens and the relocation of entire families to interment camps. Irons also has served two terms on the national board of the American Civil Liberties Union.

To make reservations, call the Interdisciplinary Humanities Center at 893-3907.

Editors: Digital images of Peter Irons and the cover art from his new book are available upon request from Andy Sharp at asharp@humanitas.ucsb.edu.

About UC Santa Barbara

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we

draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.