

DAVID E. COOMBS

O'BRIAN HALL, 211 MARY TALBERT WAY, BUFFALO, NY 14260
DCOOMBS@BUFFALO.EDU

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

UNIVERSITY AT BUFFALO SCHOOL OF LAW
Lecturer in Law

Buffalo, New York
September 2023 – Present

Courses: Evidence, Criminal Procedure, Military Justice, National Security Law

ROGER WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW
Visiting Associate Professor
Adjunct Professor

Bristol, Rhode Island
July 2015 – May 2021
July 2009 – May 2011

Courses: Evidence, Criminal Procedure, Trial Advocacy
Service: Trial Team Coach (2014 – 2021)
Faculty Advisor to the Military Law Society (2019 – 2021)
Honors: Voted “Adjunct Professor of the Year” by the class of 2017, 2018, 2020, and 2021

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL’S LEGAL CENTER AND SCHOOL
Adjunct Professor
Associate Professor

Charlottesville, Virginia
August 2009 – June 2013
May 2006 – April 2009

Courses: Evidence, Advanced Evidence, Criminal Law, Capital Litigation, Trial Advocacy
Service: University of Virginia Law School Trial Team Coach (2009)
Judicial Advisor: Law and Order Task Force – Baghdad, Iraq (May – November 2008)

OTHER PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

THE LAW OFFICE OF DAVID E. COOMBS (October 2009 – August 2023)

Specializing in Military Criminal Defense for U.S. Army Soldiers (www.soldierlaw.com)
Lead Defense Attorney in United States v. Manning (Soldier who provided classified information to WikiLeaks)
Lead Defense Attorney in United States v. Barbera (Soldier who was wrongfully accused of killing two unarmed Iraqi civilians)

JUDGE ADVOCATE, UNITED STATES ARMY (December 1996 – September 2018)

ASSIGNMENTS

U.S. Army Defense Appellate Division, Fort Belvoir, Virginia. June 2013 – September 2018
Appellate Defense Counsel
Filed direct appeals with the Army Court of Criminal Appeals
Retired as a Lieutenant Colonel on September 21, 2018
Awarded Legion of Merit

The Judge Advocate General's School, Charlottesville, Virginia. August 2005 – June 2013
Associate Professor, Criminal Law Department. May 2006 – June 2013
Judicial Advisor in Iraq, Criminal Law Department. May 2008 – November 2008
Certified as a Military Judge – May 2008
LL.M. Candidate. August 2005 – May 2006
Promoted to rank of Lieutenant Colonel on September 2, 2010
Awarded Meritorious Service Medal

Trial Defense Services, Fort Eustis, Virginia. May 2003 – May 2005
Senior Capital Defense Counsel (Capital Military Defense Attorney)
Capital Defense Counsel.
Defense attorney in United States v. Akbar (death penalty case)
Promoted to rank of Major on September 1, 2004
Awarded Meritorious Service Medal

Trial Defense Services, SETAF, Italy. May 2002 – May 2003
Senior Defense Counsel (Military Defense Attorney)
Deployed Senior Defense Counsel, Camp Doha, Kuwait.
Awarded Meritorious Service Medal

Trial Defense Services, Fort Carson, Colorado. June 2000 – May 2002
Defense Counsel
Trial Advocacy Instructor
Awarded Meritorious Service Medal

Office of the Staff Judge Advocate, Fort Cavazos, Texas. April 1997 – June 2000
Senior Trial Counsel (Military Prosecutor)
Trial Counsel
Command Judge Advocate, Camp Doha, Kuwait
Administrative Law Attorney
Promoted to rank of Captain on October 1, 1997
Awarded Meritorious Service Medal

EDUCATION

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL'S SCHOOL (2005-2006) Charlottesville, Virginia
Degree: LL.M. in Military Law
Honors: Specialty designation in Criminal Law

THE UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO (1993-1996) Moscow, Idaho
Degree: J.D.
Honors: Dean's List 1993-1996
Distinguished Trial Advocate

THE UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO (1987-1991) Moscow, Idaho
Degree: B.A., Telecommunications
Honors: Dean's List (1988-1991)

PUBLICATIONS

LAW REVIEW ARTICLES

“United States v. Blazier – So Exactly Who Needs an Invitation to the Dance”, THE ARMY LAWYER, July 2010

“Pass Go, Collect \$200.00, and Hire Yourself an Expert – Article 46 and the Right to Expert Assistance”, THE ARMY LAWYER, June 2008

“Uncharged Misconduct - The Edge is Never Dull”, THE ARMY LAWYER, May 2007

PROFESSIONAL PRESENTATIONS

Panelist, Ideas at the House Panel: Sydney Opera House, Sydney, Australia – The War on Whistleblowers – with WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange, Guardian Journalist Glenn Greenwald, and Chelsea Manning’s defense attorney David Coombs (2017)

Invited Speaker, Federal Bar Association of Rhode Island, Providence, Rhode Island – Cutting Edge Issues in Criminal Litigation and Military Law (2015)

Panelist, Harvard Law School, Cambridge, Massachusetts – National Security Law (2014)

Invited Speaker, Roger Williams Law School, Bristol, Rhode Island – The trial of PFC Bradley Manning (2013)

Invited Speaker, Defense Institute of Legal Studies, Newport, Rhode Island – Prosecution of Public Corruption (2011)

Invited Speaker, Suffolk Law School (Army Reserve Conference), Boston, Massachusetts – Rules of Evidence and Sexual Assault Litigation (2010)

Invited Speaker, National Judicial College, Reno, Nevada – Has the pendulum swung too far? Considering recent case law regarding the admissibility of uncharged misconduct, prior acts of sexual misconduct and expert testimony (2008)

Instructor, United States Army Europe. Continuing Legal Education Conference, Weinheim, Germany (2008)

Invited Speaker, William S. Fulton, Jr. Appellate Military Judge’s Conference, Thurgood Marshal Federal Judiciary Building, Washington D.C. – New Developments in Criminal Law (2007)

Instructor, Multi-Region Trial Defense Service Conference, Washington, D.C. – New Developments in Criminal Law, Mitigation Evidence in Complex Cases (2007)

MEDIA AND COMMENTARY

Profiles

“Who is WikiLeaks Leaker PFC Manning’s Lawyer?” Findlaw, June 10, 2013 (discussing my defense strategy and creative representation of Manning)

“WikiLeaks Trial is a high-profile case for low-profile lawyer” Reuters, June 7, 2013 (discussing my focus on representing PFC Manning in court rather than trying case in the media)

“For Resourceful Lawyer, Setback in Wikileaks Case” The New York Times, January 16, 2013 (discussing my creative defense tactics in a case involving millions of classified documents)

Interviews

CNN, Outfront, Interview with Erica Hill (April 14, 2023) (discussing the Espionage Act case of PFC Jack Teixeira)

NBC, The Today Show, Interview with Cynthia McFadden (January 11, 2017) (discussing the commutation request sent to President Obama for PFC Manning)

NBC, The Today Show, Interview with Savannah Guthrie (August 23, 2013) (discussing the sentencing of PFC Manning and her decision to change her name and gender)

Democracy Now, Post-trial Interview with Alexa O’Brien (August 21, 2013) (discussing the sentencing and court-martial of PFC Manning)

CSPAN Press Conference on United States v. Manning (December 8, 2012) (discussing the unlawful pretrial punishment hearings and the status of the Manning case)

BAR ADMISSIONS

California (1996-2022)

United States Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces (1997)

United States Supreme Court (2009)

District of Columbia (2009-2022)

Massachusetts (2009)

New York (2022)