Readings in Legal Thought Seminar

TO: Seminar students, Fall Semester, 2016, George Mason University School of Law

FROM: Judge Douglas H. Ginsburg

RE: Assignments and Logistics

This seminar will meet four times during the fall semester on Tuesdays from 4:00 pm to 5:50 pm. The dates and readings are, subject to change, as follows:

Aug. 23, Organizational meeting; attendance required but no reading assigned.


Nov. 8, David Strauss, The Living Constitution (2010)

Nov. 22, Timothy Sandefur, The Permission Society (2016)

Because the dates on which we will meet are subject to change, you should remain available every Tuesday from September 13 through December 1.

Prior to 5:00 pm on the Thursday preceding class, you should send me a five to six page “reaction paper” on the book for that class. Your paper should be analytical, not descriptive. You may but need not read beyond the assigned book; you may not consult reviews of the book. Each paper must be double-spaced and paginated, and your name must be on every page. Non-conforming papers will not be accepted.

You should submit your paper in the form of an attachment to an email message addressed to me (dginsburg@cadc.uscourts.gov), to my assistant, Ms. Sharon Deare (sdeare@cadc.uscourts.gov), and to every member of the seminar. If at all possible, do not wait until the last day to send your paper. Be sure to register for this seminar on TWEN so that you receive all necessary communications.

Before the seminar meets, you must read the papers submitted by the other members of the seminar and be prepared to discuss them as well as the book. I will designate in advance two or three students, preferably volunteers, to circulate by 5:00 p.m. on the Monday before class an outline for our discussion organized around the issues raised in the papers.
Grades for the seminar will be based entirely upon your written submissions and oral contributions; there is no examination. This seminar qualifies as a “writing” course.

Attendance at every meeting of the seminar is important; timely submission of every paper is imperative, and is expected even of a student who will unavoidably miss a particular class.