

Friday, November 10, 2006

Mikes in the courtroom: Check, check.

In a society where a person can barely go anywhere outside the home without being picked up on camera, some courts are using microphones to playback oral argument to the public. For instance, the Supreme Court provides same-day oral argument transcripts. The Supreme Court releases audiotapes of oral arguments annually to the National Archives, and on occasion releases audiotaped arguments the same day; some are available online at the Oyez page. The District of Columbia Court of Appeals provides real-time listening to oral arguments, but apparently does not archive them yet. Cameras and microphones ordinarily affect behavior when people know they are present. How do they affect lawyer behavior? When witnesses know that their testimony will be recorded and replayed to the public, I wonder if some of them will find a way not to appear in court. Jon Katz.

Posted by Jon Katz in Jon's news & views at 00:00