

2000

Fordham-Stein Prize Presentation to Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist

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Recommended Citation

John D. Feerick, *Fordham-Stein Prize Presentation to Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist*, 68 Fordham L. Rev. 1059 (2000).

Available at: <http://ir.lawnet.fordham.edu/flr/vol68/iss4/1>

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**FORDHAM-STEIN PRIZE PRESENTATION TO
CHIEF JUSTICE WILLIAM H. REHNQUIST
BY DEAN JOHN D. FEERICK**

OCTOBER 26, 1999

Father O'Hare, Chief Justice Rehnquist, friends and members of the family of Louis Stein, members of the judiciary, ladies and gentlemen:

As I begin, I would like to express Fordham Law School's enduring gratitude to the late Louis Stein, and his family, whose extraordinary support has enabled our School to become a leader in ethics and professional responsibility. Their remarkable generosity has allowed us to hold nationally recognized conferences and symposia on ethical issues confronting lawyers, made possible the publication of outstanding scholarship in the field by members of our faculty, and given many of our students, through their participation in the Stein Scholars Program, an opportunity to work in public interest settings and undertake specialized academic work in legal ethics.

Part of Louis Stein's legacy is expressed in the Fordham-Stein Prize. It was his vision that this would be a national award given to individuals whose work exemplifies outstanding standards of professional conduct, promotes the advancement of justice, and brings credit to the legal profession, emphasizing in the public's mind the contributions that lawyers make to our society and our democratic system of government.

This year's recipient of the Fordham-Stein Prize, Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist, has admirably fulfilled these noble ideals. He has set a standard for integrity which lies at the core of our profession, and he has been a steadfast steward of our highest court, serving for 27 years with distinction and impressing upon it—like few individuals in our history—his vision of the Constitution. Most recently, he earned the gratitude and respect of individuals across the political spectrum, as he assumed the constitutionally mandated role of presiding over only the second presidential impeachment trial in our nation's history. With his wise and mature leadership, he provided a much needed balance to the politics of the moment, and helped restore public confidence to our government institutions at a very turbulent time. Upon concluding his service in that difficult position, the Senate gave him a standing ovation.

Justice Rehnquist's tenure on the Court has been characterized by hard work, legal brilliance, and an informal manner and easy collegiality. He has been an advocate for a decrease in the enormous caseloads which burden the federal courts and has opposed federalizing crimes which are dealt with by state laws. He has been a strong voice for judicial independence, and he also has been deeply committed to the democratization of the judiciary.

In his role as Chair of the Judicial Conference of the United States, he has appointed 16 women judges to chair important committees of the Conference, and he has encouraged the Conference's Executive Committee to include district court judges as chairs. Additionally, he was instrumental in seeing that non-lawyers were included in a seminal 1989 Federal Court Study Committee that was created to look at every aspect of the court system.

Despite his many duties, Justice Rehnquist has written on a number of subjects which have found a large readership within and outside of the legal community. He is the author of numerous scholarly writings and several books, including *All the Laws But One: Civil Liberties in Wartime*. An authority on impeachment, his highly praised book, *Grand Inquests: The Historic Impeachments of Justice Samuel Chase and President Andrew Johnson*, which was published in 1992, had a rebirth during the Senate trial this past summer, as journalists, scholars, and members of Congress scrambled to obtain their own copies.

Throughout his career, Justice Rehnquist has defined the role public servant. He has brought credit to his profession, strength to his country, and dignity to all that he has done. It gives me great pleasure to present to our distinguished recipient, Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist, the 1999 Fordham-Stein Prize.