

Much as his father had shocked the newspaper world by naming his son publisher in 1960, Otis Chandler surprised friends and colleagues by stepping aside from the publisher position in 1980 at age fifty-two. After serving as chairman of the board for another five years, he virtually retired in 1985, only occasionally thereafter attending board meetings. In 1999, when the revenue-starved and ethically blind leadership of the *Los Angeles Times* struck a deal with the Staples Center to publish a special issue of the paper's Sunday magazine about the new indoor sports arena and share advertising revenue with the arena's owners, Chandler publicly excoriated the management for selling out its journalistic independence. In 2000 the Chandler family sold its interest in the newspaper to the Chicago-based Tribune Company.

In October 1984, Chandler was elected to membership in the American Antiquarian Society. Although distance kept him from participating in AAS activities, he did support the Society's mission through the American Newspaper Publishers Association and other trade organizations. In retirement, he devoted himself to the Otis Chandler Vintage Museum of Transportation and Wildlife, in Oxnard, California. He died at his home in Ojai, California, on February 27, 2006, at the age of seventy-eight.

Vincent Golden

### LEONARD WILLIAMS LEVY

Leonard Williams Levy, one of the nation's most distinguished scholars of early American law and the Constitution, died on August 24, 2006, at the age of eighty-three. He produced some thirty-eight books, along with a flood of articles, and edited the monumental four-volume *Encyclopedia of the American Constitution*.

After military service in World War II he attended Columbia University, where he received his B.S., M.A., and Ph.D. in quick

succession. He began his academic career at Brandeis University, where he became Earl Warren Professor of History, and then moved to the Claremont Graduate Schools as Andrew W. Mellon Professor of Humanities and History. He was elected to membership in the Society in 1970, the year that he departed Massachusetts for California. Distance and his constant involvement in a wide array of publishing projects kept him from much active involvement in the Society's affairs.

Professor Levy was not a lawyer, he was quick to say, and was scathingly critical of the advocacy-driven history often practiced by lawyers and judges. Yet he had the pugnacity and relentlessness of a first-rate litigator, along with a deeply learned understanding of the arcana of the law. Grounded in massive research—particularly, in the earlier part of his career, in sources that few historians outside law schools had looked at—his books were powerfully argued and always provocative.

This was particularly the case in his path-breaking studies of the true extent of freedom of the press and the practice of other civil liberties in early America. *Legacy of Suppression*, published in 1960, took a darker view than had previous scholars of the Founding generation's record on political speech; they were not, he argued, twentieth-century civil libertarians, but late-eighteenth-century officials and politicians who opposed prior restraint on the press but were willing to countenance prosecutions for seditious libel after the fact of publication. When it appeared in 1963, Levy's *Jefferson and Civil Liberties: The Darker Side*, which looked at Jefferson's willingness as president to use governmental power to harass, punish, or even silence his enemies and critics, reminded many reviewers of a prosecutor's brief.

After a quarter-century of additional scholarship, Levy somewhat modified this iconoclastic view in *The Emergence of a Free Press* in 1985. American legal doctrines, he continued to maintain, were relatively restrictive, and officials did selectively launch libel prosecutions; yet he acknowledged that this had to be balanced against the evidence that in the rapidly growing American

press as a whole, political debate and invective remained for the most part unchecked.

Levy's *Origins of the Fifth Amendment: The Right Against Self-Incrimination* received the Pulitzer Prize for history in 1969, testimony not only to his scholarship but to his powers of literary expression. He turned to the question of religious freedom in *The Establishment Clause: Religion and the First Amendment* of 1986, and in 1988 published *Original Intent and the Framers' Constitution*, a scholarly critique of the 'originalist' theory of Constitutional interpretation. Continuing to demonstrate his energy and erudition, in 1995 he moved from analyzing the Constitution to looking at the entire sweep of Western law in his massive study, *Blasphemy: Verbal Offense against the Sacred, from Moses to Salman Rushdie*.

I have vivid memories of Leonard Levy as a teacher. He was one of the founding faculty of Brandeis University's History of American Civilization program, where I began my graduate work in 1966. Coming as I did from a background in English literature and mathematics, his seminar in American legal and constitutional history was my first introduction to historical research. A rigorous one it was. I recall an anxious couple of weeks writing an essay on *Marbury v. Madison*, the first Supreme Court case I had ever read, and his incisive (to put it mildly) criticism. Yet he did allow me to follow my own bent, and directed me to a research topic that combined my interests in religion and community life with legal analysis—the early-nineteenth-century disestablishment of the Congregational Church in Massachusetts. He was sometimes intimidating, and often gruff. But I found him a superb editor, encouraging once you had proved yourself, and concerned about his students' welfare.

After he retired from Claremont, Professor Levy and his wife moved to Ashland, Oregon, to be close to their children. His last years were shadowed by ill health. He is survived by his wife, Elyse, his daughters Wendy and Leslie, and seven grandchildren.

Jack Larkin

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