

5.7: Television Cameras in Courtrooms

Activity 2: Design a Format for Future Supreme Court TV Coverage

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The Supreme Court is open to the public and anyone can come see their oral arguments. Some oral arguments are already recorded for audio and available for the public. If the justices decide that a case is able to be recorded orally then it should be allowed to be videotaped but some cases will have to remain private, this is for the court to decide. Adding cameras would make the court more open for the public and be more interesting, easier to follow, and be a way to gain a larger audience than the oral arguments alone. I propose there be multiple cameras throughout the room, one that can see each of the Justices, a wide camera angle showing all nine justices, and cameras pointing at the plaintiffs' and the defendants' table. There should also be a camera pointing to the podium in the middle where the lawyer who is speaking will be standing. Below is an example of where the cameras could be placed inside the supreme courtroom made from an existing courtroom [sketch](#) with some added cameras. The cameras should show the individual who is talking and be switching or do a side by side of the justices, lawyers, and audience for their reactions. There should also be some text below the camera feed that displays who is speaking or who is being shown on camera so people can understand what is happening. If there is something that can be shown using a picture or graphic, then it should appear on the right while the camera feed remains on the left but if the graphic is not interesting or helpful it shouldn't be shown.

Commentators who are experts on the Supreme Court and the topic being heard should be explaining what is happening when necessary during the arguments. This will be very helpful in obtaining a wide range of viewers because most people will need help understanding the procedures of the Supreme Court and details about the case. There should be opportunities for

people to engage online in real time to ask questions throughout the argument or express their opinions. This can be done using Twitter as a way of communication. The audience will be able to tweet at the news channel or use a hashtag to direct the questions. The commentators should answer them by replying on twitter and answering them live on TV. This will also give people, who are unable to watch the session live, a way to tune in and stay updated.

