

[What is Your Favorite Lawyer Biography?](#)

Posted by [Cordell Parvin](#) on August 12, 2011

I love biographies. What is your favorite lawyer biography? For me the answer is easy. It is Final Verdict the biography of [Earl Rogers](#) written by his daughter [Adela Rogers St. Johns](#). When I first read the book, I literally could not put it down.

Among his many claims to fame, Earl Rogers was reported to be the first trial lawyer to use demonstrative evidence. He was a master cross-examiner. He lost only 3 of the 77 murder cases he defended. He also served as the role model for [Erle Stanley Gardner's](#) character [Perry Mason](#).

Rogers had many flaws, including extreme alcoholism. In that capacity he served as the role model for [alcoholic lawyers](#) in novels and movies. When Adela sought to have her father put away for his own good, his brilliant cross-examination of her, won his freedom. I

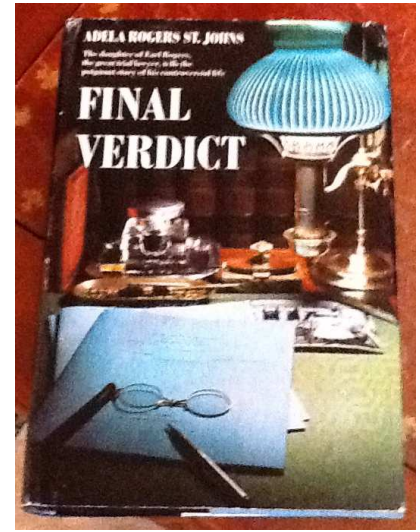
found this quote from a link to [COUNSEL for the INDEFENSIBLE](#), an article in American Heritage magazine:

William Fallon, the ‘Great Mouthpiece’ of the 1920s, said, ‘Even when he’s drunk, Earl Rogers is better than any other stone-sober lawyer in the whole damned country.’

Did you know that Earl Rogers defended [Clarence Darrow](#)? It would be an understatement to say that the two famous trial lawyers did not get along. Much has been written about the [Darrow bribery trials](#).

The shame for young lawyers and law students is that Final Verdict is no longer printed. It would be a wonderful book to put on Kindle. Shortly after Adela Rogers St. Johns died, LA Times writer, Jack Smith wrote: [Early L.A. Law : Earl Rogers' Life In and Out of Court Was More Dramatic Than Fiction](#).

When I saw Final Verdict was no longer printed, I bought a few used copies on Amazon. I also bought a copy of [Once Upon a Time in Los Angeles: The Trials of Earl Rogers](#). If you are truly interested in



learning about this troubled innovative trial lawyer, and you promise to return my book, I would be happy to lend you copies of either book.

What is your favorite lawyer biography?

Cordell M. Parvin built a national construction practice during his 35 years practicing law. At Jenkins & Gilchrist, Mr. Parvin was the Construction Law Practice Group Leader and was also responsible for the firm's attorney development practice. While there he taught client development and created a coaching program for junior partners. In 2005, Mr. Parvin left the firm and started Cordell Parvin LLC. He now works with lawyers and law firms on career development and planning and client development. He is the co-author of *Say Ciao to Chow Mein: Conquering Career Burnout* and other books for lawyers. To learn more visit his Web site, www.cordellparvin.com or contact him at cparvin@cordellparvin.com.