

# From Trial Court to the United States Supreme Court: Anatomy of a Free Speech Case: The Incredible Inside Story Behind the Theft of the St.

## **Patrick's**

Paul J. Walkowski, William M. Connolly

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### From Trial Court to the United States Supreme Court: Anatomy of a Free Speech Case: The Incredible Inside Story Behind the Theft of the St. Patrick's

Paul J. Walkowski, William M. Connolly

From Trial Court to the United States Supreme Court: Anatomy of a Free Speech Case: The Incredible Inside Story Behind the Theft of the St. Patrick's Paul J. Walkowski, William M. Connolly In March 1994 news organisations from around America and the world focused considerable attention on what appeared to be a relatively minor parade controversy boiling over on the streets of the predominantly working-class community of South Boston. After three years of legal wrangling, the state's highest court was about to speak to the question of whether sponsors of a traditionally-themed and privately organised St. Patrick's Day Parade could ban, without violating the state's public accommodation law, a gay activist group from marching behind a banner proclaiming its homosexual orientation. When the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court affirmed the decision of the trial court that the Allied War Veterans Council's traditional parade, replete with Irish flags, shamrocks, bag-pipe bands, pro-life, POW, political, religious and cultural message, was not expressive enough to be protected under the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, and because of this, could not exclude a group with an antithetical, non-traditional message from participating, the stage was set for a historic constitutional confrontation. In this important book on how the dismantling of the First Amendment occurred, the authors chronicle the social and legal arguments from trial court all the way to the United States Supreme Court, offering the reader a rare glimpse into how a legal controversy makes its way to the nation's highest court against a network of biased court judges, politically correct law firms, a state anti-discrimination agency, academe, and a timid municipal administration.

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