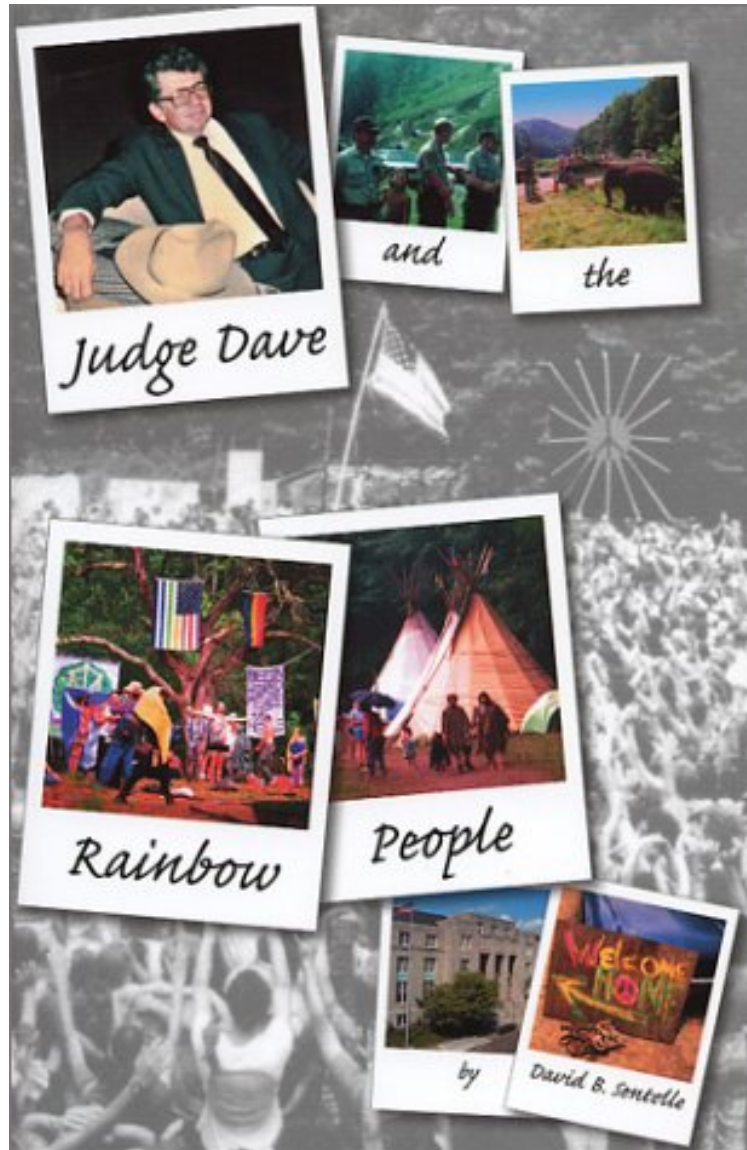


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## Judge Dave and the Rainbow People

*David B. Sentelle*

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**David B. Sentelle : Judge Dave and the Rainbow People** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Judge Dave and the Rainbow People:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Good Read as you Second Book on RainbowsBy Conflicted ConsumerJudge David provides a humorous outsider's observation of a Rainbow Gathering. He is open minded and a very good amateur writer. But don't expect this federal officer's observation to either be comprehensive or to adequately document the details of the Rainbow Family Gatherings or their history of abuse at the hands of the Federal Government. For that, you should read "People of the Rainbow" (Niman - Univ of Tennessee Press). The two books

work well in tandem. 0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. I've never been to a Rainbow Gathering, but I ...By Elbert D. Porter I've never been to a Rainbow Gathering, but I know Garrick Beck, one of its unofficial and unacknowledged but de facto leaders. I stayed on his farm for several months some thirty years ago. That's why I read this book. I'm not sure why Judge Sentelle wrote it. He assumes a sort of amused and tolerant, but also smirking and condescending, pose towards the Rainbow people. As Garrick writes in an afterword, the judge is almost entirely accurate in his facts. But he is a bit selective in his presentation of facts, and Garrick brings a much needed bit of balance to Sentelle's perspective. 17 of 17 people found the following review helpful. Tolerance, peace, and wit By Jerry Brito It's not every day that you read a book containing the full text of a consent agreement between parties to a health statute dispute and still find it very enjoyable. It's just as uncommon for a federal appeals court judge to write a book about the time he oversaw the peaceful assembly of thousands of middle-aged hippies in the woods of North Carolina. But that's what Judge Dave and the Rainbow People is about. The Rainbow People are not an organization as such. They're just whoever shows up around Independence Day each year at a place on federal land decided the year before. The people who show up are mostly baby boomer ex-hippies trying to relive the Summer of Love. They come by the thousands, get naked, and live in the woods for weeks. Invariably, the Forrest Service comes after them. In 1987 the Rainbow People converged on Nantahala Forrest in Western North Carolina. It wasn't long before the State tried to evict them under a sanitation law that was arguably unconstitutional. The case ended up before Judge Dave, who was a circuit court judge at the time. The result is an endearing account of how a conservative judge faced 15,000 decadent hippies (and at least one elephant), the ACLU, snarky law clerks, a ticking clock, and his own Senate confirmation to the D.C. Circuit in the background, and still managed to avoid catastrophe by avoiding a ruling on the law. Judge Dave is sincere and admits up front that this was one case where the results, and not the letter of the law, drove his decision. The alternative was a possible showdown between thousands of until-then peaceful gatherers and state troopers. I guess he made use of judicial discretion. Judge Dave got to visit the Rainbow camp a couple of times while he assessed the problem and later monitored the implementation of the agreement he brokered between the two sides. These visits account for much of the book and Judge Dave recounts them with a wonderful understated dry wit. "That weekend, July 4th occurred on Saturday as scheduled," he recalls in one part. You learn how tolerant Judge Dave is. Not in the modern meaning of the word, which holds that everyone's wonderful, but as originally defined: "to allow without prohibiting" even if one strongly disagrees. You also learn how truly peaceful the Rainbow People are and how this allowed tolerance to work. Finally, you learn that Judge Dave found himself staring at the naked ladies quite a bit! I would recommend this book, especially to lawyers, law students, and hippies (quite the niche). The only real critique I have is that at the end of the book, one of the Rainbow leaders shares his memories in 20 pages. I bet this was done to provide some sort of "equal time", but it doesn't add much and is actually a bit distracting. After finishing Judge Dave's hilarious and fair account of the gathering it's odd to go through a flat mini-review of what you just read. But hey, judge for yourself. Happy trails!

Book by Sentelle, David B.

"It is rare ... for a federal judge to write a riveting and funny, footnote-free book." -- Tony Mauro, Legal Times (November 4, 2002)