

July 2021

Denver Bar Association October Meeting

Dicta Editorial Board

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Recommended Citation

Denver Bar Association October Meeting, 22 Dicta 241 (1945).

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Denver Bar Association October Meeting

At the regular October 1st meeting of the Denver Bar Association, the Denver lawyers were privileged to hear Frederic P. Storke, acting dean of the Law School of the University of Colorado, give a very fine discussion of the subject, "The Lawyer's Job and the Lawyer's Training."

In discussing what's wrong and what's right with legal education, Dean Storke stated that the case method of teaching law, with its informal discussions between student and professor, was certainly right. It does appear, however, that the legal education system does need re-vamping.

First we should answer the question, "What is a legal education supposed to do?" Critics of present law school methods say that there should be some teaching of techniques in law school. The law school must prepare a lawyer to be an advocate in court, in the preparation of cases, and in advising clients. It must prepare the lawyer for several types of practice: independent practice of a small town; the small cog in big machine type of practice of the large city; with government bureaus; in business.

A lawyer is inherently more than a lawyer, and must know something besides the law. He has always been a public servant. One of the great functions of a lawyer is that of policy making. In an organization, the organization always looks to the lawyer for advice on policy. The question is, "Is his training adequate for policy making?" It is said that the giving of advice is not the job of the lawyer, but lawyers are not that kind of people, and they will always give that advice. It is, therefore, the job of the law school to educate men to handle problems that transcend legal knowledge.

In this set-up, the college should give the necessary background and the law school the technical knowledge. These two cannot be separated.

For example, a knowledge of history is necessary to a knowledge of constitutional law. Judges have a habit of making up their minds as to what they think is the correct decision and rendering an opinion which is a legal justification for the position. If these decisions are to be correct in the future, a proper basic knowledge of history and other things must be given. How can that basic knowledge be given?

There are three possible courses: (1) The improvement of pre-admission requirements. This is not practical. (2) To have law students take sociology, history, and economics while in law school. This won't work. (3) Have the law professor teach, in his law school courses, enough of the other social sciences to reasonably fit the student for the job of policy maker. This might mean that the law professor will have to have a better background of the social sciences, because they must be able to fit the two together. This is being done in the larger schools, but can the smaller schools afford it? We don't know, but we can try. There are always some men in law school who are capable of this and who can be turned to teaching. This will mean lengthening the law school course. The four year course will become the standard course of the future. The expansion of material in the orthodox subjects and the adding of new subjects even now require a longer course than the three year course. The University of Colorado hopes to install a four year course soon. The veteran should be permitted to graduate in three years. Perhaps the bachelor of arts should be allowed to finish law school in three years. Besides these two groups, all others should be required to take four years in law school. It may be that pre-legal work can be reduced to two years, making six years in all.

Law schools will not stay where they are—they are going to try to reach out and train the law student to become a policy maker.

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The following exclusive listing contract was approved by the Denver Bar Association at the November 5, 1945, meeting, on the recommendation of the Real Estate Title Standards Committee:

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The Denver Board of Realtors

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