
The Opinion

8-2004

The Opinion – Volume 17, August/September 2004

William Mitchell College of Law

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The OPINION

William Mitchell
College of Law
Student Newspaper
Volume 17
Aug/Sept 2004

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By Carla J. Magnuson

An indication that our new Dean of Student Affairs, Dan Thompson, is both flexible and good-natured might be his response to being temporarily

Introducing Dean Dan Thompson

stashed away in one of those glorified closets, the ones at the back of the microfiche room where we watched Advocacy instruction videos. "Hey, at least it's air conditioned!" Toward the end of his first month Dean Dan Thompson, a class of 2000 graduate, riffed on his past, present, and future here at William Mitchell. He encourages you to make his acquaintance, though probably only a few at a time. It's a very tiny office.

O: Given that I could end up not practicing law, I'm starting to wonder why I put

myself through the long onerous trip that is law school. Apparently you have found having a law degree helpful for your career.

D.T. Yes. Even before I applied, that was my idea. I have a Master's in Higher Education, specifically Student Affairs. When I was doing my graduate work, during the summer, I worked for the Dean of Students at a college in Wellesley, Mass. He had a law degree in addition to a graduate degree similar to the one I was working on.

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Dan Thompson Biography

Education

J.D. William Mitchell College of Law, 2000.

M.A. in Higher Education, Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, Ohio.

B.A. Management, Saint John's University, Collegeville, Minnesota.

Employment

Associate V. P. for Academic and Student Affairs: Minneapolis Community and Technical College, September 2003-June 2004

V. P. for Student Affairs and Institutional Advancement: Rochester Community and Technical College, June 2001-September 2003

Dean of Students: Century College (a community and technical college in White Bear Lake, MN), October 1999-June 2001

Dean of Student Development, Century College, November 1998-October 1999

Assistant Dean of Students/Director of Enrollment Management, Century College, April 1995- November 1998



Collected by Melessa Henderson

Editor's note: On May 21st, Dean Kevin Campana sent out an e-mail informing the students that our SBA secretary, Crystal Murphy, had been killed in a car accident outside of Nashville, Tennessee the day before. The student body sent flowers to the funeral and the school began a memorial fund. Following is a collection of memories from students who were close to Crystal.

"Life without a friend is death without a witness."

– Spanish proverb

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Dean Thompson...

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He got me started thinking it might be a good alternative to a Ph.D. in Higher Education Administration. Now this was the summer of 1990 and he was starting to see for himself not only how useful [his law degree] was, but also an evolution in higher education with more and more legal issues ranging anywhere from data practices to tort liability and contracts. More than anything I've found my approach to managing and problem solving is totally different having had the training I've had.

Another thing; for about the last ten years I was in the same system of colleges so in some respects the moves I made from one school to the next were like moves in the same company at different locations. So, within a system that large, it [a law degree] was something different than what everyone else had. That was particularly helpful for me from an advancement standpoint because people viewed my skills and background as bringing something a bit different to the table than what everyone else was bringing.

Plus, being in a non-practice area, I do bump into several others along the way who are in the same boat [with a law degree but not practicing] and they continue to say what a great education it is and they wouldn't have done it differently.

I have a long history here, my dad and my uncle went to school here, and my granddad went to Saint Paul College of Law here.

O: So you are a big L legacy. How did your family feel about your not pursuing law practice?

D.T.: I came here totally intending to work in higher ed. upon graduating. You do get exposed to things though and you think maybe I'll do this or that. My dad was often selected to do mediation/ADR and that interested me so I started looking into that also Estates and Trusts. But my uncle sort of hinted I should keep doing what I was doing.

Last time I was home my uncle asked me "What are the departments you're working with?" The first one I said was Career Services. "Does that have to do with placement?" I said yeah. Now, his name is Joe. He said, "Did you know your Uncle Joe helped start the placement office at William Mitchell?" He was pretty proud of that.

Because I graduated from WMCL not that long ago I can visit with students and have a good idea what they're going through. I realize things change quickly—I was here 1996-2000—and that the experience isn't exactly the same, but I still should have a good general idea.

O: I had the interesting experience of starting my first year right before 9/11.

D.T.: I started shortly after the conclusion of the OJ Simpson trial, so that's what everyone was talking about. Most of the professors were like "We don't want to talk about that because it's not reflective of what really happens." On the other hand some of them did, because it was so visible they would point to various things that went on {during the OJ trial}. And of course people asked questions about it all the time.

O: Did you have a favorite class or classes here at Mitchell?

D.T.: Probably property, estates and trusts that whole string. I had property my second year being part-time. My first year, contracts I enjoyed more than probably anything else. I would say I went into both of those not expecting them to be my favorite. They sort of snuck up on me and were really great classes. The faculty members made them come to life. I took ADR and a skills negotiation class over one summer. I love that stuff.

O: Coming in what do you see as the biggest challenges, things that you're going to see as potential sticking points?

D.T.: My experience would generally tell me that the employees in the Student Affairs unit like the one we have: Career Services, Registrar, Financial Aid. Depending upon the role that they play some of them can draw a very easy connection between their work and the mission of the college, the advancement of people who are trying to grow their careers, human development of some form or another. Whereas, some of the others won't, maybe are either behind the scenes or aren't thinking in the human development mode, thinking more of it's just a "daily job to pay the bills" mode. {It would be of benefit to change this attitude} both for this group and throughout the college as well. It's easy for instructors to make that connection given that they're the principal delivery mechanism for what we are trying to do. But I think the way we interact with students in Student Affairs contributes to what they get at the end of the program as well. I like to think that if we emphasize

that every interaction that we have with a student is a part of their educational experience, then when they walk across the stage at graduation we can look to that and see we contributed to that [accomplishment] in a significant way. We can say when we read that mission or think about human development we can stop and if we ask ourselves the question we know how we contributed to that. Either by helping them clear a particular hurdle that they needed to get over or facilitate something one way or helping another person better understand why networking is important, whatever it might be. I think the backbone of Student Affairs work is a balance between challenging students and pushing them to be as good as they can be on the one hand and the ability to be a supportive system on the other hand and trying to balance those two things so that we can encourage people to stretch as much as possible but when they need a boost that we can be there to try and provide that too. I think if you strike that balance then you began to feel more like describing work not as something just task oriented as much as human development oriented. I think if we can get there the job becomes more enriching. It feels like a more noble thing to be a part of.

Some other things I think might be challenging for us; we have a relatively new management team in student affairs not to mention in the college. I'd put that relatively new in quotes as while they are new they are experienced in what they are doing and I think we have some great recent hires. Whether chal-

conclusion on page 21

From the Editor

Greetings, fellow scholars of the law. I hope you enjoyed your summer break. A couple quick thoughts before we hit the ground running:

For those of you who newly grace our hallowed halls, welcome. Do you like to read? If not, you might wish to consider un-enrolling in time for that 100% refund.

In an informal survey of how much an average law student has to read (and this just goes to show how perverse my mind can be), I looked at several textbooks and figured they ran around 740 pages for a 3 credit class or an average of approximately 240 per credit. At 86 credits to graduate that's over 21,200 pages total over the course of your 3 or 4 years. This total breaks down to nearly 1,200 pages per month, 300 pages per week and, if you allow yourself a five day "work week", about 60 pages per day. Granted that doesn't factor in clinics and other courses without a textbook. However, it also doesn't factor in any additional reading required for outside research, study aids and not to mention multiple readings of the same page(s). Trust me, no matter how smart you are, you will come up against text that you will read over and over trying to make it make sense.

To get through the Assignment it really does help

to be a grown up version of the geeky kid who won volume reading recognition at the local library. Being one myself, I know whereof I speak. We got segments of an inchworm displayed for every 10 books we read over the course of a summer. Fast forward thirty years and now I almost feel naked, incomplete without some thick tome in my hands. Even so, I have found that sometimes I need to cleanse my mental palate with strings of words that I don't have to struggle to comprehend. I have a weekly subscription to a celebrity studded magazine for this very thing.

A concept which brings me around to this invitation: Feel free to use the pages of *The Opinion* to give yourself a break from the heavy mental lifting you will be doing in the upcoming months. In fact, if you are so inspired you can also contribute to these pages with writing that's not a struggle to comprehend.

I hope you enjoy this, my "maiden" issue as editor in chief. I was going for something both light and enlightening. Please let me know your thoughts, concerns and ways in which we here at *The Opinion* can make your journey through your 1's a better one. Now rev up your highlighters and get started on that 21K.



The OPINION

William Mitchell College of Law Student Newspaper

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Graduation and Onkka Photograph by Tim Rummelhoff **courtesy of the WMCL Alumni magazine and Elizabeth Warmka, photograph of Crystal by** Sherri Krueger

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The Opinion will always consider quality content submitted for publication. Interested authors may forward copy of not more than 1500 words to theopinion@wmitchell.edu.

The Opinion reserves the right to edit for clarity, space and editorial content.

Please contact the Editor at cmagnuso@wmitchell.edu for specific questions or comments.

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Submissions to The Opinion

Articles for the October, 2004 issue of *The Opinion* are due September 15, 2004.

Stu's Views

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"You like kayaking, travel and yoga. I hope you realize that lawyers don't have time for this stuff."

What I Did On My Summer Vacation

by Opinion Contributors

For some of us the Summer of 2004 was same old-same old. We chose to attend summer school to either get a leg up or catch up on credits we need to graduate. Others embraced the opportunity for something different. They included a stimulating array of experiences, from "summer associate" to summer abroad. Here are a few anecdotes to consider as inspiration for next year.



I was extremely fortunate to work for ten weeks this past summer as a legal clerk for *1000 Friends of Minnesota* (www.1000fom.org), "a nonprofit membership organization dedicated to addressing the important connections between our development patterns and the health of our communities and the environment." My work was centered around the issue of annexation, which is the process by which a city extends its borders to encompass previously unincorporated areas. My research was particularly focused on whether or not the statutes regarding annexation could be changed so as to encourage more intelligent and responsible development patterns.

Annexation has been notoriously contentious for many years now. Because it is literally the act of a city taking territory away from a surrounding township, there's little wonder why it could create bad blood among the

parties involved. What *1000 Friends* hoped to discover was whether or not this highly polarizing issue could be used to help foster "smart growth," which, loosely defined, is urban growth that is designed to minimize negative environmental impact and promote growth patterns that are efficient for the delivery of municipal services (for example, city sewer and water, fire and police protection, etc.) and for the movement of individuals (between home and work, between home and necessary services and goods, etc.).

My research involved talking to stakeholders in this issue, including the Executive Director of the office of Municipal Boundary Adjustments (the group that receives the petitions for annexations), as well as representatives from lobbying groups that advocate for either the cities or the townships. Naturally, each group had ideas about changes that should be made to the statutes that reflected whom they represented, but the input of all of the individuals was invaluable in creating my final product.

I also spent a great deal of time researching the history of annexation. What started as an ambitious, forwarding thinking project in the 1950s to create uniformity in the annexation laws and, more importantly, create a quasi-judicial board for the oversight of these actions has devolved into a somewhat opaque process with limited accountability to the parties involved.



I am currently in the process of working my research into a long paper as part of my work as a Staff Member on the 31st Volume of William Mitchell's Law Review. I've made several recommendations in a report submitted to *1000 Friends*, which they will hopefully be able to apply in their own advocacy efforts for the upcoming legislative session. It is my hope that the changes I've offered can help the various groups involved develop a recommendation to the legislature that will allow for the reasonable growth of municipal boundaries to accommodate anticipated urban growth while preserving high quality farm land and open spaces in Minnesota.

I am extremely grateful to all those who made this clerkship possible. This work was funded by the generous support of the *Minnesota Justice Foundation* (www.mnjustice.org) through its Public Interest Law Foundation (PILF) grant program, and I would like to thank the MJF officers and

members, as well as those who donated to the program via MJF's silent auction in Spring 2004, for providing this opportunity to me. I would urge all students with an interest in public interest law, in any of its many forms, to apply for the PILF grant for 2005 and to talk to our MJF representative, Heather Rastorfer Vlieger, about volunteering for public law positions throughout the year.

Anthony Kuehn



This summer I had the opportunity to work with Hauwa Ibrahim, a Nigerian human rights lawyer. Ms. Ibrahim was in the United States as a Humphrey Fellow and completed her LLM at Washington College of Law this past academic year. Ms. Ibrahim is well known for her role in ensuring due process in the newly implemented Sharia (Islamic) legal system in twelve regions of Northern Nigeria. Ms. Ibrahim has

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Defense counsel will cease placing air quotes around his references to the "justice" system.

Summer Vacation...

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worked on forty-nine Sharia human rights cases since 1999 and has done all of these cases pro bono. I was privileged to help Ms. Ibrahim with research for her own legal firm in Nigeria, focusing on a comparative analysis of Sharia law in five various countries, looking specifically at the role that culture and politics plays in how the law is applied. I also had the opportunity to attend meetings and lectures with Ms. Ibrahim at the Council on Foreign Relations, The US State Department, and many non-profit organizations. Following my one month internship with Ms. Ibrahim, I attended a two week class at Vermont Law School, where I took non-profit management and was able to 'create' my own non-profit organization (including a budget, project

details, by-laws etc). I created the 'African Civil Society Expansion Project,' the first major project for my organization is in Northern Nigeria working with Ms. Ibrahim and Sharia law! Maybe it will be reality some day.

Overall this summer solidified my desire to work in the public interest sector of law. Although I was only an intern, I felt that the work I was participating in and learning about was one that would someday be implemented to create change in the fields of basic human rights, equality and due process of the law, women's rights and management of the non-profit sector as a whole. I am excited and eager to continue my search for a more just and equal society and hope to use my law degree to enact change and spark growth.

Caroline Riss

Top 10 Reasons Summer School ROCKS

10. Ongoing game of "Where's class today?" cheap aerobic exercise.
9. ONE CREDIT PASS/FAIL the closest thing to pain-free that law school can get.
8. Campus crawling with eye candy construction workers wielding power tools and driving really big trucks.
7. Many "Fundamentals of" text have color photos and graphics.
6. Retired judge Doris Huspeni: both honorable and adorable.
5. Aspen/West publications look great and impress onlookers at the beach.
4. Attorneys are expected to be less than tan and less than buff.
3. Whistling "Schoolhouse Rocks: Yes I'm Only a Bill" down hallway prompts high fives from the SPIL/SEP kids.
2. Truncated 7 week format leaves no time for the Socratic method.
1. June 19th, 2005, I am outta here!



This summer I was lucky enough to work for the Ramsey County Pro Bono Attorney Program as a Minnesota Justice Foundation volunteer. This was my first real, legal experience. I volunteered three hours a week for attorneys that were also volunteering their time to help low-income clients. I was able to assist in initial client intake, fact investigation, as well as some research. I worked in a variety of areas that included landlord/

tenant, probate, employment and family law. The most rewarding part of the volunteer experience was the gratitude you receive not only from the clients but also from the individual attorneys that you support. Being a Minnesota Justice Foundation volunteer for a summer was a tremendous experience.

Deanne Bahti



The Opinion's Opinion Page

A *Liberal* Presumption

By Melessa Henderson

In a recent class I took, an instructor several times made disparaging remarks about those "fundamentalist Christians" out in the world. Though many a professor has broken my heart with JC curses of the Lord's name, I had never before experienced such a presumptive and public insult to the core of my being. It was at this point I probably came closest to understanding how the gay/lesbian camp for years experienced being in-the-closet, as others unconsciously bashed their lifestyle. I, being the fundamentalist Christian conservative that I am, was shocked at the instructor's presumption that either **A)** there were no fundamentalist Christians in the room, or **B)** if there actually were some who strayed into the

class, to offend them is acceptable, even as the class instructor. I agree that it is egregious to slander in speech and in spirit the Jewish, the Muslim, the black, the white, the poor, the rich, the GLBT, the straight and narrow, or any other human category for that matter. Why, though, is it socially acceptable to slam and smear those Christian conservatives who paradoxically hold values most true to those founding foremothers and fathers of our great nation?

Perhaps this liberal presumption has run mad because liberals are afraid to think, and Christian conservatives are afraid to speak! For instance, I once read an article by a very liberal writer who insinuated that Saddam Hussein is really no different than our very own American, Jerry Falwell. I am neither the paramount Falwell zealot nor expert, however to that liberal writer, and many sheep that followed and blindly bleated the same anthem, simple facts simply didn't seem to matter. Falwell with all his good and bad rolled together, to my shallow knowledge never murdered even one person. How could anyone honestly and in good faith say Falwell is just like a man who has tortured and murdered millions of his own people? Give me a fricken break! That would be like me insinuating that the "Presumptive Professor" was just like North Korea's Kim Jong Il.

I speak here, proud of those humble God servants who pray for their enemies, who believe ours is the greatest nation in the world, because we are one nation under God, who understand the verbiage was "freedom of religion" not "from religion," who tithe on their gross income, and whose hands, hearts, and hard cash support hundreds upon hundreds of shelters, hospitals, schools, colleges, rehab centers, and the list could go on and on. In fact, here is an offer dear friends... I'll give 50 bucks to the first person who can prove to me with verified tax returns that they have found a fiscally liberal person who for at least three consecutive years has tithed! (For any pagans out there "tithe" is somewhat analogous to "donate at least 10% of one's own gross income to a non-political, charitable organization such as a church or feed-the-poor programs.") I personally know at least 30 fundamentalist conservative Christians who, as opposed to their foes, put their money where their mouths are. Please, somebody prove to me that being fiscally liberal isn't tantamount to being liberal with OPM. (Other People's Money!)

Now, dearest colleague, what do you really believe? Do you wave the Planned Parenthood banner like a Homer Hanky because it is in style, and in step with your political party? Or do you support the death penalty simply because long ago you became a card carry-

ing Republican? Never, never, NEVER, let politics, professors, or popularity do your thinking for you. Aren't we *all* challenged to "defend those who cannot help themselves... speak up for the poor and needy and see that they get justice"? Our ultimate "grade" in life is given not by Kleinberger, Levine, or even Heidenreich. One day we all, stripped of our party, our partner, and our parents, will stand before God to give account for our thoughts, words, and deeds. Do your deeds match your convictions? Heck, even if you gravely don't "do the God thing," at least for the sake of good Karma, let your actions be true to yourself and you'd sow some good seeds of honesty!

Speaking of honesty, because all is relative, in my own home I am the bleeding heart liberal. The love of my life is a 100% red-blooded, rugged individualist. With his charm, good looks, ability to speak to large crowds with passion rather than a prompter, and unwavering convictions he should be the Republican poster boy. Give him a law degree and a Purple Heart and he'd give both Kush 'n Berry (a little switch-a-roo and we have a new fruity cereal!) a real run for their money. (Well, maybe not. I forgot... politics is oft about b.s. rather than tenacious convictions!) Though I go round after round against my sexy man of God about the death penalty, the environ-

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The Opinion
wants to know
YOUR opinion.

Tell us what you think:
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The Opinion's Opinion Page

Hearsay

autonomy (aw-tahn'-ə-mee), *n.* 1. The right of self-government. 2. A self-governing state **autonomous** (aw-tahn'-ə-məs), *adj.*

Black's Law Dictionary Gardner, Bryan; editor, Second Pocket Edition.

Last spring at an SBA meeting a special committee appointed by the SBA declared that *The Opinion* should be autonomous. One editor leaned over to the other and whispered, incredulously, "What do you think they mean by that?" The other editor whispered back, optimistically, "I think it might be a good

thing." So ended a rather contentious chapter in the history of *The Opinion*. The chapter began with a pitched battle over the funding and future of our newspaper. Last November, a controversial survey was conducted. "Much ink was spilt" over the how's and why's of what to do with this thing that you are now reading. The results were mixed, ambivalent and polarized. The also represented about a third of the student body, the equivalent of the number of registered Minnesota voters

who turn out in a non-presidential election year.

Feelings varied from "WE DO NOT NEED A SCHOOL NEWSPAPER. There are plenty of avenues to voice your opinion. We have plenty of student organizations that deal with many issues. *The Opinion* does nothing to enhance our LEGAL EDUCATION;"

to "The *Opinion* is an important forum for all students to write articles and for students to find out about other students' experiences. There is no other forum at William Mitchell. It's already difficult for part time students to feel connected to other students, but *The Opinion* helps. If *The Opinion* were to cease, this connection will be destroyed;"

from "Waste of time. Dump it;"

to "I think having a student newspaper is extremely valuable to the student body at Mitchell as it benefits the entire student body as opposed to student organizations that represent only specific students in their beliefs, morals, political views and/or interest."

After all was said and done the folks who did respond with an opinion on *The Opinion* felt it was a nice idea in theory, somewhat flawed in the execution. Given we are in the same company as Democracy, Justice, Equality, and Freedom, all great theories, not yet prac-

ticed in anything other than a flawed fashion, we'll take the criticism.

That being said, it would sure be great if more students, more organizations, more artists, more free thinkers, more ideas, more news, more opinions, showed up in *The Opinion*. Did you miss that PLP that sounded really interesting that you couldn't get to because you were in class? Look there's a synopsis in *The Opinion*! Wondering about that rumor about so and so and such and such? Apparently it's an urban myth, debunked right there in *The Opinion*. Feeling like you've got to be the stupidest person on earth and what were you thinking coming to WMCL anyway? So does most everyone else, says right here in *The Opinion*. You get the picture. We want to be all about the market place of ideas and would like to offer more than granola bars and microwave popcorn. The more and varied our contributors are the closer we will get to accomplishing that "nice idea". We hope our newly autonomous back to school issue gets us one step closer.

Presumption...

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ment, and women lawyers, I admire and am attracted to his rare but dogged ardor.

Indeed, many a closeted conservative Christian fundamentalist could take moxie lessons from my born-again, Bible-believing, bridegroom. They, myself included, could probably even (dare-I-say) learn something from those of the gay/lesbian camp who have come ablaze from the closet. I am not sure which burns my britches more: a liberal sheep or a conservative Christian fundamentalist with no grit! I for one, officially storm down the door of my

closet to declare: I am a female fundamentalist Christian conservative who has gay and lesbian friends for whom I pray, who knows we must become better stewards of our environment, that we should pay good teachers more, that we ought completely and forever abolish the death penalty. Nevertheless I'd rather fight, die, and vote for the lives of millions of living, feeling, innocent, unborn children who cannot help themselves and the well-being of their mothers than that of hundreds of death row inmates.

¹Proverbs 31:8-9.
(The Living Bible).



Where there is much desire to learn, there of necessity will be much arguing, much writing, many opinions, for opinion in good men is but knowledge in the making.

Milton's Areopagitica



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The Opinion's Opinion Page

The Costs of Manifest Destiny

By Mike Tierney

In 1915 a man was born into a world on the verge of enormous change: the spread of Liberty through Democracy. Depending on which history you read you might be inclined to say that the change had already occurred, and the rest was just Manifest Destiny. But as they say, there is nothing as unpredictable as the past.

The name of this man was Aung San, born of poor parents who farmed in a rural village in central Burma, now, of course, Myanmar. At 17 Aung San entered college at Rangoon University, founded by the British Empire, now, of course, Great Britain. But perhaps a brief history of colonial Burma is in order.

Settled by a people from the Thailand-Laos area called the Mon, as well as peoples from Mongolia, Tibet and India beginning between 2500 and 1500 B.C., the original inhabitants of what is now Myanmar did not experience European contact until the 15th Century when Italian merchants stopped along its southern shores, enroute to China and Japan for trade. The Portuguese came next in the early 16th Century, and they established small colonies along the southern peninsula region where now stands Mandalay. But not until 1885 was the nation as a whole under control of a European power, when at that time the English waged two consecutive wars against the Burmese

monarchy, declaring at last a decisive victory and claiming her as a colony for the British Crown.

By the time World War II broke out Aung San had finished his university education and was emerging as a modern visionary. Drawing heavily on the history of liberation from the American Revolution, as well as of the liberation of the labouring class from the oppression of the economic elite from the philosophies of Marx, Aung San saw what he would call "Colonialism's difficulty as Freedom's opportunity". Seeking this moment of colonial weakness Aung San formed an alliance of tribal leaders, union members, and individual politicians serving the colonial government, all Burmese of course, and formed The Freedom Bloc. Acting as any irrational government would when confronted with a mobilization effort being spearheaded by a population that it is oppressing, the English rounded up most of those involved, arrested them, and tried to stop any possibility of this group gaining more strength through their collective efforts. Ironically, it was the goal of The Freedom Bloc to rally support from across Burma to fight in the British war effort, in exchange only for their independence.

But Aung San evaded arrest. Following the breakup of The Freedom Bloc he was compelled to go to China to seek support from the emerging Communist nation.

Believing Aung San to be a Japanese spy however, the Chinese refused to make contact with him and he was left stranded and unable to return home. Recognizing an opportunity, a true Japanese spy seized the opportunity to acquaint himself with Aung San and invited him to Japan to recruit in him in the Japanese war effort, to which he complied. The Japanese, decidedly agreeing that the European colonizers needed to be pushed out of Asia, trained Aung San and a regiment of Burmese who were smuggled into Thailand, and the army subsequently helped defeat the British in Burma. To this end the Japanese guaranteed Aung San that they were helping the Burmese rid themselves of their colonial ruler. By failing to respect the rights of the people in whose country the English were guests, they had made themselves an enemy.

As happens to most vulnerable nations, the liberation that had been promised them in exchange for their assistance was instead exchanged for a new form of colonial rule, this time by the Japanese. As the Japanese proved to be even worse than the British with their colonial rule over the country, once again Aung San was forced to begin the formation of yet another freedom movement, this time called the Burmese Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League.

Burma ultimately fell back into the hands of the British as the Axis fell, but only with



*Aung San,
Burmese
National
Hero*

the support given by Aung San and newly formed Burmese Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League, and through a promise to continue fighting, Burma won her independence. Due to the realities of colonialism, at some point only war can sustain the Empire. England eventually lost all of her colonies, excepting Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales. Empires fall because at the heart of everything there is only one true fundamentalist principle at stake, liberation from oppression.

But why do I write this story in a law school newspaper? For this reason: we have all come here to participate in a process designed specifically for the liberation of all people from the fear and the suffering caused by oppression. Whether that oppression is crime, hatred, prejudice, unfair trade practices, financial loss due to business mis-dealings, patent infringements, or any other service that we will one day provide for our clients whomever they may be, the legal system we are studying was designed to help people by shedding light on justice and the liberation of which I speak. When we use the law to further unfair gain at some other's expense, or to further

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William Mitchell Introduces Nancy Onkka: Assistant Dean of Career Services

By Ellen Brinkman

The Career Services office at William Mitchell has experienced significant changes in staffing over the past year. The departure of Assistant Dean Gina Sauer and Associate Dean Kari Jensen Thomas left the College with the difficult task of finding a person able to lead and creatively contribute to one of the busiest offices at William Mitchell. The College selected Ms. Nancy Onkka, Assistant Dean of Career Services, who boasts a diverse legal background and desires to make the Career Services office more efficient and effective for students.

Ms. Onkka comes to William Mitchell from Honeywell, where she was a senior attorney practicing environmental and import/export law. Interestingly, law is Ms. Onkka's second career. After graduating college, Ms. Onkka received a Masters Degree in public policy analysis from the University of Minnesota Humphrey Institute, and subsequently worked as a senior planner at the Minnesota State Planning Agency.

Ready for a career change, Ms. Onkka received her juris doctor from the University of Minnesota law school. After, she practiced for six years with Fredrikson & Byron in Minneapolis, before transitioning to in-house counsel at Honeywell.

As the start of another eventful year in Career Services approaches, *The Opinion* sat down with Ms. Onkka to discuss her goals for

the office, the difficulties facing William Mitchell graduates, and what the office is already working on to improve career opportunities for students.

O: Dean Onkka, what one thing attracted you the most to the position of Assistant Dean of Career Services at William Mitchell?

Dean Onkka: It is difficult to name one thing. One thing that is incredibly exciting is a chance to come in and redesign Career Services in a way that is unique to William Mitchell and the needs of its students. William Mitchell has incredibly good students, and such good legal training, so I want to make sure that this training translates into exciting opportunities for students. Career Services is not only about job listings, but helping students learn what excites them about a career, how to prepare themselves for the job market, and how to keep that energy for the rest of their career. It is exciting to help students move forward to not only do well for themselves, but do good for the community—that is a real motivator.

O: What do you think will be your greatest strength in contributing as Assistant Dean of Career Services?

Dean Onkka: Probably my ability to come into this situation and look at things in a new and creative way. If William Mitchell is trying to ensure its students have good career management skills, job-search skills, and lots of opportunities, then we need

to deliver a student-friendly program that will connect with employers. I'm definitely willing to see what has worked well in the past, and find ways to make programs work better in the future. That is something that I was able to do at Honeywell. I was the import/export counsel, and we were setting up a compliance system for 39 importing locations in the U.S., which would comply with new federal law. Basically, it involved working with a diverse group of people, including business people, who were kind of impatient with the legal requirements. We were able to set up something that worked better than anyone ever dreamed, and it met all of our needs, and that was really exciting.

O: Do you have specific goals for the direction of Career Services, or things that you are looking to improve upon immediately?

Dean Onkka: Actually, there are a number of different things that Career Services is currently looking at. Right now, we are collaborating with our work-study students to determine what information students need, and when they need it. We want to make sure the programs presented are well thought out, and well timed. The desires of a 1L are going to be different from a 3L, so we are trying to plan a year-specific "curriculum," in order to make better use of students' time. We are also looking at the Career Services publications, and trying to determine what is the most



Nancy Onkka, Assistant Dean of Career Services

efficient way to give students access to these publications. At this point, we are coming up with a radical re-think of what these publications will look like, in other words, what information is best received through the website page. William Mitchell students have limited time, so we need to make information and resources available to students in the most efficient and effective way.

Additionally, we would like to build better partnerships with other departments at William Mitchell. And finally, we are establishing an initiative to build relationships with employers who may not be looking to William Mitchell first for hiring summer law clerks or graduates.

O: What do you think is the most difficult thing William Mitchell students will face once they graduate?

Dean Onkka: Well, there is a reasonably tight job market for lawyers, and the fact that there are now four law

Continued on page 12

Spotlight on Community:



By Molly Olson

Editor's note: Members of the William Mitchell community include non-student individuals and groups who share our facilities. Here is an opportunity to get to know one of these groups.

In September 2004, the Center for Parental Responsibility ("CPR") is celebrating their one year anniversary of monthly meetings at William Mitchell College of Law ("WMCL"). CPR is a non-profit organization that focuses on legal research and family law education for non-custodial parents ("NCP").

In the spring of 2000, CPR founder, Molly K Olson and her partner began conversing with WMCL Professor Peter Erlinder about the constitutional violations in family law. Molly credits Professor Erlinder for propelling CPR's passion for family law reform. CPR was founded in January of 2003 and meetings began around Molly's kitchen table to draft a bill for the Minnesota legislature, which was introduced 6 weeks later. By the end of that summer, because of such large turnouts, they outgrew the only available meeting space – her home garage. WMCL had been a preferred law library for their legal research. Therefore, Molly approached WMCL about available meeting space at the school. CPR had been working with several attorneys who were

WMCL alumni, and are advisors to the organization, so the school seemed like a perfect fit.

CPR's experience indicates there is often unwarranted systemic bias against one parent to benefit the other; resulting in the bifurcation of the family when one parent is labeled a NCP. As a retired appellate court judge stated, this results in an "artificially created class" often resulting in equal protection violations. While the majority of NCP's are dads, the group has also assisted non-custodial moms, who find themselves treated with the same disdain from a very unforgiving family law system.

CPR aims to prevent bias in family law, and remove the obstacles that prevent both parents from being fully and equally involved in the lives of their children after divorce or in cases of never-married parents. This is a critical aspect in the promotion of responsible parenting. CPR spends a great deal of their efforts attempting to protect the constitutional rights of both parents, and the rights of children to have equal access to both parents. Research indicates that except in cases that rise to the "imminent harm standard," it is always in the best interest of children to have both parents equally involved.

CPR is a 100% volunteer

organization continually looking for volunteers with various talents ranging from marketing, fundraising, accounting, writing, and legal skills. CPR especially needs volunteers from the legal community willing to assist in casework. CPR works with many "working class" parents who have become "working poor" and are unable to afford an attorney, and find themselves overwhelmed and steamrolled by the legal system. Except for Hennepin County residents, there are no legal resources in the state of Minnesota for low-income non-custodial parents with family law issues.

Examples of current CPR cases needing legal help:

- Developmentally disabled 44 year old man living out of his car needs legal advice to defend him for a contempt of court due to spousal maintenance arrears.
- Non-custodial 43 year old mom who, as a displaced homemaker, lost her job and ran out of unemployment benefits is seeking legal advice because Anoka County is taking legal action to suspend her driver's license due to child support arrears, causing a frustration of performance.
- Two never-married fit 20-something parents seek joint physical custody of their child. The court appointed custody evaluator agrees joint physical custody is in the best

interest of the child; however, the evaluator says "I can't recommend joint physical custody in my report because I know this judge doesn't believe joint physical custody is ever right, and he will never allow it."

CPR meets at WMCL the third Sunday night of every month from 5-8pm. Guest speakers, who are attorneys, judges, psychologists, or other family law professionals, speak and answer audience questions from 5:30-7pm. The meetings are FREE and they are open to the public. WMCL students are encouraged to attend. For more information see www.cpr-mn.org.

Upcoming Meetings:

Sunday September 19, 2004
– Guest Speaker: Family Law Attorney's Traci Capistrant and Rebecca Wong, WMCL graduates, "Helping your lawyer prepare your case information for best results."

Meeting 5-8pm,
speaker 5:30-7pm.

Sunday October 17, 2004 -
Guest Speaker: Retired Dakota County District Court Judge Duane Harves, "The judicial perspective regarding the current state of family law."

Meeting 5-8pm,
speaker 5:30-7pm



Dean Onkka...

continued from page 10

schools in the Twin Cities makes things more difficult for William Mitchell students. There is a real need for students to think ahead about managing their careers. Our new mission at Career Services is to help students find a challenging job that meets their individual needs, and it involves a certain degree of creativity in a tight job market.

O: What can students do to make themselves more marketable?

Dean Onkka: First, students need to refine skills

relating to their job search process. This includes mastering interviewing, resumes, callbacks, and researching career opportunities. Second, students need to network. Networking is a very powerful tool, if it is perceived as learning about a career or environment, not as cocktail party chatter. It is also important to develop relationships with people who can speak to your skills and capabilities. Finally, internships, externships, and volunteering are all things that give students a tremendous background to bring to an interview.

O: The Career Services office reports that approximately

15% of students get their eventual jobs through OCI. There is a concern among students that this is a very small percentage. What are your feelings about OCI, and how do you address these concerns?

Dean Onkka: I think that OCI is a necessary part of law school, because it is the only way certain law firms and corporations hire summer associates and clerks. The percentage certainly indicates that OCI is only one of many ways that William Mitchell students obtain jobs. I think there needs to be an equal emphasis on other, non-OCI employers, and ways of help-

ing students connect with these other employers. Also, I think we need to do a better job of connecting with Alumni. A number of things have been done very well by Career Services, and now we have the exciting chance to build other programs. We would like to make the Career Services programs much more powerful for those students looking for employment outside of OCI. We are also in the process of hiring someone in the Career Services office who will be taking a look at making alternative programs more effective for students.



On Seeing *The Manchurian Candidate* with My Father: A Review



by Carolyn Tuttle

My father has seen the original but I have not. Being younger, I am often stuck with the glossy newness of things. My movies become a blur of high-tech and sped-up. They are the MTV remakes of his movies—the classics the hip say are better. But tonight is his suggestion; we catch *The Manchurian Candidate* together at the mall where I worked when I

was a teenager in Syracuse, New York.

Every time I return to Syracuse I'm surprised by how rundown the buildings look. I imagine all the houses sitting perfect in a well-kept and sunny neighborhood. But when I get there, I see how the porches hang from the houses. Stores have closed, their windows covered in newspaper. The sky is typically overcast. I'm not sure if it was always this way or if

it's my view of the city that's changing. Even the mall looks different. I notice broken and scuffed tiles, birds nesting in the rafters above the food court.

As we stand in line to buy popcorn, my father explains how the old version of *The Manchurian Candidate* starred Frank Sinatra. The old version, his version, had the Korean War. Mine replaces them with Denzel Washington and Desert Storm.

My version turns out to have Meryl Streep, a great actress, playing a corrupt senator. My version has the fantasy of advanced science. There are implants in the back of soldiers' shoulders and we watch in horror as Denzel Washington cuts his out with a knife. There is the FBI, the clock counting down, the evil doctor plotting.

But somehow I'm not impressed. On the way out, I ask my father what he thought of this movie. He gives an apathetic shrug. "It's

okay. In the old one, it wasn't the Denzel Washington character that took care of things in the end." "Oh," I say. I want to know my father's version of the movie too. I want to hang onto it—but the old version seems unattainably remote. I can't quite picture its scenes.

Back home in Minneapolis, I take out the Yellow Pages and set them on my lap. One by one, I call all the video stores in my area. None have the old version of *The Manchurian Candidate* available. I have a feeling that this is somehow for the best. In my mind, it will always be my father's version of the movie—ten times better than the one we saw in Syracuse. It will be shined to perfection, the way I remember the mall when it was new and I was growing up in my father's house.



Irish Centre for Human Rights a Great Place to Learn About UN

by Mike Tierney

To anyone interested in the UN system and thinking seriously about pursuing a career that interacts with international human rights law, assuming the US doesn't begin to jail those who advocate for such a system, the Irish Centre for Human Rights is a great place to begin.

Founded in 2000, the Centre "is dedicated to the study and promotion of "human rights and humanitarian law". You can take a summer term there, where you'll have the opportunity to take 3 of 6 courses offered, generally in the area of human rights law, either in the context of the international system under the UN, or with an emphasis on such litigation within the US legal system. The professors are all exceptional professionals with real experience in the field and it's a great opportunity to not only learn about international law, but also to visit Ireland, meet law students from around the US, and to earn credits that you will be very glad to have come registration time for the rest of your time in school.

The Centre is located in Galway, Ireland, a fun, young city on the west coast of the island. They offer Masters and LL.M degrees in humanitarian law, as well as hold an annual conference on minority and indigenous peoples' rights and the summer abroad program I've mentioned above.

As an Irish-American, I'd never been to the land of my roots, and I was amazed to see how at home I felt when I first arrived there. Looking

around it was amazing to see so many people who looked just like me, no towering Germans or Swedes, and it was as though my family had come with me. Seeing one guy I would think, "That's grandpa!", or a girl and think "My cousin is just like that!" And the story of Irish humor is true. The pubs are a blast, and you'll get the chance to experience the Galway Races and the Galway Arts Festival as well, two of the biggest celebrations in Ireland every year held just down the road from the university where you'll be studying.

This last summer I spent another week there attending the minority and indigenous peoples' seminar, which was focusing on human rights in Asia this year. I heard lectures from speakers from India, Ireland, Sri Lanka, Viet Nam, and Iran, as well as from Prof. Patrick Thornbury, the Commissioner of the Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, a UN body created through charter to monitor the progress of human rights development around the globe in the area of race. Other speakers came from the International Labour Organization and the EU/China Commission working on creating stronger relations between China and the West to further the goals of both better trade relations along with human rights. But best of all I had the chance to meet and spend a week with attorneys and human rights activists from other parts of the world, from Africa, Europe, the Middle East, and North America. If you hate

President Bush's policies of pre-emptive attacks on sovereign nations and his notions of a Fortress America, which is scaring the entire planet into an aggressive stance that can only further war and not peace, then you'll be amongst friends there.

Einstein said that "you can not simultaneously prevent and prepare for war". If you think on this statement and agree with it, and you believe that we live in a world where peace is a real alternative, you should take advantage of the opportunity to supplement your legal education with a summer or two in Ireland at

the Irish Centre for Human Rights. Visit their web site, www.nuigalway.ie/human_rights, to learn more, or stop by the Multicultural Office to speak with someone about summer study sessions abroad. You'll have a great time earning school credits, get a great education, and become better prepared to participate in the global human rights movement that will be the lead philosophy in the decades to come.



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Studying in Prague

by C. Tobin

With propellers humming and the plane vibrating, Jerome Porter, Siv Mjanger, and I touched down at Ruzyně, Prague's airport. After a 4 a.m. wake up to make the flight, we found ourselves in Prague wondering where we would sleep that night: everywhere was booked. Finally—luckily—a friendly Czech worker found a “hotel” outside the city, and, exhausted, we met our fellow traveler, Rian Radtke, a fellow William Mitchell 3L, in Prague's old-town.

Studying abroad could never be overrated. After living and studying in Oslo for two years, arriving as a care-free (perhaps careless that first day) traveler already had me excited. Despite the turbulent start, I knew Prague would be a fantastic city.

Fortunately, three of us had adjusted by making it to Norway to celebrate the 17th of May earlier that week. With everyone adjusting to European time, we discovered the pub (Petr's) closest to the dorm... with half-liters of good Czech beer... for 70 cents! Good, dark, Czech beer flowed for next to nothing pretty much everywhere in the city. Even at the “Super Club”—complete with 5 stories playing all sorts of music—beer was still half the cost of clubs in the cities. And it was the largest club in Eastern Europe (or so they claimed) with people from all over Europe until the wee hours of the morning!

Czech beer cannot receive enough praise—it's truly world class beer. “Czech beer is the Czechs' finest asset... I have been spoiled by the

great beer of the Czechs . . . [and] I enjoyed all the Gambrinuses we had from the vending machine in our dorm,” Mr. Radtke, said.

“Deep fried everything,” that's the food in Prague according to Jerome Porter, William Mitchell 3L. He's absolutely right. The food of the Czech Republic “is fattening, rich, and overall unhealthy. But I miss it . . . I miss the potato pancakes and croquettes,” Mr. Radtke said. But, if you're vegetarian, well, don't ask. And knowing how to ask for the check is a must if you don't want to spend two hours on a meal.

Girija Bhargava, South Texas College of Law 2L, said Prague is a “perfect blend of refined history and modern chic.”

Prague's streets resonate with history that you feel everywhere. No skyscrapers block the red rooftops of the houses and buildings. Nothing obscures the view of the castle, or the old town hall tower, or the enormous church in the center. You walk along cobblestone streets and think hundreds of years ago someone else walked exactly here too. Even the law faculty building, sitting next to the Vltava River, reminds you that you're part of a rich, historical area.

“Old town square, the palace, the university, heck you could go just about anywhere and have a good time. It was the simple fact that the whole town was beautiful,” Mr. Porter said.

I took a course on International Criminal Law while I was there, war crimes and the like. I've been inter-



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Prague...

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ested in this for a few years, and four of us traveled to Vienna, Austria and saw where Hitler liked to hang out: Café Sperl. Today, it seemed to be an apolitical café, but it was crazy to have a coffee where someone who, quite sadly, shaped the latter half of the twentieth century and really provided a large reason for having a class like International Criminal Law.

Crazier than that was standing in the Czech concentration camp, Terezin, the day after Café Sperl. While depressing,

the opportunity to see the history with my own eyes that we only hear about in America enticed me, particularly since I have great-uncles who were held in Norwegian concentration camps.

The International Criminal Law course even applies today. "It is interesting to watch the news now with the knowledge I gleaned from the course," Mr. Radtke said.

Of course, another historical feature of Prague was the impact of communism.

"Being in Prague... one really gets to taste the effects of a communist regime. You

really got to appreciate what you have living in America, but then you also got the opportunity to see what you missed out on living in America," Ms. Bhargava said.

The old town's beautiful skyline changes to ugly, cement, Soviet-style block-housing as you leave it. The Czech folk are quiet (nearly inaudible on the subway) and skeptical of strangers. Nonetheless, we found that trying even our rudimentary (and weak) Czech always made them warm-up and take interest in us. The Czechs were really terrifically nice people.


Overall, studying in Prague was great. "[It] was awesome because you learned about the law but not in the typical law school environment and the professors were a lot more chill," Ms. Bhargaza said. I hope this story encourages people to study abroad. Merely recalling these words does not compare to the actual experience of being in another country and culture. The classes and professors combined with the rich city of Prague are well worth anyone's trip across the Atlantic.



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Manifest Destiny...

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our own religious convictions, or crush those of others, this is when we utterly fail the system. It is not a fight of all against all. Life is only nasty brutish and short as long as we all succumb to the desires of power and wealth.

To conclude, several months after Aung San won independence for his people, he and his newly formed cabinet were assassinated by a group of former politicians that sought to retain the power they once had under the British Empire. It shows you that even though a colonial ruler is gone, the repercussions can remain for decades on end. These assassins missed the purpose of that hard won independence, and so now I ask, why is this story not told in any of our classrooms? Is it that we don't care about the dire struggle for Democracy that is being fought by others? It seems there could not be a clearer, more parallel effort for independence than our own, and yet we learn nothing of it in this country today. I'd say it's because we, in our fighting to preserve what we have come to believe is our God given "right", our Manifest Destiny, waged under the dual banners of Capitalism and God, that we have failed to recognize that what most of the citizens of the world are fighting for is precisely what we are fighting today to preserve, Liberty. Do what you will with your degree and feel no shame the profession you enter—Ambulance Chasers, I'm talking mostly to you—but don't fail to recognize the roots and the history of the system you are learning to preserve. To fail to recognize that it is freedom from oppression that a legal education is meant to defend is to

fail the very principles that Democracy stands for, and is to fail that system as a whole. Lest we take the time to explore our past today, one day it will be too late.

To learn more about Burma and its current struggle for Democracy see *Freedom from*

Fear, by Aung San Suu Kyi, daughter of the man talked about in this article, winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, and currently the democratically elected leader of Myanmar being held in exile in her own country. Their struggle is ours.



Be part of the Annual Fund Phonathon 2004 October 3 – October 7, 2004

You are invited to help us at the Annual Fund Phonathon 2004, October 3 – October 7, 2004. The Phonathon is an annual event directed by the Alumni & Development Office. William Mitchell students will have the opportunity to contact graduates and friends of the college to support the Annual Fund. The Annual Fund provides resources to support financial aid, enhanced academic programs, and expanded library holdings and technology resources.

You will have a chance to talk with attorneys and judges about William Mitchell and earn extra money. Complete training is provided and no previous experience is required. Past callers have earned hundreds of dollars in just a few days! This is a fun, annual tradition at the college and a great way to meet fellow students too.

There will be catered meals, snacks, prizes, and the opportunity to earn bonuses. The compensation is \$9/hour for training and calling sessions. Calling will take place on campus.

If you are interested in participating, please contact Maura Mitchell, Alumni Relations and Annual Giving Officer via e-mail (mmitchell@wmitchell.edu) by Monday, September 20, 2004 with the shifts you would like to work, your e-mail address and phone number. Each caller will receive a confirmation notice to clarify calling hours.

Thank you for your interest in the 2004 Phonathon!

TRAINING SESSIONS:

Choose ONE (attendance at one session is required for all callers):

Sunday, October 3: ☐ 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. or ☐ 5:00 to 6:00 p.m.

PHONING SESSIONS:

Choose as many as you wish:

Sunday, October 3: ☐ 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. ☐ 6:30 to 9:00 p.m.

Monday, October 4: ☐ 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. ☐ 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. ☐ 6:30 to 9:00 p.m.

Tuesday, October 5: ☐ 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. ☐ 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. ☐ 6:30 to 9:00 p.m.

Wednesday, October 6: ☐ 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. ☐ 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. ☐ 6:30 to 9:00 p.m.

Thursday, October 7: ☐ 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. ☐ 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. ☐ 6:30 to 9:00 p.m.



Crystal Murphy...

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I will miss Crystal because she was a constant friend. Almost every time I went to the Commons, she would be there with a smile, regardless. This year will not be the same without her boisterous laugh and continual presence. She would help out anyone at a moment's notice and would lend a word of encouragement whenever needed. She will be missed.

– Melissa Gregory

"On the death of a friend, we should consider that the fates through confidence have devolved on us the task of a double living, that we have henceforth to fulfill the promise of our friend's life also, in our own, to the world."

– Henry David Thoreau
(1817–1862),

U.S. philosopher, author, naturalist.
Journals, entry, Feb. 28, 1840 (1906).

It seems like just yesterday that I was sitting across the table from a very bright, fun, and special person. It will be very hard to return to William Mitchell knowing Crystal won't be there too. I have many memories of the long study sessions, the trips to Perkins, and the witness prep. for Advocacy. For those of you who didn't know Crystal, she was full of life and extremely generous. When somebody needed something, she was there saying, "I'd be

glad to do it." If only there were more Crystals in this world... Crystal was young and full of life. She always had a big smile on her face. I'll truly miss her, but I will always be comforted when I recall the reaction and words of my four year old son who had become friends with Crystal last year over Easter weekend. When I told my son Crystal had died in a car accident, he looked at me, smiled, and said, "now she gets to see Jesus!"

Sherri Krueger

"Oh, a friend! How true is that old saying, that the enjoyment of one is sweeter and more necessary than that of the elements of water and fire!"

Michel de Montaigne
(1533–1592), French essayist.
"Of Vanity," The Essays (Les Essais), bk. III, ch. 9, Abel Langelier, Paris (1588).

She always rolled with the punches... always upbeat and just plain nice to be around.

Molly Gage

***"Life is too short to waste
In critic peep or cynic bark,
Quarrel or reprimand:
'Twill soon be dark;
Up, heed thine own aim,
and God speed the mark!"***

Ralph Waldo Emerson
(1803–1882),

U.S. essayist, poet, philosopher.
"To J.W.," Poems (1847).

I still can't believe that school will start in August and she won't be there. But I guess that when I think of Crystal I think of someone who was a great friend to everyone. She was always there to help out (being the witness for so many people in Advocacy last Spring!) and she was always there just to talk and hang out with. She was so funny and had such a sweet personality. I will miss our

get togethers at Khan's and bingo- I'll just miss her alot. When I think of Crystal I am reminded of a quote by an unknown author: "Nothing loved is ever lost. And she was loved so much."

Andrea Hoyt

"A sweet friendship refreshes the soul."

Proverbs 27:9 (The Message)

I will miss her dazzling smile, contagious laugh, and eclectic ideas. I'll never forget the time we drove into the school parking lot at the same time and parked side by side. She was in her bright, red SUV, and had her music blaring as she sang boldly and joyfully with the song. That's how she lived life; ever so boldly and joyfully. She was also remarkably kind and had faith; I believe she was one of God's most beautiful children.

Melessa Henderson

[Asked, upon the death of her fast friend... Elizabeth Cady Stanton (1816-1902), which period of their association she had enjoyed the most:]

"The days when the struggle was the hardest and the fight the thickest; when the whole world was against us and we had to stand the closer to each other...[t]he years since the rewards began to come have brought no enjoyment like that."

Susan B. Anthony (1820–1906), U.S. suffragist. As quoted in Life and Work of Susan B. Anthony, vol. 3, ch. 61, by Ida Husted Harper (1908).

In an interview on October 16, 1902, the day of Stanton's death.

The two women had worked together for fifty years.

To My "Irish Sister" Crazy C –

You played a huge part in helping me make it through the year they "worked us to death" - I'm sure you will continue helping me for years to come. Whenever I am

doubting myself, I re-read the words you wrote to me; they always bring back my confidence and make me realize everything will turn out okay after all. I still don't believe you're gone because your memory is in so many places I go every day. As everyone knows, it especially won't be the same hanging in Hachey without you – but I know you'll be with us all somehow.

C, I have so many memories of you – and they're ALL good (even when I'd argue with you and you'd stare me down!) Of course, I'll never forget how much fun we had creating our pig-infested Copyright presentation for Prof. Schaumann or the many Chipotle burritos we scarfed down together.

You were in my life for a very short time, but you left me with some of the biggest, brightest, and most beautiful memories I have. I love you and will always miss you, Crazy C, but I know you're around somewhere. And when I finally do see the Grand Ole Opry, I'll know you'll be there with me, too.

Molly Walsh

"He has achieved success who has lived well, laughed often and loved much...who has left the world better than he found it... who has always looked for the best in others and given them the best he had; whose life was an inspiration; whose memory a benediction."

Betty Anderson Stanley. 1904.

Reprinted by the syndicated advice columnist Ann Landers, March 11, 1995

*All are invited to send a memory or tribute to The Opinion for next month's issue. Please send to
mhenderson@wmitchell.edu.*





By Ahmed Teleb

On Wednesday, July 28th, 2004 at *Café Les Couleurs*, in the working class 11th district in eastern Paris, I had the opportunity to chat with one of the actresses/participants in the unique 1999 film *La Commune* by Peter Watkins, in the very neighborhood where the actual events in the film took place.

I had seen it at the Minneapolis documentary film festival last winter, and been struck by its monumentality. Now the beginning of July, sitting at *Les Couleurs*, awaiting the commencement of the first projection in a series of Watkins's films to be shown there, I had a déjà vu. Who is this self-assured, exigante person that seems to be running the place? After the show, which like everything in Paris took its sweet time to begin, while attempting to

Interview with "Une Communarde"

rearrange one of the tables to play a game of chess, and being ordered by her not to use this or that table, not to move that or this chair, I had the chance to tell her, smiling, "You are very difficult to please; but that's ok!" Later, at the end of the month, at a special screening of the six-hour *La Commune*, my question and déjà vu were answered. In fact, I was privileged to meet

several of the participants of the film, and to interview one of them. Below is a translation of my interview with Maya Olasso. The film concerns what happens when a group of ordinary people struggle to create a rule of law out of chaos. As it turns out this is just what the film crew had to do to create the film itself!

O: Before participating in *La Commune*, what was your acting experience?

M.Olasso: I had studied theater. I acted in a few small productions. A film by Argentin. Many little shows, mainly around Paris. Oh, I participated in a film by Raymond Depardon called "Paris". I think in... '97.

O: Yeah? And after?

M.O.: Nothing. No... No, it

wasn't because of the film. I just got into other things.

O: How did you get involved in the project?

M.O.: A friend, a cinéaste, told me about it. You know, Peter Watkins had gone all over France showing *Culloden*. After each showing he would explain the project and call for volunteers. In fact, *Culloden* produced many, many volunteers. Actually, I wasn't even picked at auditions. But I participated as a technician. So I worked as a technician for about a week and then as an actress and writer afterwards.

O: How long did the whole thing take?

M.O.: The whole thing [took] about a month. But actual camera roll was three weeks. Of the filming, one week was devoted to the written parts with the journalists from Versailles and Paris. The last two weeks was with all the participants, the volunteers and all.

O: I know there were a lot of participants, how many would you say?

M.O.: Over 200 volunteers. Actually 300 would be a better approximation.

O: What was the ambiance of the set like?

M.O.: You know, INCREDIBLE. We all had to write our own roles. Each group (of characters) got together and wrote out what they would do and say. Peter Watkins met with each group at the beginning, we exchanged information, historical materials. We had some good research. About the period, what people ate, how they dressed, how they were like, about the neighborhoods...

We had to discuss everything among ourselves and defend our own ideas. I mean, Peter even went into the sixth district and such to get people from the chic areas to play the bourgeois roles. You were given the power of discourse but you had to defend your views.

O: What... um... difficulties? What measure of difficulties did a democratically run set create?

M.O.: Oh la la! A lot... a lot of conflicts. You know, aside from a handful of essential technicians, nobody was paid. But people took time off, used their vacations, to do this thing. Because people believed in it. Nonetheless, there were conflicts between points of view. But when the discussion is open, the problems work themselves out. Have you seen *L'Horloge Universelle* (*The Universal Clock*) by the Canadian?

O: No. That's the one I missed. [*L'horloge* is a 2001 doc by Geoff Bowie about the filmmaker]

M.O.: That's too bad! He interviewed dozens of participants in different Watkins films and they all talked about this.

O: Were all the films run the same way—with volunteer participants?

M.O.: The greater part of his films are run that way. You know, there was no down time. No wasted time. Like on traditional film sets. It's not at all like classic film making when you do your part and go. Well, frankly, I never did much traditional films. Even before the project, most of what I did was non-traditional. But friends and

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La Commune...

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acquaintances did a lot of that sort of filming. Frankly, traditional theater never interested me. It's too fast, you know, like reflex. Like I said, here, we were always working, researching, reflecting, searching, discussing. Even the children, the child actors in the film, they were always here, talking, discussing, playing.

O: According to you, is there a difference in the state of mass media between then, 1998, and now?

M.O.: One and the same... Well, I can't really answer that question. I'm a lot more aware of it now. Have you read Watkins's *Media Crises*? I do somehow feel there's more disinformation, misinformation, attempts to create apathy. I think power has become more willing to use the media. But again, before, I was younger and didn't think the same. The link between armaments, media, oil, construction—it's not just you in America who have this problem. We too have the same sh#*.

O: Do you think *La Commune* and such films can make a difference?

M.O.: No. One film, no. On the other hand, 300 people, who were moved, profoundly, could propagate ideas, a sense of hope. And then you have *Le Rebond* [organization founded by some of the participants of the film to help distribute it]. You should have talked to Patrick, Patrick Watkins before he left.

O: Oh? That was?

M.O.: Yeah, the tall dude. One of the director's sons. Well. I know many people whose lives were absolutely changed by the experience of

the project.

O: Mostly Parisians?

M.O.: The participants were mostly Parisians but there were some from all over France. A lot of us have kept in touch. People were changed by it. You know, for example, the fourteen year-old boy who participated with his mom. Their discourse can never be the same. She said just that in the interview, in *L'Horloge*. He can't watch TV anymore. You know, once you make that observation, how TV numbs the brain. It's a prison of the mind. Actually, more correctly, there is the regular prison for those who don't follow and then TV prison for those that do. It's really sh*tty. You saw the quote from Patrick LeLay, CEO of TF1 [Channel One in France. The quote she mentions, briefly, is "We sell brains to advertisers by making those brains 'disponibles'—that is "available".]

O: Yeah! I don't believe he actually said that!?

M.O.: (disgusted) Sh*t, I tell you!!

O: Let's move to a slightly different topic. Did you receive a French education? What did they teach you about the Commune of 1871?

M.O.: Yes. In class? Almost nothing. You know, my generation and the one after it, people in their 30s and younger, almost nothing, just a mention. It's taught to those too young to understand and in a very simplified manner.

O: Primary?

M.O.: No, no. College, the 11-15 year-olds. But the "bloody week", nothing.

O: What did you learn during the filming?

M.O.: Everything. The "bloody week" always sticks

in my mind. But it was a while ago, you know. [La semaine sanglante, the aftermath of the Commune when the French army, coming from Versailles, executed **30,000** civilians, mostly unarmed, in the streets and the parks of Paris.]

O: How would you critique the movie?

M.O.: It's hard to critique because of the experience. You can see how the experience changed people during the film. See at the beginning, it was hard to prendre la parole, to take the discourse, really to speak one's mind. Twenty minute takes, with no retakes, no editing... it made you nervous.

O: You mean no footage was cut?

M.O.: No, no. I mean, each scene was one continuous shot—not necessarily all twenty minutes were taken. Sometimes only ten minutes were used or less. Sometimes just a few minutes. At first, we were nervous to take the opportunity given to us. Notice, notice how at the beginning we just all were kind of just saying the same thing, shouting, all that. But I have never, ever, seen a film teach people how to share their real views, feelings, their real selves. Did you notice, by the end everyone had learned that. To really talk.

O: Do you wanna talk about Co-errance? [A media cooperative that promotes and distributes books, film, poetry, etc. not otherwise commercially viable.]

M.O.: Well it's the co-op. Actually, I am not that involved with it and don't wanna talk about something I don't too much about. Oh! You should have talked to those dudes before they left.

O: *Le Rebond*?

M.O.: Well it was founded after the film by a group of participants to distribute the film. We actually got Arte [Franco-German film channel that airs on TV5 at night] to show it; but it was only once and it was from midnight to 6:00 am. We were so moved by the film we wanted to share it with as many people as possible. Wait... Here's the, do you have the schedule of what was shown here and the bit about *Le Rebond*?

O: No. But...I saw almost all of them.

Afterward we talked a little bit about American and French politics, the coming elections, Bush in the eyes of the world, recent trends in French politics, etc... I told here that next time I was in Paris, I would definitely see what's up aux Couleurs. She said that unfortunately, they're gonna be selling the place next year. That only weighed more heavily on me, as I unwillingly left Paris.

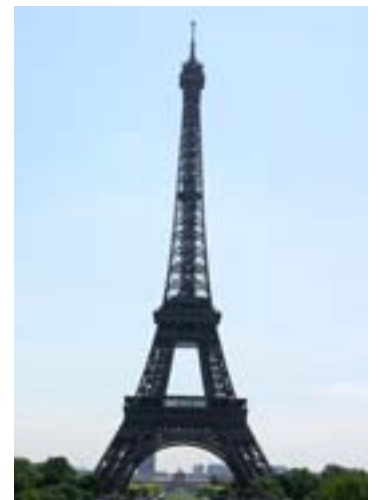
Useful Links:

<http://www.co-errances.org/>

<http://www.mnsi.net/~pwatkins/prologue.htm>

<http://www.lerebond.org/>

<http://www.harvardfilmarchive.org/calendars/01janfeb/watkins.htm>



Dean Thompson...

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allenges or opportunities, I feel really fortunate about the people I get to work with, getting to know that group, how we tick, how we work together.

Another one that comes to mind is how to promote some sort of involvement in the college, other than classes, like involvement with *The Opinion* or other student organizations. To the extent that that sort of involvement helps them in another way, it could provide them with a foundation for what they are going to do next. I think it's harder to get a handle on what kind of opportunities we can facilitate so that people can have those experiences. The fact that a law school education is something that is very demanding and sometimes pushes those extra-curricular things out of the way. What can we do to make getting involved easier? I was visiting with somebody yesterday and was using an "every minute counts" sort of filter. This runs through everything. So if we can figure out how to work electronically or to be more efficient so that student involvement is more manageable then we are doing it in such a way they have an opportunity to fit it in.

O: One of the ongoing themes that tends to create tension on some level is the generation gap between those students who are part-time and have been out in the work force and are coming back and those students that are fresh out of college and they are doing law school 24/7. The two groups almost feel like they are from two different planets. Sometimes programs are geared towards

one or the other and when we run into one another we can somewhat relate but it's hard to communicate.

D.T.: In fact when I was going through the process of getting this job, looking at the work I'd done in the past, I noticed the nature of the student body here is very similar with respect to what you just described you find in a community college environment where I did most of my work. If you come to campus {at MCTC, for instance} during the day it's almost all full-time students who are right out of high school if you come in the evening it's almost all adult students who are working. We publish things that say our average age is 28 years old but if you came to campus at certain times you'd think these are awfully young looking 28 year olds, or not. It's literally like two different worlds. The last two places I worked had a particularly good focus on diversity in a very wide sense of the word and tried to do what they could to help

students see how learning from people who are at different positions in their life could be learning opportunities. One of the things I found interesting about going to school here was I was always looking for things I could use to apply back to my work. Every vacation day I used to study I would come here and I would see a whole new group of people that were different. I think a challenge for us is to continue to be responsive or listen to what's going on, about what the needs are and what the struggles are and also to build opportunities to take advantage of that. When I do look back on it I think one of the greatest things for me were the times I could interact with both of those camps.

We also want to find ways to capitalize on it because it is something that sets us apart. I think about the people I went to law school with and I think of the students I have already met here who are in either camp and how valuable it may be to

get them to interact with each other, what they value where they come from. I think one thing that has the prospect of being particularly interesting is that we are getting more people from a younger generation that has a different perspective on a number of different things. It's a good opportunity for students who have been out of school awhile to interact with some really bright focused and motivated individuals who they wouldn't necessarily have opportunity to interact with.



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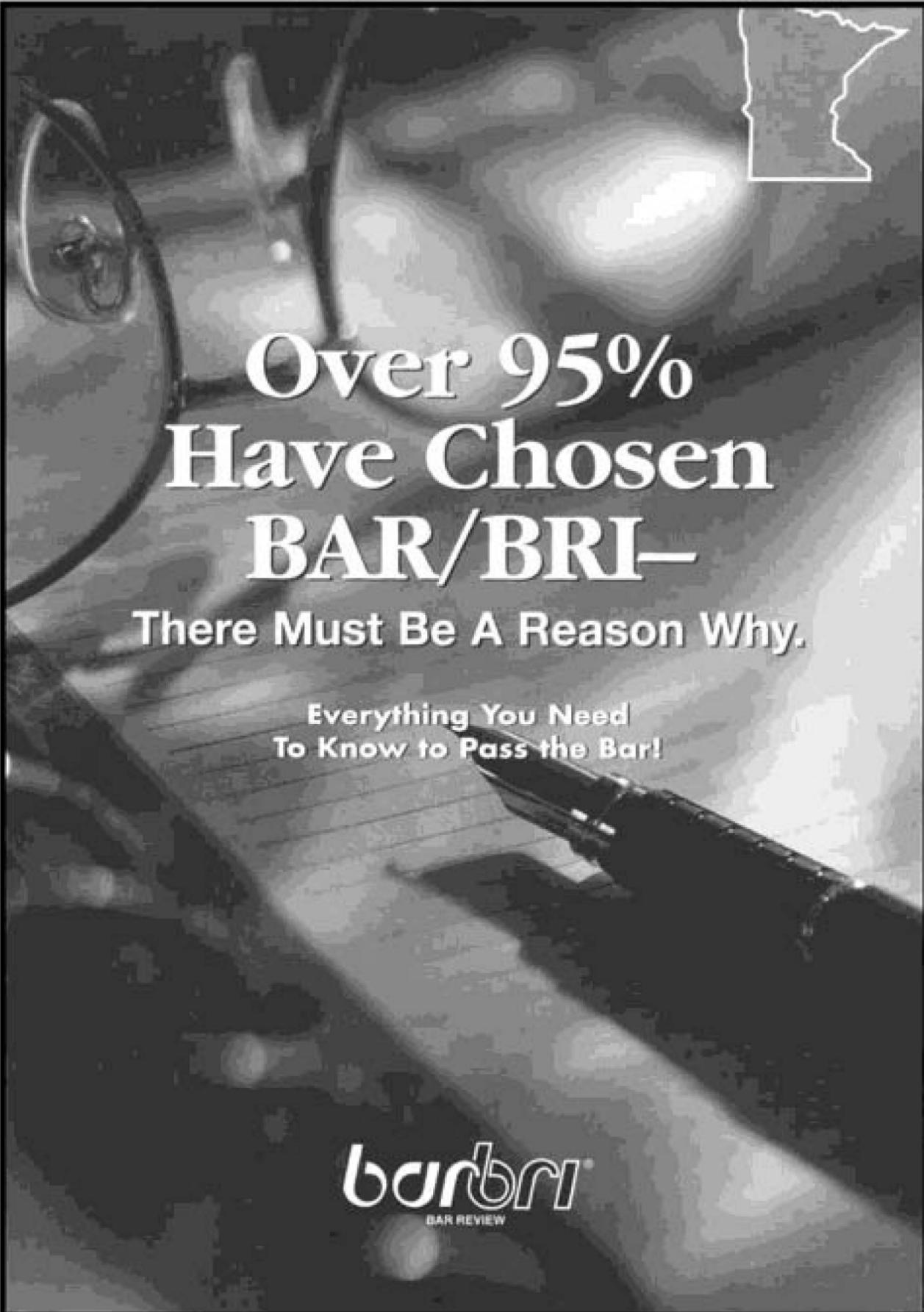


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