Life, Lawyers, and Book Royalties

Jess M. Brallier∗
Life, Lawyers, and Book Royalties

Jess M. Brallier

Abstract

When I was a child and life was sweet, innocent, and full of fun, there were no lawyers.
*No, if we have to invite somebody, how about that Jane Hokum-Cohen? I hear she was a damn good field hockey player. And she's vavavaVOOM, if you know what I mean,* said Nails.

*Nails, Jane's married and so are you,* reminded Oscar.

*Yes, but I'm not blind.*

[STANLEY'S NOTE: Jane's guest appearance at the next SIN meeting was a turning point in the history of women at our firm. Not only did she refuse to excuse herself to go to the ladies room (she said she didn't have to go), but she insisted on reporting on the meeting to all associates. Shortly thereafter, the original SIN was dissolved.]

---

**The Bliss of Childhood**

When I was a child and life was sweet, innocent, and full of fun, there were no lawyers. Sure, there was a lawyer's office down the street and one of my friends, Freddy, even had a lawyer for a father. But lawyers weren't in my life, not the way that kind and helpful grown-ups like wise doctors, kind police officers, funny barbers, and friendly bricklayers were. You see, a kid can look, listen, and understand what these normal grown-ups do. But a lawyer?—nah!

And certainly, in my early childhood none of us actually wanted to grow up to be a lawyer. After all, from what I could see, Freddy's father didn't really do anything—unlike doctors, police officers, barbers, and bricklayers—and what child dreams of growing up to do nothing? Yes, life was very good then and very much without lawyers.

---

**The Uncertainty of Adolescence**

But five to ten years later, life got much more confusing: hormones kicked in; *Highlights* magazine was out, *Newsweek*, *Time*, and the *Sports Illustrated* swimsuit issue were in; and late-night television was suddenly accessible. It was then that my friends and I first began to read and hear about lawyers. The early indications were not promising—lawyers were always part of "bad" stories like murders and Congress.

And sometimes—now that we were older and our parents weren't so careful with their conversations—that word "lawyer" would be overheard. Mom and Dad said it with a special dreadful tone, just like they said "surgery," "IRS," and "Aunt Clara's visiting for two weeks."

---

THE REALITY OF ADULTHOOD

Then another four years or so went by and life got even less attractive—it was at last time to grow up. Suddenly, all sorts of friends, relatives, and even girlfriends were becoming lawyers. These people started talking funny, dressing stiffly, and acting weird around the same time that horrible adult things like bosses, mortgages, and sexually transmitted diseases started showing up.

Along about then, halfway through that first truly good martini, I came to the realization that life with lawyers is far worse than life without lawyers.

Life then became a never-ending process of reconfirming that martini-inspired thesis. You get divorced and lawyers are there. You run your car little car into a really big truck and suddenly lawyers appear. You default on a school loan and lots and lots of lawyers get involved.

So what was I to do? Lawyers—I can't live with them and I can't live without them—especially when so many of them are friends, neighbors, brothers, sons and daughters.

By this time in life I'm an author. And I'm sitting around one night, feet propped up on the word processor, watching a really obnoxious episode of L.A. Law and the idea bolt hits me like a bad summons: "I'll write a really mean-spirited book of lawyer jokes, anecdotes, quips and curses."

I did. Its title is Lawyers and Other Reptiles. I expected to sell about 5,000 copies of the book. But, in just seven months it sold over 100,000 copies.

Wow! Geez! Do people really hate lawyers that much?

Not at all.

THE OBLIGATORY IRONIC TWIST AT THE VERY END

You see, the very last page of Lawyers and Other Reptiles invites its readers to submit their own really mean-spirited lawyer jokes, anecdotes, quips, and curses, all in anticipation of a second book—More Lawyers and Other Reptiles. I received 500 letters.

467 were from lawyers.

Holy smokes!—all the laws in suspenders and all these women in dreadful pants suits have a marvelous, wonderful, self-efficacy sense of humor. Hundreds of lawyers bought lots of copies of the book for favorite clients. Others bought books to display in their firm's reception area. And many others bought multiple copies for their partners, legal aides and

I now adore lawyers. Because of them I've made more money than I ever imagined. I may very well be the only person who made money from lawyers while trying to be mean to them. Even Freddy's father bought three copies; no wise doctor, kind police officer, funny barber, or friendly bricklayer ever did that.

So now, after thirty-nine years, I for one, just love lawyers. God bless 'em.
THE REALITY OF ADULTHOOD

Then another four years or so went by and life got even less attractive—it was at last time to grow up. Suddenly, all sorts of friends, relatives, and even girlfriends were becoming lawyers. These people started talking funny, dressing stiffly, and acting weird around the same time that horrible adult things like bosses, mortgages, and sexually transmitted diseases started showing up.

Along about then, halfway through that first truly good marriage, I came to the realization that life with lawyers is far worse than life without lawyers.

Life then became a never-ending process of reconfirming that marriage-inspired thesis. You get divorced and lawyers are there. You run your car into a really big truck and suddenly lawyers appear. You default on a school loan and lots and lots of lawyers get involved.

So what was I to do? Lawyers—I can’t live with them and I can’t live without them—especially when so many of them are friends, neighbors, brothers, sons and daughters.

By this time in life I’m an author. And I’m sitting around one night, feet propped up on the word processor, watching a really obnoxious episode of L.A. Law and the idea bolt hits me like a bad summons: “I’ll write a really mean-spirited book of lawyer jokes, anecdotes, quips and curses.”

I did. Its title is Lawyers and Other Reptiles.

I expected to sell about 5,000 copies of the book. But, in just seven months it sold over 100,000 copies.

Wow! Geez! Do people really hate lawyers that much?
Not at all.

THE OBBLIGATORY IRONIC TWIST AT THE VERY END

You see, the very last page of Lawyers and Other Reptiles invites its readers to submit their own really mean-spirited lawyer jokes, anecdotes, quips, and curses, all in anticipation of a second book—More Lawyers and Other Reptiles. I received 500 letters.

467 were from lawyers.

Holy smokes!—all those guys in suspenders and all those women in dreadful pants suits have a marvelous, wonderful, self-effacing sense of humor. Hundreds of lawyers bought lots of copies of the book for favorite clients. Others bought books to display in their firm’s reception area. And many others bought multiple copies for their partners, legal aids and secretaries.

I now adore lawyers. Because of them I’ve made more money than I ever imagined. I may very well be the only person who made money from lawyers while trying to be mean to them. Even Freddy’s father bought two copies; no wise doctor, kind police officer, funny barber, or friendly bricklayer ever did that.

So now, after thirty-nine years, I for one, just love lawyers. God bless ‘em.
Law and the Chicken: An Eggs-agated Curriculum Proposal

Roger L. Abrams

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION ........................................ 771
II. THE ALLOCATION OF POWER IN SOCIETY .......... 772
III. OUR BASIC CHARTER—THE CONSTITUTION .......... 773
IV. PRIVATE LAW ISSUES: TORTS AND CONTRACTS .... 775
V. THE INTEREST OF SOCIETY IN GENERAL: THE CRIMINAL LAW ........................................ 779
VI. THE PROCESS: EVIDENCE AND SPECIAL VERDICTS . 780
VII. THE REGULATORY STATE: ANTITRUST, LABOR LAW, AND TAXATION .................................. 781
VIII. CONCLUSION ........................................ 784

I. INTRODUCTION

For decades, legal educators have debated two important curricular issues: How do we introduce law students to the study of law? And, how do we place the law in context, combining different intellectual disciplines in a single course? At the risk of ruffling the feathers of some legal academics high on the pecking order, I suggest we address both issues at one time—in effect, killing two birds with one stone.

The issue of the appropriate introductory course has been the subject of much scholarly work, but not much creativity. Should the course focus on basic principles of the legal process? Should it focus on legal history?

* Chief Feather-Flutter, Nova University Shepard Broad Law Center. One afternoon in the mid-1960s, Dean Abrams studied at the Ag School Library at Cornell University, although indiscretely, he received his B.A. from Arts & Sciences. He fathered his son with a J.D. from Harvard Law School. Although many cases in this article refer to the consumption of chicken, Dean Abrams respects those who believe that eating out debonified Snucks is a societal affront.