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William Lamey: A Student's Reminiscence

*Kathleen Corcoran Esposito**

A law professor must not only be a superb lawyer and scholar, but he must also have the ability to impart his knowledge and expertise to persons knowing little or nothing about the subject matter of which he speaks. Students fortunate enough to be exposed to Professor Lamey during their law school careers had the unique opportunity to observe an instructor who set a standard by which the performance of other professors could be judged.

Professor Lamey's in-depth knowledge of the Uniform Commercial Code was obvious from the first day of class. During the course of the semester, his students also came to know his sense of humor and delightful disposition. In every class Professor Lamey made it clear that he enjoyed teaching and the people whom he taught. He once was interviewed by a reporter on the staff of *Blackacre*, the student newspaper, and admitted that teaching was one of his greatest joys: "The satisfaction I get from [teaching] is the greatest when by virtue of the give and take in the classroom I can see the intellectual development of the class and their overall enthusiasm."

Professor Lamey challenged the class but never derided students who, for one reason or another, were unable to meet the challenge. He was extremely tolerant of his students' many peculiarities. No question was too basic or unusual to be answered. We students had far less patience about questions than did our mentor! Professor Lamey was willing to devote time, right after class or later in his office, to helping students better understand the subject matter of his course. However, he could not be described as a "buddy." Students, who seemed to have nicknames for everyone, never had any nicknames for him. Somehow a nickname seemed inappropriate, not because he maintained a distance from the students, but rather because he was a quiet sort of person and the students instinctively respected his quietness.

Even the most callous student could not help but enjoy Profes-

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sor Lamey's lectures. He was not the sort of person who entertained the class by telling amusing "war" stories, or to whom hundreds of anecdotes came immediately to mind. He was, instead, a person whose class was comfortable, intellectually challenging, and interesting. Very few "statutory" classes could boast the class interest, participation, and enthusiasm that Mr. Lamey's classes commanded!

Although we didn't fully appreciate it at the time, we were vaguely aware that Professor Lamey was a contributor to professional journals on commercial law topics and was a member of the original joint committee of the Illinois and Chicago Bar Associations that recommended adoption of the Uniform Commercial Code. He was active in continuing legal education programs in the Midwest, specializing in the Uniform Commercial Code, and was thus instrumental in the eventual acceptance and understanding of the U.C.C. In this way, Professor Lamey became an educator of many more individuals than just those students in his Loyola classrooms.

The instructor who combines superb teaching abilities with his own personal warmth and belief in growth through practical experience is rare. So rare, in fact, that most students, fearing the perennial rumor that Professor Lamey planned soon to retire, attempted to fit Code class into their second-year schedule. They did not want to miss the opportunity to be taught by one of the finest professors Loyola Law School ever had.

Professor Lamey had often told students that he "enjoyed the classroom." Never was that so obvious as when he walked to the front of the class, opened his book, and began to speak. I will never forget the feeling we all had for him and the standing ovation we gave him at the end of the term. The applause should have never stopped.