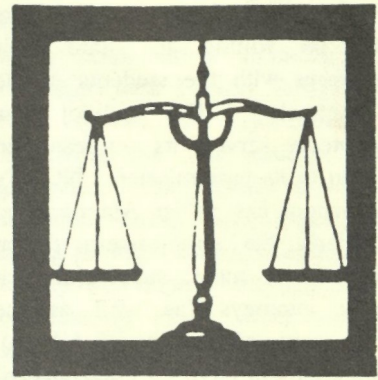


The Barrister

NORTH CAROLINA CENTRAL UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF LAW

DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA



APRIL, 1991

My father once told me that when he was my age (I was fourteen at the time) his primary "career goal" was to become a chauffeur. He explained that few other opportunities were open to blacks. Being a chauffeur held a position of prestige within his community during the mid 1930's to 1940's in rural Hanover County, Virginia. Contrary to his first career goal, he eventually became a teacher after attending Virginia State college and Columbia University's graduate school on the G. I. Bill. Hence, he joined the profession that most educated blacks belonged to in the years following World War II.

Ironically, around this same time period, African American icon and Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall had graduated from the Howard University School of Law. Also, a law school had been established on the campus of North Carolina College at Durham, known today as North Carolina Central University. This law school was established with the primary purpose of educating lack lawyers to become champions and advocates for their own people. These lawyers were to serve in whatever capacity necessary to protect the rights of poor or unfortunate blacks in the area. Blacks were not admitted to the law

schools at the University of North Carolina or Duke University, thus North Carolina Central's law school was the only place for aspiring young black North Carolinians who wanted to go to school in the state to train to become attorneys. The law school had a clear and ever present mission to focus on the problem of the black communities in the southeastern region of the country by educating and preparing black lawyers.

As recently as only ten years ago in the NCCU law school bulletin for 1980-81, the law school proclaimed in its mission statement that it was "one of four predominantly black law schools in the United States", and that it remained a "primary source and leader in the training of black lawyers in North Carolina and the southeast generally." It also stated that "...it will continue to maintain its vital role in the production of well-trained minority lawyers in a well integrated legal environment." The following are excerpts from a bulletin of the same year on page 7.

It is also essential to recognize that NCCU is not the typical law school. The school of law reaches out to serve the needs

of the black and poor community ...

...accepts as one of its primary missions the preparation of lawyers for practice in the black community and rural south...

...one clear example of this is the School of Law's admission program which seeks to provide to traditionally disadvantaged communities future leaders who will be skilled in, and dedicated to solving the legal problems of the poor and under-represented ...with emphasis on providing legal services to presently under-served communities including poor, minority, and rural communities.

One of the reasons that many blacks currently enrolled in the law school applied to NCCU was because of the school's rich tradition and purpose. Many of the students envisioned an academic atmosphere where they could bask in the glow of their talented and wise professors who had participated in "the struggle."

Many had hopes that these professors would be willing to share their experiences with the students of the law school. The school has undoubtedly served its purpose and lived up to its past mission. NCCU's Law School has given America and particularly the southeastern region some of its most successful and diligent attorneys (as well as the current mayor of the City of Atlanta). These attorneys have excelled in civil rights and criminal defense litigation during the turbulent times of our past. However, in the last decade, the racial make-up of this law school has changed significantly. Many say that so has its mission. In 1991, the North Carolina Central School of Law is more than 50% white, and the following questions present themselves to us:

- 1) Is NCCU still one of four predominantly black law schools in America?
- 2) What is the school's mission in the era of integration and equal opportunity?
- 3) Has it outlived its purpose?

Other questions should be addressed as well. Is it reasonable to assume that white graduates of the law school feel any allegiance or financial responsibility to NCCU after they have obtained their law degrees? Secondly, over the past decade, has the change in the school's racial make-up fostered a declining sense of responsibility to the school by the school's black graduates? In short, where does NCCU's law school go from here in 1991? The answers to these questions could hardly be accurately given in the limited space afforded to this article, but perhaps we should acknowledge the fact that they exist; and deal with them accordingly in the future.

--Christopher L. Anderson

Who Listens to the Rumor Mill?

Debbie Brinton, 1L

At the beginning of the Fall semester when we went through orientation as 1Ls I wondered what was meant by the "rumor mill." We were warned by the faculty during those first few days of school not to listen to this "rumor mill." We soon found out what this thing was and how it affected and continues to affect our lives every day as law students.

Just the other day I heard that one of the students planned to spend much of the time during spring break in the library. Inside of an hour the event had extrapolated into a trip to Liberia as a soldier of fortune. Perhaps this is a bit exaggerated, but this type of illogical growth of rumors is not unusual. There are all sorts of rumors available for whatever our fancy. There are the rumors concerning exams and the stuff we should have done when we took exams. Even though we know deep in our heart that mens rea is not necessary in a landlord - tenant relationship, if the "rumor mill" implies that it is such, then we would be sure to believe we were incorrect in not stating that on an exam. We are immediately reduced to panic upon hearing such information after an exam and know that we have surely bit the dust because the "rumor mill" bears the gospel. The dazzling tales we hear about one another are even more incredible. At any given moment during the course of a day we can hear amazing things about alliances between male and female students. The stuff we hear about who does what to whom and where it is done puts any reasonable soap opera standard to shame. We always believe that the other section has something better or worse happening to them and we believe anything that a 2L or 3L tells us. What makes intelligent adults behave in this manner? We accept any information given us as the gospel, even if there is no evidence as to its truth. We even accept information as truthful that we know a jury beyond a

reasonable doubt would find to be untrue.

Law school is in essence a subcommunity of the real world. We spend our days discussing moot cases that retreat us into a world lacking the reality and dissemination of the current day to day type of life we might otherwise experience. Most of us are compulsive, competitive individuals to even have selected the law as a profession in the first place. We have put our lives more or less on hold while we pursue our big goal in life. None of us can deal with failure and we have the need to control all the areas of our lives. We have, however, met our match. We cannot quite conquer law school to get the needed control to appease our personalities. We know that many times even our very best performance is not quite good enough. Our compulsive, perfectionist personalities spend much of the time in a quandary as to what we should do next to conquer the law school system or to second guess the professors. Since we fail to order our world the way we have always been able to, we instead make up stuff to rationalize why our world might be the way it is. We make up new rules for our subcommunity where exams are made of strange things, study relationships are illicit and students make peculiar trips instead of going to the library. Because we feel as if we lack the control that we once had before we came to law school we instead invent things that are either impossible to control so we won't feel too threatened or make up nice, juicy tidbits that we can control with our idle chatter.

Does this mean that when we leave the narrowed world of law school we will no longer be able to deal with reality? Who knows? I suspect, however, as we climb upward and out of law school that this will change. When we finally pass the bar and become full-fledged lawyers we will no longer believe everything we hear; we will scoff at "rumor mills." Instead, we will pass from the moot world back into the real

world again, become skeptics and not believe anything we hear.

A Discussion on Scholarly Writing & Practical Skills Teaching

Rufus Banks

In recent weeks there has been ongoing debate concerning the topic of professors at this law school publishing scholarly journal articles. Another point of interest spun from that debate was the issue of whether our professors should also be required to place more emphasis on relaying the practical tools that law students will need when they become attorneys. This article represents a look at the viability of each point and whether one should be favored over the other. Numerous professors were given a chance to respond, but some chose not to and others were unavailable for comment at the time of this writing.

Professor Finesse Couch feels that an enormous value invres to students when professors publish articles because the students can see that the standard of excellence to which they are held is the same standard that professors hold for themselves. "Many times students feel that professors just pile the work on the poor students then they (professors) go home and relax," says Couch. The students must know that we are all in this together.

Couch feels that publishing scholarly writings also benefits the faculty by inspiring new debate about changing legal issues. Along with new debate comes a heightened awareness and a sense of accomplishment and exposure for our professors. these are some of the elements that she hopes will bring this law school together so that the faculty can have internal harmony which will inspire the students to work together and with the faculty as well. Couch feels that the Central professor deserves as much exposure for his or her scholarly writing as any other law professor in the country. But, she adds a caveat to that by saying, "It is the dynamic professor who will get the

attention, no matter what." In other words, the quality of the professor is not always determined by the Law School's exposure.

Another belief is that recognition of our professors' writings on a regional as well as national level would be a helpful recruiting tool to enhance the prominence of this law school. Professor Couch believes in this idea and is joined by fellow Professor Warren Bracy who thinks that scholarly publications should be required of all professors once they become tenured.

Turning to the issue of professors placing more emphasis on teaching practical skills, Professor Bracy believes that the teaching of those skills should be limited to the clinics. He also feels that there are certain benefits therein. Bracy favors leaving the present system in place as it is.

Couch feels the Law School has achieved prominence through its Alumni's success and its perpetuation of the mission that was established long ago. An increased awareness of the Law School's prominence will undoubtedly result as the School continues to prepare talented lawyers for the future.

A special thanks to Professors Couch and Bracy is extended for making this article possible.

Combination Exam

Angela Dolby

Each year around this time, the first year students seem to have one common concern - the combination multiple portion of their final exam. Last spring I was one of those concerned students, and even after conquering he dreaded exam, I still had some questions. I interviewed three members of the Law School Faculty to get their views on why the combination exam is a part of our Law School experience and how to do better on it.

According to Professor Ringer, the idea of a combination exam was first discussed at a Faculty Retreat in the early eighties. A major concern was improving the Bar passage rate of graduates. The faculty decided that students needed more experience in taking multiple choice questions. The faculty was hopeful that the first year combination exam would encourage students to study throughout the semester since it would be virtually impossible to "cram" for the combination exam. Another reason for the combination format was to develop uniform tests for both sections of the first year class. The combination exam tests the students' substantive knowledge as well as their ability to think quickly. Professor Ringer's hints concerning preparation for the combination exam included being prepared for class, briefing cases, preparing outlines, participating in viable study groups and completing lots of practice questions.

Dean Mary Wright also states uniformity in the final exam is a major reason for using the combination exam. Ultimately, there are thirty questions per class that professors in both sections have agreed on. Also, subject matter knowledge is being tested so students should focus not only on the general rules, but also the exceptions, and common-law/statutory distinctions. Her helpful hints include using the modules in the computer lab, reviewing all midterms with professors, answering old exams under timed conditions and discussing your answers in study groups. Finally, Dean Wright told me the faculty understands our concerns but also pointed out that the combination exam format is actually more work for the professors than a regular exam. Its purpose is not to punish the students but to make sure we actually know the material.

Professor Marschall gave me the answer that was easiest to accept about why there is a combination exam. Students were having problems with

**AM JUR AWARDS
LAW DAY AWARDS CEREMONY
April, 1991**

STUDENT'S NAME	FALL, 1989	SPRING, 1990	SUMMER, 1990
Benshoff, Albert	Legal Method 102		
Bernard, JoAnn	Civil Litigation Clinic		
Campbell, Robert	Contracts I 102		
Carlin, Haral	Criminal Litigation Clinic		
Carroll, Cynthia	Legal Method I 102		
Cox, Marilyn (Bowens)	Property I 101	Contracts II 101	
	Contracts I 101		
Davis, Gail		Law Review Editor-In-Chief	
		Torts II 103	
Durkin, Patrick			
Edwards, Diane	Debitor/Creditor		
Ellis, Sandra	Torts I 102		
Foxworth, Ronald		Criminal Law 101	
Hale, Michael	Constitutional Law I 101	Decedents' Estates II	
Hamilton, Wayne	Law Review Editor-In-Chief		
Hayes, Phillip		Civil Procedure II 101	
		Property II 101	
Henderson, Melissa (Taylor)	Civil Procedure I 101		
Holland, Haman	Criminal Procedure 101		
Janke, Hope	Prof. Responsibility		
Johnson, Thomas	Civil Procedure I 102		
Johnston, Michael	Commercial Law II	Commercial Paper 102	
Kordich, Donald	Tort I 103		
Langenderfer, Jeffry	Property I 102	Contracts II 102	
Leftwich, Donna		Criminal Law 102	
McClanahan, Carolyn			Family Relations
Mason, Sharyl		Trial Practice 101	
Meddock, Adriene	Appellate Adv. I 101		
Modic, Victor	Corporations		
Montford, Cassandra		Advanced Torts	
Nassif, Karen	Evidence		
	Decedents' Estates I 101		
Noel, William		Family Relations	
Olson, Nina	Appellate Adv. I 102	Commercial Paper 101	
Phillips, Steven	Civil Procedure I 103		
Pittman, William		Trial Practice 103	
Pueschel, Janet			Criminal Procedure
Sellers, Barbara (Wilson)	Appellate Adv. I 103		
Smith, Timothy		Constitutional Law II	
Stitt, Ross	Legal Bibliography 102		
Tatum, Robin	Advanced Legal Writing II	Real Estate Transfer & Finance	
	Business Associations	Remedies	
Tyndall, Amos	Torts I 102		
Welch, Brian	Criminal Procedure 102		
Yancy, Arthur		Trial Practice 102	

multiples and even though ideally, the end of the third year is the best time, the only possible time to administer the exam is at the end of the first year because this is when students are in the same classes. The combination exam helps students learn to shift gears and increase flexibility, she says. Her helpful hints to all students include using the modules, "practice, practice, practice" all exams available from all professors, rewriting exam answers, and using highlighters for dates, names, and anything unusual in the fact pattern.

There are undoubtedly many reasons why students do not perform well on the combination exam. However, the bottom line is that your performance depends on you. Study, read all questions carefully and good luck! You can all do well.

The Placement Center and Student Participation

Sean McGinnis

Lisa Crutchfield is the new Director of the Placement and Recruitment Center for the School of Law, having settled into the job in the last few months. She replaces Ms. Gayle Moses, whom Ms. Crutchfield credits with having established an excellent program upon which she expects to expand and enlarge services for the students at the School of Law.

As with any successful program, participation on the part of the students is a key to furthering the placement program at NCCU. The Placement Center offers a number of workshops designed to help the law student hone their job interview skills. Ms. Crutchfield is also available to review resumes, cover letters, and writing samples with students in order to make sure that the materials offered to the recruiters are of a quality worthy of NCCU law students. It is important that students participate in the programs that are offered by the Placement

Center, without student participation the programs suffer and in the end the students may be adversely affected.

The Placement Center and Ms. Crutchfield are available to help students make informed choices about their careers in the field of law. One of the main priorities of the Center is to help students land jobs with the firms and agencies that come on campus to interview with the student body. Ms. Crutchfield will counsel students about what to expect in their interviews. She will offer advice concerning job interviews, and she will critique material presented to her by the students. All of this is offered in order to help the student be more effective in the interview.

What is required of the law student is, at the bare minimum, to have a complete and current resume on file at the Placement Center. For the first year students a transcript of your undergraduate grades should be available with your resume. For second and third year students your resume should be up to date; last year's resume will not be as effective for this year's interviews. Ms. Crutchfield points out that all students might want to enhance their resume with a quality cover letter. She will help students with their cover letters if the students will bring them by for review. It is important that students be familiar with the firm or agency they are interviewing with. The students need to take the time to acquire some background information and to be prepared for their interviews. One sure way to make a poor impression is to not be familiar with the firm or agency you are interviewing with. It is also important that the student attend the interview after they have signed up. The firms are only on campus for a limited time and if a student has signed up for a particular time slot then it is imperative that the student attend the interview at that time. When students fail to attend scheduled interviews this hinders the Placement Center in getting more firms

to interview at the school. It also uses a time slot that could be assigned to another student.

One of the goals stated by Ms. Crutchfield is to increase the number of employers interviewing at NCCU, especially large firms. She is committed to seeing that students have more opportunities to interview with large firms and will have more of a choice as to where they will work, whether it be for a public interest agency, government, or law firm. She feels that it is most important that the students have a variety of alternatives from which to choose.

Ms. Crutchfield feels that the Placement Center is headed in the right direction and with the continued participation by the student body, the Center will continue to grow and be an effective tool for the students in the future.

Reaching Out To the Community

Jerry Smith

For most of us, "life" has been put on hold while we strive to learn the law. The pressures of law school often make it difficult to look past the next case holding or statutory interpretation. We are constantly searching and "researching" for the answers to complex legal problems and are unable to devote much time and energy to other daily tasks. These constraints are further compounded by the needs of those dependent on us for love and support. Many times, the problems of the world around us are hard to see and, more importantly, hard to feel because of these constraints and pressures.

There is a group of students here at Central who are attempting to reach out to certain members of the local community. This group, Future Attorneys Challenging Elementary Students or FACES, works with third, fourth, and fifth graders at Lakewood

Elementary School here in Durham. Through the help of the principal, Ms. Emily Scott, FACES targets certain students who have a strong need for guidance and positive reinforcement. Each elementary student selected for the program is paired with a law student in FACES. The law student is asked to spend a certain amount of time each week, usually one or two hours, with the child in the classroom. Law students take part in all the activities that the elementary students would normally do during the course of the day. These activities can include mathematics, handwriting exercises, reading comprehension, music, story time, and even recess. The primary goal during a visit with a child is to let the child know that someone cares about what the child is doing. Since most of the children live in broken or single parent homes, any supportive comment that a child receives is probably more beneficial to the child's self-esteem than anything else an adult can do.

The law students in FACES cite several reasons for participating in the program. One is a feeling of obligation to help educate and motivate the young people of Durham. Another is the desire to serve as role models for children who need adults to admire and follow. A third reason is to keep the children from getting turned-off of school and onto other ventures that could be self-destructive. Finally, all the law students in FACES express a genuine feeling of personal satisfaction at reaching out to help a child in need. Undoubtedly, the experiences with the children at Lakewood enable the members of FACES to put the struggles of law school into the proper perspective.

If you would be interested in volunteering your time and effort to the FACES program, whether this semester or in the Fall, contact: Tonja Roberts - 682-3075.

The students and faculty at Lakewood are greatly appreciative of any time that one can give to FACES. Students who wish to participate in the program should not feel guilty if their studies do not allow them to spend much time at Lakewood. The fact that a child knows that someone cares about him/her is what is most important.

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 Sean McGinnis - Article on SBA
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 Law Journal, Moot Court, etc.
 Carlos Edmunds - Student Organi-
 zations, Law Journal, Moot Court,
 etc.
 Debbie Brinton - "Full Time Mother/
 Full Time Law Student"
 Bill Olynick - The Placement Office
 Ssycet Jackson - First Year Exams
 Fenita Morris - "Student Reaction to
 the C-Minus Rule"

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