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LAW STUDENT WEB SITE

Law students looking for relief amid concerns of substantive classes and Legal Skills negotiations, might take a break via THE LAW STUDENT WEB. As described by D. Kevin Dunn, Web Administrator:

The Law Student Web is a resource designed specifically for law students and those interested in the study of law. It first began experimentally in December of 1994, and has developed into a participatory place where law students, law professors, and those interested in legal study can locate WWW information resources as well as add information for others to refer.

The Law Student Web Contents include: Web Pages of Law Students; Law Journals Published on the World Wide Web; Web Locations of Interest to Law Students and Potential Law Students; United States Law Schools Currently Available via the World Wide Web; Offbeat Court Opinions and Statutory Law; Additions Page for Suggestions for Additions to the Law Student Web.

Although the Web site provides citations (with brief summaries) of numerous interesting and humorous cases, statutes, and law reviews, only a few selections are noted below. Check out the

Offbeat Court Opinions selection for additional interesting citations.

Interesting Cases:

Let's Sue Satan!

United States ex. rel. Gerald Mayo v. Satan and His Staff, 54 F.R.D. 282 (1971) (no personal jurisdiction over the defendant).

I'm OK, You're definitely not OK

Lodi v. Lodi, 219 Cal. Rptr. 116 (Cal. App. 3 Dist. 1985) (Oreste Lodi sues himself, then when he fails to answer his own complaint, he asks for entry of judgment against himself. What's more - he acted as his own attorney for both sides!)

Unarranged Strangeness

Bass v. Aetna Insurance Co., 370 So. 2d 511 (La. 1979) (Interesting use of the "Act of God" defense).

In Re Kadans, 562 P.2d 490 (Nev. 1977) (Applicant seeking admission to bar w/out going to law school).

Henderson v. Mississippi, 445 So. 2d 1364 (1984) ("how not to" of legal writing; upholding conviction even upon an unintelligible indictment - the court states the issue as whether the rules of grammar of the English language are part of the natural law of Mississippi).

Interesting Law Review Articles:

James D. Gordon III, *How Not to Succeed in Law School*, 100 Yale L.J. 1679 (1991). This is a must for law students or those thinking of attending law school!

James D. Gordon III, *Law Review and the Modern Mind*, 33 Ariz. L. Rev. 265 (1991).

The Common Law Origins of the Infield Fly Rule, 123 U. Pa. L. Rev. 1474 (1975).

William H. Rodgers, Jr., *Environmental Law Trivia Test No. 2*, 22 B.C. Env'tl. Aff. L. Rev. 807 (1995).

Kenneth Lasson, *Scholarship Amok: Excesses in the Pursuit of Truth and Tenure*, 103 Harv. L. Rev. 926 (1990).

WEB ADDRESS

http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~ddunn/l_schl.htm

The Law Student Web [⌈] is maintained by D. Kevin Dunn, a 2L at the University of Oregon School of Law. See also U of O's Princeton Review of U of O Law.

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Edited by Marty Rush

WHY JUDGES WEAR BLACK

As the season of Moot Court begins and the opening of the Supreme Court's session approaches, traditional black judicial robes appear. Are all judges' robes the same? Who manufactures these robes? Why are robes black? The answers to these questions are found in historical roots and current tradition.

Historical. The origin and history of the use of judicial robes and their colors have sparked considerable debate over the years. Most researchers are in agreement that the wearing of the robe has an ecclesiastical origin dating back to the fourteenth century when all judges were clerics who wore robes. When lay judges

replaced the clerics, the robes remained the costume of the judiciary. In England, robes were various colors, such as red, green, and violet, and adorned with fur and other trims, depending upon the court and the occasion.

The first black robes were probably worn in mourning to signify the appropriate respect for the monarchy at the time of death. Controversy continues over whether the mourning robe was to commemorate the death of Queen Anne in 1714 or the death of Queen Mary II in 1694. In either case, the black robe accompanied the common law across the Atlantic to America where its wearing was adopted and has continued for over 200 years.

The Supreme Court. The justices of the United State Supreme Court have been dressed in black robes throughout history. In January 1995, however, Chief Justice Rehnquist surprised the Court and the country by donning a black robe with four gold stripes on each sleeve. The bold fashion statement broke 200 years of Supreme Court robe tradition. According to Rehnquist's aide, the Chief Justice was inspired to change his robe's look after seeing Gilbert and Sullivan's *Iolanthe*, in which the lord chancellor sports a similar gold-striped robe.

A robe of a Supreme Court justice was also in the news when Ruth Bader Ginsburg was spotted carrying her robes into Rizik Brothers dress store in downtown Washington. It seems the justice was shopping for a mother-of-the-groom dress that would fit underneath her robe. She wore both the dress and the robe while officiating at the November 17, 1995 wedding of her son, James, in Chicago.

The robes of the Supreme Court justices are housed in the Robing Room in the Supreme Court building, next to the conference room. Nine adjacent closets, each with a brass nameplate, hold the judges' "work clothes." The closets are arranged in order of the judges' seniority.

Where Judges Shop. One of the major manufacturers of judicial robes (as well as choir and academic gowns) is Oak Hall Cap and Gown Company in Salem, Virginia. In 1974, this company purchased the legendary Bentley & Simon, supplier of robes to many Supreme Court justices. For example, Justice Byron White had a Bentley robe lined with a special lining from Yale Law School. Justices Thurgood Marshall and Lewis Powell, Jr. were also Bentley customers.

Bentley robes are known for their full bell sleeves, pleated yokes, and padded shoulders. Their most popular model, J-71, is available only in polyester.

In California, Academic Choir Apparel in Chatsworth sells 700 to 800 judicial robes annually, mostly within the state. Lance A. Ito is a customer as was People's Court Judge Joseph Wapner. California law mandates that a judge must wear a robe in open court and that it must be black and have long sleeves. Judges must buy their robes at their own expense.

In comparison to the Bentley, the Academic robe features a tapered sleeve. Other options include monogramming, elbow patches, an eye-glass pocket, an added pocket, and a velvet front. Academic welcomes special orders. Among its most memorable special orders were a robe in denim, a robe with a special pocket for a concealed gun, and a green robe embroidered with a shamrock. And there are gender-based differences in robes, the primary difference being the pockets for women and side slits for men.

Conclusion. The wearing of the black robe signifies the neutrality of the judges. The uniform of black allows the judge to focus on justice rather than on fashion. Black minimizes distraction and the assertion of individuality. The judicial robe announces that court is in session. The black garb imparts a certain solemnity and dignity to the judicial proceeding. The judicial robe also bestows a certain prestige

upon its wearer; it separates the judge from the lawyers and litigants. The black robe, dignified and simple, has endured through American history and serves as a constant in the everchanging judicial environment.

SOURCES CONSULTED:

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Charlotte Bradshaw, *Judge Gives Son Life Sentence*, Washingtonian 15 (Dec. 1995).

Douglas G. Camahan, *Aspects of the Robe: Even Judges Are Faced With Fashion Choices*, Los Angeles Daily Journal, Dec. 2, 1994, at 6.

S. James Clarkson, *The Judicial Robe*, 1980 Supreme Court Historical Society Yearbook 90 (1980).

Glenn W. Ferguson, *To Robe or Not to Robe? - A Judicial Dilemma*, 39 Journal of the American Judicature Society 166 (1956).

Oxford Companion to the Supreme Court of the United States 739 (Kermit L. Hall ed. Oxford Univ. Press 1992).

Henry J. Reske, *Showing His Stripes: Operetta Inspires Chief Justice to Alter His Robe*, 81 ABA Journal 35 (Mar. 1995).

Tradition Holds Steady in Robing the Bench's Elite, Los Angeles Daily Journal, Sept. 11, 1981, at 5.
...Sue Trask

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