

Touro College Jacob D. Fuchsberg Law Center

From the Selected Works of Suzanne Darrow Kleinhaus

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Why I Teach

Suzanne Darrow Kleinhaus, *Touro Law Center*



Available at: https://works.bepress.com/suzanne_darrowkleinhaus/13/

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We are interested in knowing why you teach. Please tell us your story in 350 words or less. Send your story to the Institute at ilst@lawschool.gonzaga.edu.

Why I Teach

By Suzanne Darrow-Kleinhaus

I came to the practice of law after 12 years as a technical writer. After practicing for several years, I jumped at the opportunity to teach at the law school where I had graduated only a few years before. I am now an associate professor of Legal Methods at Touro College, Jacob D. Fuchsberg Law Center. I could tell you about my students and the classroom and how it comes alive with ideas when we connect, but the truth is that my father said it better in a letter he wrote to me. I consider it one of the most precious gifts I have ever received. My father, Albert Darrow, wrote:

“The Teacher”

Dear Suzanne,

Harry Truman once said “it makes not much difference what sort of a building you’re in when you’re after knowledge, but it does count entirely on who teaches you.”

Many teachers are bright, quick, intelligent and articulate – and yet they are not good teachers. Why is this so? It’s not very difficult to answer once you pause a bit and think. They lack the other attributes that make a teacher a success. To succeed you must be a complete person. In addition to being smart and articulate, you need to have wit and charm. You have to be able to teach the subject matter in such a way as to make the student interested and motivated to learn what you are trying to teach.

In the end, what the teacher must have most of all is dedication. The teacher has to say, “I can, I will, I must – teaching is not everything, teaching is the only thing.” Such a teacher is worth all of the gold in Fort Knox.

Never let go of your dream to teach and to write. It is who you are.

I remember 55 and 60 years later many of the teachers who motivated me. Mr. Wechsler and Mrs. Jerome in English, Mrs. Calabria in Spanish, Mr. Berkowitz in History, my sixth-grade teacher Miss Keenan, and my music teacher Miss O’Hara. I and others like me are their legacy.

“Knowledge is the lamp that never goes out” and the torchbearers are the great teachers, who by their dedication to service instill in us the idea that we all have value.

Love,
Dad

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