Judicial Externship Evaluation Online Version

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Thinking about my Externship

I start to evaluate my externship with a quote from one song:

You who are on the road
Must have a code that you can live by
And so become yourself
Because the past is just a good bye.

Teach your children well,
Their father's hell did slowly go by,
And feed them on your dreams
The one they picked, the one you'll know by.

The first line says: “You who are on the road.” It does not mean in the literal sense car riders or drivers, but rather individuals who are public figures. They are those who hold public offices such as politicians and judges, those who are celebrities such musicians and artists, and some others.

The next line says: “Must have a code that you can live by.” What code? They are principals that these individuals implement in their lives. How do they handle such publicity? How do they exercise their judgment on the public? It must be there something or a code.

The next two lines are a bit sarcastic: “And so become yourself because the past is just a goodbye.” The author seems to ask a question: oh, do not you have a code? He answers it: well, now, it is the time. You should have one. Why should public figures have a code? It is the reality. It will not work anyway at least all the times. They have tried a few times. It failed. The author relies: try it out again now. Maybe, you did not try well enough. It did not work in the past, but it was just past.

Ok, then, assuming that public figures follow his argument, what should they do? He instructs: “Teach your children well.” Again, he does not mean only public figures’ children but rather those whom they have authority or influence over. An example would include students. He seems to cut off public figures before they say anything: “Their father hell did slowly go by.” In other words, he explains: I know you have experienced unpleasant moments in your life, but “your children” do not need to know it. First, it is gone. These moments are not present now. Second, it is different time now than before, so don’t bring it up and keep it to yourself.

The final two lines speak for themselves: “And feed them on your dreams, the one they picked, the one you'll know by.” He is simply instructing the leaders to tell a future generation their dreams: the ones they like, will implement into reality, and will be known of one day.

Now, I apply this analysis to my externship. The judge is a public figure because of a public office. Court clerks are “the children” as the verse goes. Now, I was present during numerous court proceedings, and I still don’t know what the judge is doing. Where is the code? Where is this something that explains those decisions? Well, it is common and socially acceptable to say that a judge’s decisions are based on facts and the law. Yet, I don’t know what it means. Even if true, it is too broad of a category. There are small nuisances where this category does not cover it. Then, it is up to the judge’s discretion. Then again, what is the discretion? I don’t know. More importantly, what is the dream about the judicial system?
Second, the judge does not pay attention to the interns. In fact, for the last three weeks, I have not said a word to the judge. My friend suggested that the judge is too busy with work, but still how easy it is to ask an intern how he or she is doing, and how school is going. The staff that works in the courtroom acts in the same way because the judge sets up the atmosphere. In all these weeks, in my presence, the prosecutor only once approached us students and asked if we have questions or anything.

I have noticed how attorneys talk to each other, and it is a different how we talk in real world outside the court room. In fact, I’m not at ease to talk for example to some of them because they are on a different level, and I may say something inadequate. I even told my friend that when I got into a court room even for 2 days, I’m in a different world – an unjustifiably harsh place with little mercy. I don’t see any magic going on there. It takes me some time to return to reality, but it does not need to be this way. I don’t mean to discredit the judge.

I understand that the judge enjoys a status as a public figure. On one occasion, the judge even said that all police force is under control. The judge thinks that the prosecutor has a big name. In other others, he is the celebrity but of course not students. Who could possibly think that a Cooley student may have a big name while still being a student? This is an old-fashioned way of thinking. This is how it used to be.

As it goes in the song, time has changed. It is no longer past now. Appellate Judge Peter O’Connell pointed out that every 60 years the world changes to unrecognition, and these past few years have proved it. There are numerous examples where a teenager becomes a sensation over night either because being an X Factor finalist or some other way. The legal profession is touched as well. Judge O’Connell explains that the court will no longer be traditional as we know it but rather will become a revolving door meaning that there would be in addition numerous processes to resolve issues.

Talking about the court, the judicial system itself is outdated. We know it. It is not something new. We talk about it, and we do little about it. I don’t say it does not work, but it could work better with a better solution and outcome for everyone. I will give you a simple example with the just language in court. The Michigan Jury Instructions say: “It is your duty as jurors to decide the issues, and only those issues, that I submit for determination by your verdict.” The problem with it is that we don’t talk the way it is written. Maybe, we used to talk that way when we were back in 80s. Nowadays, we would simply say: it is up to you to decide.

There are many talented students in their own ways at Cooley Law School. I’m not only talking about myself. I’m not going to be surprised that a Cooley student will become a sensation over night similarly to an X Factor finalist. Failure to pay attention to them is just ignoring the present.