

CHAPTER 4 - The Beginning and the End of the Beginning

The Introductory Block was scheduled to be eighteen days of exposure to what a "real live lawyer" does. Although the goals of this block were stated to us in a memo to be to illustrate, to demonstrate, and to motivate us (to something), and the problem was to be simulated, it was very easy to get off in the real world and want to do something "real", even if we didn't quite know what and how to do it. We were working with real clients, Life of the Land, the City and County and Hui O Malama. The introductory seminars moved at quite different paces, as was demonstrated at the simulated legislative hearing. One group was still posing questions to dimension the problem while in strong contrast another group was slickly making a slide presentation (and sending out bills to their clients). But what was it all about anyway and was it worth the eighteen day investment?

Before it ended, a few small controversies came up during the plenary sessions that may have been harbingers of future events. Although the exact date isn't clear, fairly early on the question arose: Why were haoles doing all the talking? The answers and discussion on this point never were (and probably never will be) conclusive, but as time would tell, the real question should have been: If they don't have anything to say, why are they boring us so? The more moderate question probably lies somewhere in between, but it was clear that a few students were infatuated with the sonorance of their own voices and were so worldly-wise that they could enlighten the rest of their classmates on just about any issue. There is also a theory that some of the local students, wanting to equalize the hours monopolized during the introductory block, appointed Wayson as a "spokesman" and charged him with making up for lost time. He's been doing a pretty good job.

Although the problem was to be simulated, another controversy arose over the participation of the "live" clients in the legislative hearing. Even though we were 50 odd, untrained minds, following the analogy of a million monkeys with a million typewriters, we most probably ^{could} turn out some "real" information of some usefulness. We hadn't freely chosen our clients, and while some of us weren't exactly wild about who we were "representing" (Life of the Land? Mike McCormick?) at least one student was positively opposed to aiding the City and County. Settling this particular dispute took quite a bit of time, and there were grumblings about this "waste" of time when we should have been working on the problem. As it turns out in retrospect, we may have had our priorities mixed up and what then seemed to be waste was in fact at the heart of what law school was to be about while the "simulation", while perhaps useful in the context of original goals (to illustrate, demonstrate, motivate), wasted time beyond those goals. As soon as you see these goals, the introductory block's usefulness ends. Looking up statutes, cases, statistics, etc. is not relevant in the first few weeks of law school, unless you are planning a "Paper Chase."