

## CHAPTER 9 - The Gestalt Approach, Or, Off on the Wrong Foot Again?

An introductory block of more modest dimensions greeted us second semester. Lasting only a week, a "touchie-feelie" approach to the Hawaiian criminal justice system made up in confusion what it lacked in length of time. Over the semester break, assignments to seminars had been made and the experience with Ben's course and his final caused a great deal of behind-the-scenes scrambling to stay out of his seminar, most often to no avail. So with new seminar leaders and new classmates, we chased literally all over town riding in patrol cars, visiting the jails, sitting in on courts, etc., etc. The highlight for a few was an all day/night visit to the Hawaii State Hospital, where the confinement proved to be a novel contrast to school. Or was it? In any event, it can probably be said that at any given minute of the week 18-25 January, at least one student was lost or in the wrong place. But how can you be two places at once when you're not anywhere at all? The concept behind this immersion in the criminal justice system was undoubtedly noble, but perhaps a little naive. Somewhere was the premise that it was the students who were naive. and trusting of the criminal system and it was this exposure that would enlighten and shock us into crying out for reform and inspire us to protect the rights of the downtrodden. Well, there were enough students who were cynical of the entire legal system to make this week an exercise in overkill and its attempt at proselytizing the liberal point of view a little heavy handed. But as confused and disorganized as this introductory block was, it was soon to become the highpoint of organization for the rest of the semester.

Marilyn Cohen was an eminently likable person and it was her personality and obvious sincerity that made almost everyone so patient with her course. The reaction to the semester's accomplishments is still mixed, but the majority viewpoint holds that the course was a disaster. There is no doubt that we received an excellent exposure to the tactics of a defense counsel prior to trial, but aside from that and three lectures by Donald Gordon on criminal law, it was the total exposure many of us would get not only to criminal trials but any trial. The course was certainly a great opportunity to present the policy issues and the reality from beginning to end, but we stopped about halfway through. Fortunately a number of third-year students have continued with other courses to fill the voids, but others might be ill-equipped to argue their own traffic tickets. At least we know who to call for advice.

Lindsay Kiang, in stunning contrast, was taking a more conservative approach to the "Regulations of Economic Activity: Contracts" course. One measure might have been the amount, or lack thereof, of xerox material. In contrast to the 10 lbs.+ of Ben, Dick, and Marilyn, Lindsay barely made 25 pages. Fundamentals were stressed, but the course had a very human approach. There was little doubt that Lindsay, in spite of his obvious nervousness about being "on camera" for a potentially skeptical audience, was a natural and talented teacher who brought out the best in everyone. In spite of being a fairly tough taskmaster and grader, Lindsay won the respect and friendship of our class.