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## **Sometimes You Need a Good Shove**

Penny Hazelton

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(5) if a program is boring, get up and leave; (6) spending one's days with law students is an absolute delight; and (7) work very hard but make sure you leave time for family, friends, and relaxation. I still struggle with the last part of number 7.

Al and his wife Joyce became more than just friends to me. To this day they remain like a brother and sister to me. I admire both of them so much and what they have accomplished. Some of the best times in my life were spent with them. When Al announced that he was leaving Houston to become Law Librarian and Director of the Law Librarianship Program at the University of Denver, I thought I would die. It was such a wonderful opportunity for him, but I could not imagine working for another boss. (As luck would have it, I never have). I have continued to consult him throughout my career, and he is always willing to offer advice and encouragement.

One endearing trait of Al's is that he never thought I got any older. To him I was always twenty-three, my age when he hired me. After I had finished law school and become Director at Houston, Al would brag to people at conventions, ending with "And she is only twenty-three!" He truly thought I never aged.

There are two other people I want to mention: Ruth Lindsey and Hibernia Turbeville. Ruth was librarian at the Arkansas Supreme Court when I was still in high school. I met her at the Arkansas Student Librarian's Association annual convention where she was a speaker, and Ruth was instrumental in interesting me in law librarianship. She was still at the court when I entered the profession, and she knew what she had meant to me. Hibernia Turbeville accepted me as the first library intern Southern Methodist University had ever had. I worked there one day a week in 1967 for my final semester as an undergrad at Texas Woman's University. She designed an excellent internship for me and remained a wonderful advisor for many years. Miss T encouraged me to accept the offer from Al Coco because I would learn so much from him plus I would have a wonderful time doing it. She was so right.

From Al I learned about working with people, presenting ideas effectively, dealing with controversy, and treasuring fun in life. Throughout my career, I have never made a major move without consulting Al. He has tremendous insight and can often help crystallize my thinking with just a few pointed questions. I will always be grateful for all that Coco did for me, and I can only hope that I have been able to pay him back by mentoring others as he did me.

### **Penny A. Hazelton\***

#### *Sometimes You Need a Good Shove*

I would never have been a law librarian without the shove given to me by my mentor. Virginia Kelsh, law librarian at the University of San Francisco, is my mentor and very good friend. We met in the fall of 1972, when she was the assistant law

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librarian at Northwestern School of Law of Lewis & Clark College. She had just started her first law library job, and I was beginning my first year of law school in the night program. Newly married and short on financial resources, I needed to work to stay in law school. Fortunately I was hired to work in the law library.

That first year I was supposed to be learning how to think like a lawyer. Instead I spent nearly every waking moment unpacking the thousands of volumes the library was adding in order to get AALS accreditation. It was here my real instruction in legal bibliography began. I learned about the *Green Bag* (a periodical published in Boston between 1889 and 1914); the *Southern Law Journal and Reporter* (a periodical with case reports published in Tennessee from 1878 to 1881—does this shelve with the periodicals or the reporters?); *Selden's Notes* (a New York case reporter covering cases from the New York Court of Appeals from 1852 to 1854); *Judgments in Admiralty* by Hopkins (a one-volume reporter containing opinions from the federal district court of Pennsylvania from 1779 to 1788); and the fierce rivalry between the now defunct Fred O. Dennis & Co. and the Hein Co. (both law book dealers from upstate New York).

The first edition of Price and Bitner (reprinted by Rothman)<sup>1</sup> was my bible. Where else could the unwashed find a list of regnal years, an appendix with the list of English law reports by name, a comprehensive list of case reporters for each state, and fabulous lists of abbreviations of American, English, and Canadian legal materials. I always swore I would update this masterpiece someday when I grew up. Well, I grew up to be a law librarian, but others have tackled this major bibliographic chore!<sup>2</sup>

I finally stopped sorting and shelving books and took over incoming serials, having the title of Serials Librarian during the last couple years of my employment in the law library (and of my legal education). I loved this job a lot. Organization, organization, decisions, problems—I was in heaven. Through the three years I worked in the law library, Virginia treated me with respect and helped me learn more and more about library operations. She showed me how she did the chart of accounts to track law library expenditures, she discussed issues of space and staff organization, she taught me how to work with publishers, she asked for my opinions (I had a lot, even then), and she helped me learn to work with other staff and library users. None of these were part of my job duties. Virginia was not required to tell me any of this. But she satisfied my curiosity and challenged me to look beyond my daily work routine. She infected me with the value of teamwork, the value of full discussion of issues in

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1. MILES O. PRICE & HARRY S. BITNER, *EFFECTIVE LEGAL RESEARCH: A PRACTICAL MANUAL OF LAW BOOKS AND THEIR USE* (Fred B. Rothman 1969) (1953).
  2. *Editor's Note*: The fourth edition was prepared by Harry Bitner and Shirley Raissi Bysiewicz. In their preface they thanked the following individuals for their contributions: Albert P. Blaustein, Dale Alan Diefenbach, Dorothy Dropick, Mary Fisher, Judith Lahey, Marlene McGuirl, William Matthews, Robert Oakley, Meira G. Pimsleur, Nicholas Triffin, and Ruth Van Demark. MILES O. PRICE ET AL., *EFFECTIVE LEGAL RESEARCH* [xxiii] (4th ed. 1979).

search of solutions, and the value of honest and straightforward interaction with people.

By the late spring of 1975, law school graduation was in sight. But I had done nothing to prepare myself for a permanent position in law practice. Nothing. Zip. Nada. Virginia asked me what I was going to do after graduation. When I replied, under my breath, "I don't know," Virginia said, "Go to library school. There is a great program at the University of Washington." I did. What irony that I am now working for this same institution!

Looking back, as Frank's inquiries make us do, I smile with fondness as I remember my law school years filled with work in the law library. Virginia's influence on me was pervasive, yet subtle. She taught by doing. Her sense of humor, her dedication to her work, her excitement when a plan came together, her respectful treatment of others, her team orientation, her knowledge and understanding of libraries, and her high standards for service gave me an unbeatable model to emulate. And besides, she knew what I had not even figured out for myself—that I would love being a law librarian.

So, Frank, thank you for allowing me to publicly thank a woman who literally got me where I am today. I'd probably be digging ditches if not for her. Thanks, Virginia. And here's to many more wonderful years in this profession!

### **Barbara C. Holt\***

#### *All I Really Need to Know I Learned from My Mentor*

I had a mentor before I even knew that I was supposed to look for one. When I was about to begin library school in 1974, I was already working in a Seattle law firm. I asked my firm's librarian if there might be a part-time library clerk position. Jane Stewart hired me on the spot. I didn't immediately recognize that this job was the beginning of my "career." Having already worked as a law firm receptionist, switchboard operator, and proofreader, I wasn't much interested in working for a partnership or working with lawyers. I wanted to be a public librarian, doing work for the greater good, maybe on a bookmobile. But Jane taught me more than I expected to learn, and I remained on her staff for nine years.

*A special librarian is a real librarian.* Only a handful of law firms in Seattle had professional librarians, and it was up to each librarian to define his or her role. Jane imposed high standards from the start: prompt and thorough reference service combined with solid library structure. Jane was the first local law firm librarian to institute full Library of Congress cataloging and LC classification into the collection. When the firm doubled and tripled in size, the classification scheme grew along with it.

*Develop your staff.* Jane ensured that each and every library staff member,

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