

Bill passed to repeal capital punishment in Connecticut

By Michelle Davison

The death penalty. Just those words inevitably evoke powerful emotions in all of us. Supporters claim that some crimes are so heinous they demand social retribution, and that the death penalty acts a strong deterrent to others. Opponents say that it does not bring closure to victims' families, and that there is too great a risk that innocent defendants might be executed.

On Thursday, April 5, 2012, the Connecticut State Senate voted 20-16 to repeal the death penalty in Connecticut. Last year, the proposal did not pass the Senate. This year's success is attributed primarily to newfound support from four Senate members who had previously opposed repeal and helped stop the bill last year. Sen. Edith Prague (D-Columbia), who had previously opposed the repeal, voted for the measure after speaking with a man who spent 18 years in prison for rape and was later exonerated, explaining that she wanted to ensure that no innocent person would be sentenced to death. Senator Carl Leone (D-Stamford), who also voted in favor of the repeal after having opposed in last year, claimed that a visit to the facility in which the death row inmates are housed had an immense impact on the way he views the issue capital punishment.

The Connecticut House of Representatives followed suit, voting 86-62 in favor of the repeal on April 11. Rep. Kim Rose (D-Milford) cited her conversations with the father of murder victim who told her he had found peace through forgiving the murderer and did not want to see anyone face the death penalty.

The repeal did not come as a surprise to one professor here at UConn
See CAPITAL PUNISHMENT, p. 3

Federal Trade Commission attempts to increase internet privacy

By Patty Martins

The fast growth of the digital world has led to a multitude of privacy concerns. Search engines and online businesses collect data on browsers and shoppers. While data-collection certainly makes it easier for websites to pander to the browser's interests, it appears disrespectful of users potential desire to keep the collected information private. The compiled data can also be shared with other companies and there is always the possibility that the information could be hacked. The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) issued a 73-page report detailing its recommendations to improve commercial-data collectors' privacy practices. Despite major companies voluntarily working to provide some of the FTC's recommendations, there is still a lot of work to be done.

The FTC's chairman, Jon Leibowitz, considers a computer the owner's property and wants to give consumers control of their information. The FTC suggests:

- 1) That products should be designed with privacy protections
- 2) Consumers should be able to choose how their data is collected and used
- 3) Consumers should be able to both view the data collected about them and know how that data is used.

Additionally, the FTC wants to have a "Do Not Track" system implemented on browsers by the end of 2012. Currently, Google, Yahoo, and Microsoft are among the companies working on implementing a "Do Not Track" feature. A "Do Not Track" feature would limit the amount of website tracking with a single setting in the user's web browser.

However, small companies—companies that have fewer than 5,000 customers a year—are exempt from the FTC's recommendations, provided that the small company does not share the collected information with third parties and does not collect sensitive data. The FTC wants the collected information to be compiled in a centralized website, allowing consumers easy access to their data—a move opposed by marketing

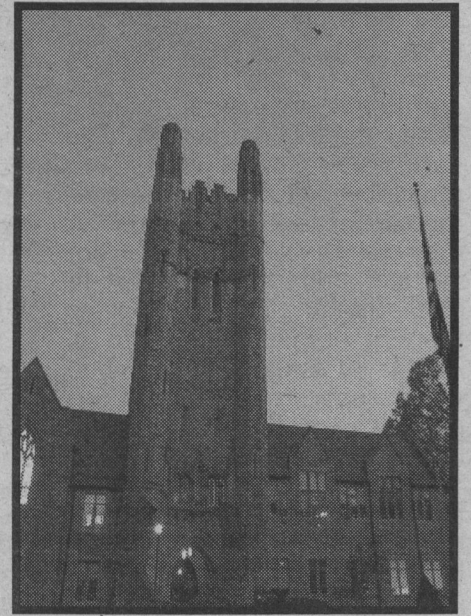
See INTERNET PRIVACY, p. 3

Economy still impacting Law School applicant stats

By Alexa Millinger

Despite a national downward trend in law school admissions amid the flagging legal market, applications to UConn Law were up this year. The Law School Admissions Council reports that the number of law school applicants is down 15.6 percent from last year and 24.1 percent over the past two years. Applications to UConn Law increased 4 percent from last year, but applications are still down about 10 percent from 2010.

Karen DeMeola, Assistant Dean for Admissions and Student Finance, attributes this year's increase to a new crop of full scholarships the Law School will offer to next year's incoming class. In addition to 10 full scholarships the Law School had available last year, the University Provost's Office gave the Law School 20 additional full scholarships for the incoming 2012 class. DeMeola said that the school widely publicized these scholarships during the application season, by sending out mass mailings to po-



tential students, holding additional events, and buying advertisements on Facebook.

"This put us on the radar for students who might not have otherwise applied," DeMeola said. But UConn Law's scholarships are still minimal compared to what many other law schools offer. DeMeola

See ADMISSIONS, p. 2

Health Care Case Update: Report on Oral Argument

By Alex Anastasio

From March 26 to March 28, the Supreme Court held three days of arguments over the constitutionality of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, often referred to as "Obamacare." The Act, passed in 2010, restructures the health insurance market and is considered one of the primary achievements of President Obama's first term.

The first day of arguments concerned whether or not the 1867 Tax Anti-Injunction Act prevents a plaintiff from bringing a suit against the PPACA until that plaintiff actually pays a tax under the Act. Neither the plaintiffs nor defendants appeared interested in pursuing the theory that the Anti-Injunction Act prevents the Court from deciding the constitutionality of the PPACA.

On the second day of arguments, the Justices considered the primary constitutional challenge. The respondents targeted the individual mandate within the Act, which requires most Americans to purchase a qualified health insurance plan. They contended that this constitutes a regulation of economic non-activity, and that such regulation is outside of Congress's power under the Commerce Clause. The government defended the mandate, arguing that since almost all Americans are or will be participants in the health care market, it is effectively regulating only the time of entry to a market within which people are already participating.

The government made its arguments first, and members of the Court's conservative wing asked most of the questions. Justice Kennedy, considered a crucial swing vote in the case, began his questions by asking whether Congress "can create commerce in order to regulate it." Justices Scalia, Roberts, and Alito questioned the extent of the Commerce Clause, asking

See SCOTUS, p. 3

Connecticut contemplates medical marijuana statute

By Matthew Szafranski

Last year the Connecticut General Assembly reduced the penalty for simple possession of less than half an ounce of marijuana. This year, the legislature is poised to make Connecticut the seventeenth state to make Cannabis sativa, marijuana's scientific name, available for medicinal purposes.

The bill originated in the Judiciary Committee of the assembly, but recently passed the Finance Committee, which sent the bill to the House of Representatives for debate. The bill enjoys support among leadership in both the House and

the Senate, which makes it likely to pass.

Under the law, dispensaries of medical marijuana would be limited to licensed pharmacists. The Department of Consumer Protection would manage the regulation of the dispensaries, including their total number. The Department would regulate the number and location of such facilities based on the need and appropriateness of the proposed location.

In early March, the Judiciary Committee held a marathon public hearing, which elicited testimony from individuals of all walks of life, from patients to legislators to activists. In addition to the diverse sources of testimony, the divide

between supporters and opponents of medical marijuana did not fall along party lines. Representative Penny Bacchiocchi favored the bill, Senator Toni Boucher opposed it; both women are Republicans. By comparison, although the bill enjoyed broad support among Democrats, the Vice-Chair of the Judiciary Committee, Senator Paul Doyle, voted against the bill's move out of committee.

Among the arguments against the legalization of medical marijuana, beyond the obvious continuing federal prohibition, were concerns involving California's experience with medi-

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An appeal for continued laptop use in the classroom

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New monthly column highlighting recent efforts in public interest law

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Dean's Corner with Dean Paul

By Dean Jeremy Paul

Students hardly need to hear from me about the tough job market those of you graduating in May will confront. But one aspect of the current challenge facing young lawyers calls out for creative solutions.

Media portrayals often suggest the problem is that the nation's law schools are producing too many lawyers. But the real question is too many for whom. While the job market remains tight, more citizens than I can remember are unable to afford the sort of legal representation they need. One recent Connecticut study suggests that in 85% of family law cases one or more parties will appear pro se. This is an astonishing number, which suggests there is a shortage not a surplus of legal training.

I don't have a silver bullet for how to ensure that enough resources can be re-directed to create a broader array of legal services for ordinary citizens. Perhaps what the country needs is a new program along the lines of Teach for America in which recent law graduates receive a philanthropically funded stipend to spend two years in post-graduate training representing those of limited means. Although "Counsel for America" might not have the same ring to it, it could turn out to do a great deal of good. And it might fill part of the demand

for more practical training that American law schools are struggling to provide.

More generally, the sort of market mismatch now plaguing the provision of legal services represents a microcosm of many of the deeper issues threatening our economy. We want top journalism, but the advertising model that once funded it has broken down. We expect first rate health care but the costs have spiraled out of control.

Redesigning markets to better serve social needs is perhaps the most significant challenge facing the next generation. Who better to do this than young lawyers? Everything starts with constructing institutions in which the relevant parties are offered the right incentives to produce socially desirable outcomes. Markets offer a good start by demanding efficiency and lower costs from producers of goods and services. But the challenge of our era is to improve on the market structures we have inherited from prior generations.

I wish every member of the graduating class good luck in all things, but in particular I look forward to watching as you invent ways to transform legal practice, revise economic organizations and re-imagine political institutions. Although this may seem now to be pie in the sky, it will turn out to be just the trick to ensure that you ultimately thrive in your careers.

Letter from the Editor, Reflections on this Year

Dear Readers,

As *Pro Se* concludes its sixth year of publication, I would like to take a moment both to reflect on the transformation that the newspaper has undergone over the course of this last year as well as to highlight some of the hard work that the staff has undertaken to enhance and maintain those traditions that make our newspaper unique and successful.

Over the course of this past year, *Pro Se* has undergone a myriad of changes, not the least of which has been the appearance. The staff began the year by making one of the most obvious changes to the newspaper: printing it on newsprint. This transformation allowed us to submit our newspaper for the very first time to the ABA Law Student Division's Student Newspaper Competition. The results of the competition will be available in August, but whether we win or lose, the issues that we submitted, along with all of the issues that we have presented to you this year, remain some of our finest work and I am deeply and profoundly proud of the staff, contributors, and law school community for their contributions to and support for this endeavor.

Our efforts to improve *Pro Se* have not simply been limited to transforming the layout; we have also been working hard to illuminate the different voices and perspectives that permeate our campus. We have done this through the establishment of a variety of monthly columns including our columns featuring stories from individuals participating in the D.C. and study abroad programs as well as our newest Pro Bono/ Public Interest feature. Additionally, the staff has also been hard at work creating a web presence for the newspaper.

Finally, on a more personal note, I would like to take a moment to reflect on my experiences as a contributor and editor for *Pro Se* during the past three years. Through my work on the newspaper I have felt connected and part of both the law school community as well as the great and important enterprise of maintaining open, honest, and factual discourse about important issues. In recent years, the news media has often been portrayed in a negative light with terms such as "dishonest," "propaganda," and "tool." *Pro Se*, however, has never fit this description to me. It has always been the way the news should work: an opportunity to converse, to challenge, and to effectuate change.

A great deal of *Pro Se's* integrity comes from hard work of the editor board and contributors. I have never met such a group of dedicated, engaging, and talented individuals as those that make up *Pro Se's* staff, and I am honored to have had the opportunity to work with them this year.

So it is with both a great deal of both pride and sadness that I pass on my editorship to next year's editor board. I know that they will continue to improve and enhance this institution that I have loved for the past three years, and I look forward to watching how *Pro Se* develops in the coming years.

Yours respectfully,

Erica C. McKenzie
Pro Se Editor in Chief

Interested in writing for *Pro Se*? Keep a look out for our first informational meeting in the fall or drop us a line at prose@students.law.uconn.edu

Stay updated through our facebook and twitter pages!

Pro Se

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University of Connecticut School of Law.

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Alex Anastasio
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Scott Robson

A special thanks to
Ellen Messali, Immigration Attorney
and UConn Law Graduate 2010

from ADMISSIONS, p. 1

said schools with more funds use scholarships to attract a higher-caliber student body - a luxury that UConn cannot afford.

"There are schools that are buying their [LSAT] median and selectivity... and that takes those of us who don't have a lot of scholarship money out of the running," DeMeola said. DeMeola claims the economy plays a large part in UConn's application numbers, since, as a state school, it is significantly cheaper to most applicants than a private school. Forty percent of UConn's applicants are Connecticut residents. But LSAC reports that applications to public law schools overall fell 13.8 percent this year.

The national decrease in law school applicants reflects the economic downturn and diminished job prospects for the 45,000 students expected to graduate law school in each of the next three years. LSAC reports that the number of students taking the LSAT dropped 16 percent this year, the largest decline in more than a decade.

DeMeola said the Law School struggles to keep a balance between selectivity and sufficient class size when admitting students in the past few years. The Law School admitted 11 percent more applicants this year than in 2010. Last year, about 250 students were admitted from the waitlist, DeMeola said this is significantly more than she has ever seen. "We had to take a hit on selectivity because we had no choice, we had to bring in a class," DeMeola said.

This year, the Law School eliminated the option of applying to the day and evening divisions, to better predict incoming class size. The Law School has not been able to pull in a 1L class of 200 students in the past few years, although the University recommends an incoming class of about 210.

"Admissions have gone up and down over the past thirty years," DeMeola said, "but this is the worst we've been hurt in terms of the legal market."

Introducing the 2012-2013 Pro Se EBoard!

Editor in Chief: Patricia Martins
Managing Editor: Matt Szafranski
Layout Editor: Michelle Davison
Executive Editor: Alexa Millinger
Features: Alex Anastasio
Commentary: Sahar Hafeez

A Note from the Student Bar Association

First and foremost, I would like to thank you for your support in electing me for new SBA President for the 2012-2013 academic year. Over the next year, I look forward to working with the entire student body to leave a lasting impression on UConn Law in a way that greatly benefits the UConn Law community in both the present and future.

As the semester rapidly draws to a close I wanted to take this opportunity to congratulate all the newly elected student organization executive board members. The SBA is looking forward to working with the newly appointed leadership to continue to make student organizations and events one of our unique traits. While we look forward to the continued success of our student organizations, the SBA also looks forward to reconnecting with other UConn graduate programs to further enhance our social network.

I would also like to thank the Social Committee and its Chair, Sebastian Tornatore for organizing a very well attended Spring Fling at the Connecticut Boathouse. Aside from the event occurring without incident, the hottest song of the spring, "Call Me Maybe" by Carly Rae Jepsen, was played a record four times in the span of two hours. For all of those who requested it, we owe you a debt of gratitude.

By the time this issue of *Pro Se* reaches you, our student body will have executed several other fantastic events as well. Recently, the Connecticut Moot Court Board concluded yet another successful Alva P. Loiselle Moot Court Competition. Congratulations to the winners, Melanie Orphanos and Brian Boulet. The Moot Court Board also hosted the Connecticut Supreme Court on campus to hear arguments on the case John A. O'Dell, Administrator v. Koozee, et al.

One matter of business that will require the participation of every student currently enrolled at UConn Law School is the 2012 Budget Referendum. Essentially, the management of the "Student Group Activity Funds" for the Student Bar Association falls under C.G.S.A. 4-54, and states that a referendum must be held every four years to determine whether control of the funds shall remain with the SBA or return to the President of the University (who would presumably delegate the management to the Dean). In order for fiscal management to be retained by the SBA, such referendum shall require approval of at least 40% of all students enrolled in the institution and paying activities fees (which we all do through our tuition). The SBA will be tabling in the library foyer for the duration of the school year conducting an electronic vote, and we ask that everyone take a minute (if not less) to vote and help the Student Bar Association retain the right to control our student activities budget.

In addressing the most important matter of this month, the SBA would like to offer a heartfelt congratulations to all the graduating members of the class of 2012! You have certainly earned this honor, and the law school community looks to you to continue our fine tradition of professionalism and success in law. I implore you to remain active as alumni because your knowledge and experience will only better serve the upward trajectory to which we all aspire to see the law school rise. Again, congratulations.

Lastly, the SBA will be doing what it can to ease the frustration and stress of finals week. The SBA and Dean's Office will be offering Midnight Breakfast, and the SBA will be providing free coffee at the Co-op during finals week.

Best of luck on finals to everyone! If I do not have the pleasure of seeing you before the fall, have a wonderful, enriching, and relaxing summer.

Respectfully,

Franklin E. Perry II
President, Student Bar Association

Those laptops in the classroom...

OPINION

By Matt Zagaja

In classrooms across the country there has been a consistent push to get technology in the classroom. In Idaho the state legislature passed a law that would make sure students in Idaho classrooms receive laptops or tablets and that would require they take at least some online classes. A recent 60 Minutes segment explored a project created by Salman Khan to flip the classroom by having students watch lectures at home and then work on problem sets on their computers at school. Yet while public school districts are fighting and struggling to update their technology, here at UConn Law the debate seems to be whether we need it at all.

What is most surprising is that it's not just the professors that seem cynical about the laptop use in the classrooms, but the students seem even more so. Classmates see each other surfing the Internet and playing games instead of paying attention. Solitaire, Pinterest, facebook, I've seen it all. Professors are rightly concerned that students in their classroom might be unengaged when surfing the Internet. But before we throw out the baby with the bathwater, it's important to consider the benefits of the laptop use and question whether a lack of laptops would cause students to pay attention.

As a student I decided to go paperless at the beginning of my law school career. This meant all my notes would go into a note program on my laptop. I adopted a method of briefing cases where I type the briefs up in the laptop the night before then add and expand on them during my classes, something that is certainly easier on a laptop. This means that by the time the end of semester rolls around my outline is pretty much already built for me, saving hours if not days, of time. When I get confused about a topic or term I can quickly search my notes and find it without spending the additional time skimming every single page. Even bet-

ter is that during a class I have all my notes from previous classes on my computer so if an old question comes up that I forgot the answer to I can pull up my notes on it to refresh recollection. The computer has made my note taking more efficient and useful than it was without.

The second advantage of laptops in the classroom is the use of backchannel communication and research during class. If a professor brings up a case that was not read I can quickly Google it to get a summary. If a person or place is mentioned that I'm not familiar with I can quickly get information on that as well. Yet even more exciting is the backchannel communication going on in class. Using tools like GChat many students are often discussing the class with their classmates in the class. Sometimes it is just a question about a point that was missed or area of confusion but other times it is a debate about the class topic. Professor Zittrain at Harvard Law School piloted a special program they developed called H2O that created a backchannel that the whole class could participate in during his torts lectures.

Finally the other piece of wisdom that my classmates have shared is that the absence of a laptop does not automatically assure that students pay attention. I've even heard of students taking blank pieces of paper and hand writing drafts of other assignments because they lacked engagement. For these students, the presence or lack of presence of a laptop will not make a difference.

So in deciding whether or not to allow laptops I do not think the school should adopt a bright line policy but leave it up to individual professors and that the course catalog should specify whether the professor allows laptops. In a seminar course or a lecture where the professor is sending notes to the class after the fact, the laptop may not be necessary or helpful. In a typical lecture course or where students are expected to take notes the laptop is extremely beneficial for many students and those benefits outweigh any detriments.

from MARIJUANA STATUTE, p. 1
cal marijuana. After California legalized medical marijuana in 1998, there was an explosion of dispensaries throughout the state. The law legalized the drug for medical purposes with few if any meaningful regulations, leading to a scenario where marijuana is legal for almost any use.

In a remarkable exchange between Republican Senator John Kissel and Eric Baier, an eighteen year-old afflicted with numerous physiological and behavioral problems, Kissel asked Baier how he felt about children as young as twelve using medical marijuana. Baier had already explained that his body's problems processing most medications leaves marijuana as one of the few effective treatments available to him. Baier answered Kissel's question by asserting that he felt that any younger than 16 would be inappropriate. He had earlier said in his testimony that his case was an extreme circumstance.

If the General Assembly approves the bill and the governor signs it, Massachusetts and New Hampshire will be the only New England States without medical marijuana laws. However, a ballot initiative will go to the voters in Massachusetts this November, which could add the Bay State to the list of medical marijuana states.

from CAPITAL PUNISHMENT, p. 1
Law. "If you're governor of a state, and you have a program that can cost upwards of \$5,000,000 every year, is fraught with political controversy, and does not achieve its only purported goal, what would you do?" asks Professor Robert Casale who teaches a course entitled Capital Punishment.

Connecticut has only executed one prisoner since 1960: Michael Ross was executed in 2005, after waiving his right to any further appeals.

The new law has caused controversy because opponents of the death penalty—including some in the state legislature—believe that the proposal should also apply to the eleven men currently awaiting execution in Connecticut. Professor Casale claims that these sentences may be commuted because the situation is ripe for appeal. "What happens when the next guy comes along and does something worse? Whether or not someone is put to death can't be decided based on when they committed the crime," he says.

Dr. William Petit Jr., whose wife and two daughters were murdered in the infamous 'Cheshire home invasion' case, has adamantly protested the aim of the repeal. He is largely credited with preventing the appeal from passing last year while Joshua Komisarjevsky, one of the two defendants accused of the crime recently convicted and sentenced to death, was still awaiting a verdict.

Governor Malloy signed the bill on April 25. This makes Connecticut the 17th state to abolish the death penalty, and the fifth to do so in the last five years.

from SCOTUS ACA, p. 1
whether Congress might also require Americans to purchase burial insurance, emergency cell phones, or broccoli.

Most of the questions directed at the government came from the conservative justices, but the liberal wing also asked questions. Justice Ginsburg clarified the government's main argument, that most Americans are participants in the health market; those people who do not purchase insurance are still in the market, but instead of paying for insurance they pass their costs on to others.

During respondents' arguments, justices from the liberal wing asked most of the questions. Justices Kagan, Sotomayor, Ginsburg, and Breyer all appeared to believe in the constitutionality of the mandate. Justice Kagan pressed the idea that the Act merely regulates the timing of entry into the health market, while Justice Breyer seemed to accept the idea that the government could use its Commerce power to force entry into markets.

On the third day, the Court considered whether if the mandate could be severed if it was found unconstitutional. If not, the entire Act might be rendered unconstitutional. Justice Ginsburg described this as a choice between a "wrecking operation" and a "salvage job." Justice Scalia inquired if determining the severability of each provision in the 2,700 page Act constituted cruel and unusual punishment of the Court. The Court also considered whether the Act's expansion of Medicaid was constitutional.

Pro Se will continue to provide updates regarding this landmark case.

from INTERNET PRIVACY, p. 1

companies. Marketing companies stress how difficult it would be to create a centralized website. They argue that the database would be difficult to keep safe. They are also wary of removing information out of the information economy.

Finally, the exact definition of "Do Not Track" sparked debate. Possible definitions of "Do Not Track" conflict as some argue that internet companies should be allowed to continue to collect data for market research and product development, and others contend that "Do Not Track" means no data can be collected. Because the FTC lacks authority to control or implement privacy measures, the success of its recommendations requires the cooperation of marketing companies or legislation to be passed by Congress.

While the U.S. currently carves out possible new privacy protections, other countries have already begun protecting online privacy. After an Austrian law student requested his own Facebook file and received 1,222 pages of information including information he had deleted and location information that he did not enter about himself, new privacy law considerations were unveiled - including Web companies needing explicit consent before obtain data and allowing European citizens to demand that his or her internet data be deleted forever. The U.S. does have laws protecting various types of information, but currently has no law detailing the use of online data.

"B Median" continues to trouble students

OPINION

By Benjamin Kuehn

Many law students disapprove of standardized grading requirements. For example, UConn fixes larger classes around a "B median" in classes over 18 students. The rule intends to provide a fair baseline to measure students against one another. However, the execution of this rule is flawed for three reasons.

First, the median is applied only to larger classes, allowing substantial room for students to escape this standard. In theory, all students are equally able to enroll in classes to which the B median does not apply, which are perceived to boost the GPA. However, the fact that courses graded without a B median are smaller ensures that less students can take these courses. For fall 2012, 131 courses were offered, 57 of which are not required to be graded on the B median. Of

these 57 courses, 15 are clinics, which are extremely difficult to enroll in. Further, depending on a student's academic goals, they may be punished for taking popular or stimulating courses. This discourages intellectual development and conflicts with the intent of the median, because students will try to "pad" their GPAs by taking the "free A" courses.

The second flaw of the B median is that it is designed with limited statistical relevance. A median ensures a level of predictability in grading, but also gives each professor too much individual discretion. Even in first year courses, students notice significant variation between both sections and professors. Perhaps intentionally, the rule leaves a great deal of room for the professor to assign grades in any manner they see fit, so long as the medial grade is a B where applicable.

Finally, professors often fail to comply with the rule. Whether protesting the rule or merely failing to apply it properly, the result is unfair

to students. In some cases, unsuspecting students receive emails from the registrar informing them that their grades have been changed.

The design and application of the B median rule allows for considerable and unacceptable inconsistency. The easy solution is to abolish any grading standards. While students, and seemingly professors, would like this change, it may be undesirable as UConn transcripts could lose weight in a competitive job market and may be against ABA guidelines. Another proposal is to enforce strict grading guidelines on all courses. This would require a bell curve and grades to be distributed evenly about the mean. Any solution like this is likely to be resisted by students, faculty and the registrar due to its difficulty of administration.

Neither of these solutions feels satisfactory. Both are all or nothing deals that upset the balance between administration, faculty, and students.

The Back Page

Highlighting recent efforts in public interest law

By Ellen Messali, Immigration Attorney and UConn Law Graduate 2010

When I was approached to write the first installment of the pro bono/public interest column, I was asked to describe some of my past and present pro bono and public interest work. I wrote several drafts of this column that were in line with the instructions; but, the problem was...I didn't like any of them. In those drafts, I wrote about myself mostly, and very little about my clients and mentors. What you will find as you engage in public interest and pro bono work is that these two groups of people - your clients and your mentors - are the story. So, I'll tell you about mine.

I spent my first two years of law school doing exactly what a public interest student does at UConn. I was involved in the PILG auction, I interned at several non-profits, and I took advantage of the clinics. In the fall semester of my third year, I was fortunate enough to get a spot in the Asylum and Human Rights Clinic, where I met my first client. She was a young woman, several years younger than I, who had survived extreme brutality at the hands of her child's father. It took immense courage for her to go through with the asylum process, as it involved reliving the details of her story countless times. Seeing my client testify before a stranger in a black robe was such a testament to her strength, and hearing the judge grant her asylum is something I'll never forget. I am happy that my client is still a part of my life, but now as my friend. She is living a life free of fear, and has been reunited with her son in the U.S.

After that, I guess you could say that I was hooked. Shortly after graduating, I took on an asylum case pro bono. This time, I represent-

ed a man who had escaped horrible violence in Africa because of his homosexuality. When I met him, it was evident how much he had suffered physically and also emotionally because most everyone in his life had disowned him due to his lifestyle. What my clients had in common, though their stories were worlds apart, was enough optimism and strength to fight for the chance at a new life in the U.S., despite the many moments that it would have been much easier to succumb to feelings of hopelessness. His persistence led to a grant of asylum as well.

I am also lucky to have two mentors at UConn who have made a remarkable impact on my life. I hope that many of you had the opportunity to meet Nicole Ayala, who just left Career Services for a new position. Nicole read every cover letter, guided me through every fellowship application, and reassured me on an almost weekly basis that a career in public interest is a reward worth striving for. I also hope that many of you have the chance to participate in the Asylum and Human Rights or Poverty Law Clinics with Professor Jon Bauer. He will teach you how to be an advocate you can be proud of, and offer you endless guidance and encouragement along the way.

For me, public service is a passion that has grown from knowing what is possible when you dedicate your energy to something larger than yourself. I hope that all UConn students take advantage of the opportunity to do pro bono work. You will meet clients for whom you are truly honored to advocate, and you will learn from professors and colleagues who inspire you and exemplify what every attorney should aspire to be.

Voices From the Quad

By Patty Martins

This month's question:

If you could choose anyone - living or dead - to be Dean of our Law School, who would it be?

"Howard Stern - he's funny and smart."

-Joel Henry, 2LE

"Martin Luther King, Jr. - after he's achieved all of his accomplishments."

-Yoann Pré, LLM

"Dean Martin - he has experience being a dean and has reached #1 in the rankings before."

-James Ringold, 2L

Mysteries of the Law School Revealed

Welcome to *Pro Se's* latest column where we investigate real questions that you have about the law school. We have put together a team of our best investigative reporters to delve deep into the secrets of the school and report back answers to the questions that are on everyone's mind. In this edition our team risked failing our finals and getting lost in the woods to bring the answers to these intriguing mysteries:

What does the path leading from the parking lot behind the library lead to?

Over the past three years, you may have noticed the development of a concrete path leading from the parking lot behind the library into the wooded area behind Knight being developed. None of the members of the *Pro Se* Investigative Reporting Team had even seen this secret path, but after some careful exploration, we located this mysterious passage.

If you deign to wander past the great edifice that is our library and journey on foot through the parking lot to the rolling pasture beyond, you will find this concrete path leading back into the wilderness behind the school. If you follow that path, you will eventually come upon a platform beset with two chairs and a table:



Having finally located this site, *Pro Se* contacted sources within the administration to discover the use for this site (Perhaps the location of the meetings for some secret society?). Our sources revealed that this path and seating area was developed for student, faculty, and staff to use to relax.

The *Pro Se* Investigative Reporting Team remains skeptical, however, and intends to investigate this site further. We are launching a full-scale investigation, employing recent law school graduates, to monitor this site this summer for suspicious activity. We will report back the results in the fall.

Do you have a question about the law school that you want us to unveil? Something that you have always wondered about the school, but never been able to figure out the answer to? Email us at prose@students.law.uconn.edu and our investigative team will try to unravel your questions about the law school.

Wendy's Wise Words of Wisdom

Dear Wendy,

I just finished outlining for all of my classes last night, but I can't get over my anxiety about how I will fair against my competition. Please advise on what I can do between now and the exam period to ensure that I do the best.

-Sincerely, Anxious for an A

Dear Anxious,

You should know at this point that when preparing for a law school exam, finishing your outline is never the end. Your job right now is to scout study groups, identify your fiercest competitors, make your presence in the library known and get comfortable with the idea of losing all of your friends (who needs them?). First, get a feel for the study groups that are forming amongst your fellow classmates. Ask to join a few. Once you've joined, make sure you take on a LOT of responsibility--offer to outline multiple chapters of the reading, create charts and diagrams to help illustrate balancing tests and complex rules, compile a document with case summaries--and then, when the deadline that you've set (dangerously close to the exam) approaches, don't give them anything. This will leave your competition in a state of shock and scrambling for any study aids, useless or not.

Next, find students who you know will ace the exam and offer to meet with them to discuss some questions you have (be extremely flattering to secure that meeting). This will help you enhance your knowledge of the subject while possibly opening the door to some useful study material, like those charts, diagrams, case summaries, and bits of outlines that you were supposed to prepare for the groups in step one (but don't hold your breath, as these students may know better). You should also book study rooms in the library and be sure to show off how much studying you're doing by asking unsuspecting classmates unsolicited questions about material that you know won't be on the exam. Finally, when you sit for the exam, be sure to bring a loud snack and some plastic to crackle throughout, infuriating your classmates out of concentrating. Good luck!

Yours,
Wendy

Robson's Ramblings: Fearing a Dwindling Job Market, ABA Looks to Fiction for Answers

By Scott Robson

It is said that life often imitates art. Today, in the wake of its most recent proclamations, it would seem that the American Bar Association has looked to the world of art for inspiration.

"We live in a desperate time for attorneys," an unnamed ABA spokesperson said. "Overpopulation and a dearth of resources have left us in absolutely dire straits. Each year, the problem gets worse. It's become an almost Biblical plague of law students, swarming our firms and Starbucks like locusts."

"I made the mistake of going to an on-campus recruiting event somewhere in Connecticut," the spokesperson said with haunted eyes. "It was like something you'd see in a post-apocalyptic grunge film from the 80s. Like Mad Max, only with suits."

The problem, according to analysts, is getting worse. As universities continue to realize how profitable law schools can be, more law schools

are created. As more law schools are created, more people pay tuition to become law students. More law students create more lawyers. And more lawyers need more jobs.

Unfortunately, the legal market cannot possibly keep pace with the unsustainable law student growth curve.

The situation was grim. The ABA couldn't realistically cut back on the number of law students admitted, since that would eventually reduce their cut of the profits from student state bar applications.

In a flash of inspiration, the ABA suddenly had its answer. They would look to popular fiction for a publicly palatable solution.

"It's already an adversarial system," an anonymous source said. "So why don't we capitalize on that to alleviate the overpopulation problem and provide some public entertainment? That's what we call a win-win in the industry."

Rather than endorsing an arbitrary rating system that would potentially stigmatize bright

and capable law students, the ABA has decided to create a biannual competition for job placements.

One male and one female student will be selected from each law school per semester. These students will compete against one another for scarce resources until only one remains. Hosted in a different state each semester, the competition's rules are simple: law students who survive and are able to bluebook successfully will be placed at top-notch law firms.

"It's not just a challenge of legal skills," *Pro Se's* ABA source said. "It's a challenge of real-world practical survival skills, predicated on competition and our reverence of the adversarial system. Sure, Suzanne Collins may try to sue us, but c'mon."

"We are the law."

No Hunger Games fans could be reached for interview.