



2000

Dedication to Dean Harold Gill Reuschlein

Sandra Schultz Newman

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.law.villanova.edu/vlr>



Part of the [Legal Biography Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Sandra S. Newman, *Dedication to Dean Harold Gill Reuschlein*, 45 Vill. L. Rev. 9 (2000).

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.law.villanova.edu/vlr/vol45/iss1/4>

This Tribute is brought to you for free and open access by Villanova University Charles Widger School of Law Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Villanova Law Review by an authorized editor of Villanova University Charles Widger School of Law Digital Repository.

2000]

DEDICATION TO DEAN HAROLD GILL REUSCHLEIN

MADAME JUSTICE SANDRA SCHULTZ NEWMAN*

HOW does one begin to pay tribute to one of the great men of our generation when it has all been said? For instance, at the American Bar Association, during a 1992 awards ceremony in which the Dean was honored with the Robert J. Kutak award, it was said, “No individual has given more to the cause of American legal education than Harold Reuschlein.”

When Villanova University was given the go ahead to move forward with plans for a law school, all that was left to be done was to find the foundation for the school, a new dean. There was a nationwide search, and it was most likely easy to decide to give the position to Harold Gill Reuschlein, a veteran law professor who was then a faculty member of the University of Pittsburgh School of Law. Villanova School of Law admitted its first class in September of 1953. The man I write about today exhibited leadership and brilliant foresight that led Villanova to become a distinguished law school in a relatively short period of time, and he was active in the goings on of the law school until shortly before he died at age 93 in August of 1998.

As I have said, newspapers, magazines, books and law reviews from all over have praised the great Harold Gill Reuschlein, so I would like to share some personal memories I have that always make me smile when talking about “Dean Reuschlein.”

My first memory takes me to the time I was driving by Villanova Law School, as I was beginning my Ph.D. at another university, and I asked myself why I was going to study for a doctorate when I always wanted to be a lawyer, even though I never knew a woman in law. I had recently read an article where a Ph.D. student had shot his professor after his thesis was rejected for the third time, and I thought maybe I should get out of the car and get an application and see whether I could become a law student.

While walking toward the Admissions Office, I saw Dean Reuschlein and when he asked if he could help me, I told him I was looking for the Admissions Office. He developed my inquiry into a full discussion, asking me about my academic credentials, my husband, whom I had mentioned, and what it was like to raise two young children and be a student. He also informed me that the last LSAT for September Admission in 1969 was being given that Saturday, and he said I had better rush to be approved to sit for the LSATs that week. I took the LSATs that Saturday and began Villanova University Law School in September of 1969. At the beginning

* Justice of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania (1995-present); J.D. 1972, Villanova University School of Law.

of the semester, Dean Reuschlein delivered to the freshmen an intellectually challenging speech, which he ended by telling us not to throw chewing gum on the floors of the halls and not to cross the railroad tracks behind the school. He also told us that if we were married, our spouses should know that law school would make us more difficult to live with now. I soon realized not to mention this part of the introduction to law school to my husband, because I thought I had already reached the epitome of being a difficult spouse—Just going off to law school with two toddlers was enough to win that prize.

Once, while I was talking to a friend in Dean Reuschlein's jurisprudence class, the Dean stopped and asked, "Mrs. Newman, do I have to bring my lecturing to a standstill to tell a mother of two to stop speaking during class?" As would be expected of a former World War II colonel in the Army's Judge Advocate General Corps, in 1971-72, I remember the Dean telling many men to leave class for not wearing jackets and ties. However, my funniest recollection concerning the dress code was when he told a male student in shorts that he could not take a final exam.

When Dean Reuschlein and I walked down the aisle together at graduation in 1993, when I was receiving the "medallion award" given by Villanova University Law School—only the third recipient and first female graduate to receive the award—I was very proud. I told the Dean Emeritus that it was wonderful to be at his side and that he looked truly glorious in his hot pink and red robe. He then asked me if I thought he looked rather garish. I assured him that he could never be brassy, that he was truly distinguished and splendid looking, and that I was the most fortunate graduate to have the honor to walk with him.

At a Board of Consultors meeting of the law school, we spoke of housing for professors for the Harold Gill Reuschlein Chair for Distinguished Visiting Professors at Villanova Law School, and our dear Dean Emeritus, then 91 years old, assured us if she were pretty, she would be invited to stay at his home.

In 1994 after my election to the Commonwealth Court of Pennsylvania, the Dean Emeritus confided that I was the first Republican for whom he had ever voted. He voted for me again when I became the first woman elected to the Pennsylvania Supreme Court. I must also add that he told me he was truly proud that the first woman elected to the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania was a Villanova Law School graduate.

I end by describing Harold Gill Reuschlein as a brilliant educator and leader who always kept his sense of humor and sparkle in his eyes, and praying that he and his dear Marcella are hand in hand creating a grand afterlife. I also tell you that when I visited the top of Mount Assisi in 1992, and I watched the doves, I thought of you, my great teacher, and so you know that I really did listen and learn in your class of jurisprudence, I share with you a prayer I read in Assisi that reminded me of you, my dear friend, teacher and mentor:

Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace!
That where there is hatred, I may bring love.
That where there is wrong, I may bring the spirit of forgiveness.
That where there is discord, I may bring harmony.
That where there is error, I may bring truth.
That where there is doubt, I may bring faith.
That where there is despair, I may bring hope.
That where there are shadows, I may bring light.
That where there is sadness, I may bring joy.
Lord, grant that I may seek rather to comfort, than to be comforted.
To understand, than to be understood.
To love, than to be loved.
For it is by self-forgetting that one finds.
It is by forgiving that one is forgiven.
It is by dying that one awakens to Eternal Life.¹

1. Prayer of Saint Francis of Assisi.

