

Our Designated Hitter, Everett F. Goldberg

Garrett Power



Everett Goldberg served the University of Maryland School of Law long and well for over 25 years. He died on February 4 after a long battle with cancer. Yet when I think of him, I remember softball in the lawyers' league years ago when we boys of summer sought to recapture athletic glories that never were.

We nicknamed our teammate "Rett the Jet," though he was neither fast nor flashy. He played a sedentary third base, but when the ball was hit his way he handled it with perfect reflexes and good instincts. His throw to first was true and on the mark. I remember Rett most as a hitter. I don't think he ever hit a home run. But when the right pitch came along he had a perfect swing, stroking the ball right on, dead center. He always got a hit, never made an out.

Among his colleagues Rett was a conciliator. He never bit a back. He offered praise for the success of others; he found no fault. And in one respect Rett had a very special position at the law school. When it came to the most basic issues of equality, fairness and compassion, we looked to him for guidance. His answers were right on dead center. Reality trumped rhetoric. The ends never justified the means. And fair was fair. On questions of conscience Rett was our "designated hitter." He always got them right; he never got them wrong.

When he came to the law school in 1967, Everett Goldberg planned to specialize in international law. After graduating from Princeton (1960) and Harvard Law School (1963), he served as a Peace Corps legal advisor during tumultuous times in Ethiopia. He was intent on teaching how the rule of law might bring peace and order to international affairs.

Maryland had other plans for him, pressing him into service in the experimental Legal Method Program. Goldberg became a pioneer instructor in Legal Method-Property. He proved a perfect choice, and for two decades initiated hundreds of students into the mysteries of the law. When the Legal Theory and Practice experiment began, he was again a pioneer, collaborating with other faculty to create LTP-Property, which gave students the theory and field experience to deal with the housing problems of the urban poor.

Mid-career, he took time out from teaching to be a dean. As associate dean from 1975 to 1985, he was the "inside dean." While Dean Kelly jumped from project to project and idea to idea, Dean Goldberg ran the place. We on the faculty came to appreciate his calm, fair, steady manner.

Everett Goldberg was a citizen who found a way to use the principles of law to address broader public concerns. Early in his career the Environmental Protection Agency commissioned him to consider the legal problems of dealing with acid wastes from Appalachian coal mines. His study should be required reading for the generation now charged with cleaning up toxic wastes at Superfund sites. He also helped franchise cable television services in order to assure public access and competitive rates.

At the time of his death, he was driving in the fast lane on the "electronic highway," using his natural intelligence to consider the legal prospects for artificial intelligence. We will miss him.

Garrett Power is professor of law.

I was also fortunate to be in the country during its second set of free elections, in which the country threw out rather unsuccessful leaders from its first four-year term as a democratic state, and voted into office the previous opposition parties, including the reformed communists, now known as the Hungarian Socialist Party, and the Alliance of Free Democrats, a liberal party.

The city itself is beautiful, full of exquisite architecture, and set on both banks of the Danube river, which flows between the two halves, Buda and Pest. Unlike most of the former Soviet block, Hungary had begun early experiments in economic modernization and decentralization, as well as expanded tourism by the early 1980s.

Thus, in many respects, the country was easier to live in than some of its neighbors. Fine restaurants of all varieties, from Greek to Thai to Mexican and Chinese, are available, as well as the deliciously seasoned Hungarian fare. Fast food American style is likewise ubiquitous. The opera is unbelievably inexpensive—the highest priced tickets are about \$15.00—and excellent in quality. Theater in Hungarian, and occasionally German or

English, is outstanding and exceedingly popular. For the visitor with adequate amounts of hard currency, this urbane city is as glittering, and much less expensive, than such western European cities as London, Vienna or Copenhagen.

Nevertheless, the transition plainly has a long way to go, a fact evident in the immense amount of bureaucratic red tape and inefficiency still pervasive in everyday life, as well as high unemployment and a large remaining body of unprivatized, state-controlled industry. I look forward to returning, periodically, and witnessing the continuing development of a fledgling free society in the coming years.

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