

Strickland: Dean will teach American Indian law course

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school so much. But it was, in some respects, so trying that as an escape I worked on this book. You've got to have a life in addition to academic life.

In fact, I gave the summer commencement speech on Saturday. And I closed with the movie "Auntie Mame," when she says, "Life is a banquet, and most poor suckers are starving to death." That was part of my message in that speech.

Q Do you teach here?

A Yes. I'll be teaching this spring, the basic course in American Indian law, the introductory course. Then, the following year, I will be teaching a seminar in American Indian law and policy.

This first year I did not teach due in substantial part to the fund drive. I've been on the road asking people for money.

Q So, are you going to be one of the first professors with expertise in Native American law?

A Well, Mary Wood, who's on our faculty, is a young scholar who has done some really very exciting things on Native Americans and natural resources. Other people: we have 11 people who teach in natural resources and environmental law. So, a number of them have significant contact with Indian law.

Q How do you feel about coming to Eugene, a less racially diverse community?

A One of the nice things about the state is that Oregon now has about a dozen federally recognized Indian tribes. So, in terms of the state of Oregon, there's a very rich opportunity to visit with In-

dian peoples.

The University is in the midst of another fund drive for a new Native American longhouse that will be by the new law school. We have a substantial commitment at the University to be of service to the Native people. One fellow, a Choctaw, received his Ph.D. on Saturday. It's not, in terms of the Indian community, so isolated.

Q How does the amount of diversity compare with other states?

A That's a substantial number. Oregon is, I think, one of maybe 10 or 12 states that have substantial, active, ongoing tribal groups. There's a Bureau of Indian Affairs area office in Portland. It's a state with a good, strong Indian leadership.

Q And where do you see your work?

A My first task is to learn more about the Indian tribes and Indian people in Oregon. Because the law as it applies and the culture of historical experiences are different from tribe to tribe. There are over 500 tribes, bands, and villages of Native people. One of the things I've been doing is trying to visit each of the tribes. I've met with a number of tribal councils and tribal business corporations to talk about some of the things we could do that would be helpful.

Q How is your work directed? What's your agenda?

A The principle focus of my work has been to help Indian and non-Indian participants of legal issues to see the point at which they have shared interests, at which the opportunities for Indian tribes intersect the opportunities for the state as well. For ex-

ample, we have a law and entrepreneurship center here at the law school. And one of the things we're looking to do is to work with tribes in helping them establish tribal-based corporations and business opportunities.

I think my real agenda in terms of long-term contribution to the state is to revitalize the historically strong Indian law program that the University of Oregon has had. And to assist our graduates, many of whom will not work in the field of Indian law, to understand what the issues are when they have clients who happen to be Indian people. It's really, I think, to try to build a bridge between the Indian and non-Indian community and between the lawyers who are trained to deal with Indian issues and lawyers who are part of the general public area who don't believe, or at least have a sense, that they're going to need to deal with Indian issues. For example, anybody who deals with the domestic relations area may find themselves facing the Indian Child Welfare Act so that the adoption of a child may raise issues, if you have an Indian child, that many lawyers just don't know about. That's what's required, is to know about these issues.

Q How do your work and your living interrelate?

A One of the things, for example, is that I'm a collector of American Indian things. And I put together a collection of over 200 American Indian paintings and sculpture done by Native people. I gave that, as a gift, to the Heard Museum [of Native American and Primitive Art] of Phoenix. We did a touring show that went

to the Smithsonian and is now in Australia and New Zealand. In fact, the show was at the Portland Arts Center about five years ago.

I've done a lot of work on the art and then in terms of how it relates to law. In recent years, we've had several pieces of federal legislation that have limited ownership and sale of works by Native Americans.

Q And you worked for that legislation?

A Yes. I was on the committee of the American Museum Association that reviewed that. Then I was the consultant to a group that the Senate and House put together to review and compare this legislation.

Q How do you see the new law school building enabling the school and its programs?

A It will be an absolutely state-of-the-art law school. We will have the capacity to deal with on-line legal research. We will be absolutely cutting edge. We were able to look at educational architecture — the architecture of education — to create classrooms that will maximize interaction.

About one-third of our library collection is in storage. So we'll bring that out so that students can have immediate access to those materials.

I think it'll also be very important in terms of our going to create a professional community in the law school. We'll have space in which students can interact with each other and we can model for our students what life as a lawyer and law professional is as they interact with each other.

Q Sounds exciting.

A It really is. It's a magnificent opportunity for, I think, not just the law school community but for the entire University. We will have public space that the community of Eugene will use. The Wayne Morse Chair and their operations will be housed in the building.

Q What tradition is there at Oregon as far as the Law School dean goes?

A I don't plan to run for the Senate. (laughing) I don't think I'm a very good politician.

I've certainly had a sense that there's a strong tradition of the Law School dean being actively involved in the state and I want to do that. When President Frohnmayer was dean of the law school, he, of course, became much more rooted both at Oregon and politically. But much of what he did as dean of the law school was to go into communities and be involved in helping people understand law. One of the things that I'm very anxious for is becoming involved in a much more substantial way with education about law for elementary and secondary schools.

I have a line which I use with some regularity that, "Education about the law is too important to be limited exclusively to would-be lawyers." We need to help students, particularly high school-age students, to get a sense of what they can and cannot do so that when students go out and rent an apartment for the first time, they have a sense of what a landlord's obligations and what a tenant's obligations are. So then a person's first dealing with the law

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