

A Tribute to Professor Robert Casad*

*George Cameron Coggins***

Honored Guests, Ladies, Gentlemen, and Law Students:

I cannot compete with Judge Logan's oratorical prowess and profundity in praise of Kane Distinguished Professor Robert C. Casad. And, unlike Terry Schackmann, I have never been a student in one of Professor Casad's classes. Even so, it is an honor and a privilege to have this opportunity to talk, however briefly, about Bob and his career. As the only thing standing between you and the bar, you can bet I will be brief.

Bob Casad and I have been colleagues for 27 years and office suite-mates for much of that time. I must admit at the outset that my admiration for Bob is touched with more than just a tinge of envy. Let me talk about what he has done, where he has gone, and, especially, what he is not.

As to what Bob has done, most of you know the main facts:

- that Bob Casad is one of the premier civil procedure scholars in America;
- that Bob Casad is renowned for his internationally oriented scholarship;
- that Bob Casad was only the second professor in the Law School's history to be voted a chair by his fellow faculty members;
- that Bob Casad is the favorite law teacher of generations of law students;
- and that Bob Casad is a passionate advocate for social justice.

This would be enough for most people.

But Bob is more than just the sum of his professional accomplishments. He is a devoted husband and father. He is an accomplished musician. He is fluent in Spanish and does some research and writing in that language. He was an invaluable member of the great KU Law Faculty touch football teams of the 1970's and a ferocious handball player.

What particularly inspires my envy is the traveling he has done and the places he has seen—do I sound like Dr. Seuss? Within the United States, he has taken semester visits to UCLA, Illinois, Hastings in San Francisco, Colorado, and Michigan. Then, beyond this country, he has visited Spain, Vienna, London, Japan, Costa Rica, to Guatemala, Munich,

* This tribute was presented at a dinner honoring Professor Robert Casad upon his retirement.

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Augsberg, Frankfort—and many other exotic places. As we know, Bob's traveling was all for purely professional reasons. And from this he is retiring?

In the end, much of what I admire most about Bob Casad is what he is not. That sentence may violate several grammatical rules, but, what the hell, this is the age of post-modern critical legal studies, in which words do not have to mean anything. Anyhow, think for a moment about what Bob lacks.

First, Bob Casad is not an egotist. You would never know from talking with him that he is one of the most distinguished scholars the University of Kansas School of Law has ever produced, nor that his chosen area is one of the most difficult in the curriculum.

Second, Bob Casad is not a typical big time law professor, which is to say, he is not an arrogant theorizer, trying to fit the world into his preconceived model of it. Too many college campuses and too many law schools are like Boulder, Colorado—ten square miles surrounded by reality. Bob is firmly grounded in reality.

Third, Bob Casad is not a prima donna (is that now a sexist term?). He demands no special treatment; he never avoids his students; he attends to all the details of law school life; and he follows the rules. He works hard, long hours at a profession, not just a job. How many of us faculty members can say that?

Fourth, Bob Casad is not a politician. He does his law school and University committee work without complaint, but he does not follow the University Committee Code, which is: the less at stake, the more vicious and long-winded we are. As far as I know, Bob Casad has never uttered harsh words about other human beings, except of course Ronald Reagan and Newt Gingrich.

Bob and Sarah, all of us thank you for the pleasure of being your colleagues and friends.