A TRIBUTE IN HONOR OF PROFESSOR JOHN MURPHY

I went to law school for all the wrong reasons. I had graduated from an Ivy League university with good grades only to find myself in the middle of a recession. I thought I wanted to be an arts photographer, but I couldn’t even find a freelance job doing commercial photography. I ended up as a bellhop at a local hotel.

I backed into going to law school as a way to escape that dead end job. I thought law school would give me more career options than other graduate programs. I had no particular interest in the law; none of my relatives were lawyers.

I discovered that law could be intellectually stimulating when I took Professor Murphy’s international law class. Professor Murphy engaged us in deep questions: What is the role of law in international relations? What is the role of courts in reviewing foreign policy decisions by Congress or the executive branch? Can individuals or states use international law to advance human rights? Most importantly, he made international law exciting. Because of his class I decided to practice international law after graduation.

Now I teach law as an adjunct, and try to instill in my students the same intellectual curiosity that Professor Murphy imbued in me and countless other students. I am indebted to him for turning my mistaken reasons for going to law school into a satisfying career.

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