

The Rhetoric of Chiasmus #4

Law

For many reasons, lawyers – although well regarded, more or less – are often the butt of many jokes: easy targets, like politicians, particularly. There is a trio of opposing forces in Law, though: lawyers, judges and criminals – each ripe for chiasmic commentary. Let me show you...

Where would we be without the rule of law?

That's a rhetorical question, of course. Trouble is, however, while all recognize the law is necessary, many take the view that it's okay to bend, bend, bend and even break *this* law or *that* law to suit their own ends.

That's nothing new, of course. And, it's the sort of thinking that pervades a host of human activities – notably in politics and used-car sales, as two quick examples. Almost every week, it seems that **laws passed by our political leaders are sometimes bypassed by the same people**. It's probably one of the major complaints against those who are the guardians (ha!) of the law.

Legal transgressions obviously occur in other areas – in fact, probably in all aspects of commerce and business. Need I mention Wall Street? And, what about the shenanigans of Enron, Global Communications, Goldman Sachs, Bank of America and too many more, over the last fifteen, financially-rapacious years? We'd be forgiven then, wouldn't we, by saying that **things are crook in business when business is run by crooks?**

But why does it always take so long to do *anything* about it?

It's a real problem for the legal profession, I think: too many legal eagles trying to subvert the law – and the interests of the people – to make a few more bucks for their clients, and themselves naturally. Oh, I can hear some say: It's the way of the world, bucko – deal with it. Spare me, please – I'm trying....

But, if I *were* religious, I'd respond thus: **But, it's not the world of The Way, is it?**

However, *because* I'm not religious – not now – I try to leave my most vitriolic chiasmic ruminations for lawyers ... and priests. After all, I firmly believe in retaining equality with my criticisms. Hence, the next time you hear a lawyer talk about wanting to get to the truth about a case, just remember this: **In law, the absolute truth is this: there is no absolute truth in law.**

Because, philosophically and even phenomenologically, everybody's truth is different. There *is* justice, however; and we must be thankful for such small mercies. Moreover, because truth in law is ephemeral, at best, it almost goes without saying that **the truth of the matter is just that the matter of truth just doesn't matter. . . .**

Having said that, however, about truth and justice, we must remember that law and justice serve the interests of the powerful first. Which means that **for the oppressed, there is often no justice in law; and for the oppressors, there is often no law in their justice!**

Ouch - a double whammy! Sad, but all too true, when you read and hear the daily news from around the world.

Thankfully, though, there *is* a vehicle for the control of lawyers: the judge – who was probably a lawyer first and so knows all, or most, of the sleazy tricks used by the unscrupulous. From the latter's perspective, they should know **never to make book on a judge for his cover** (oh, okay – bad implied chiasmic pun). Which, in turn however, will make it easier for **good judges to keep lawyers in line, while lawyers can keep a line on good judges.**

Well, now, then, there ... who's left? Aaaah, yes, *the criminals....*

It's almost unnecessary, I think, to say that most people should *not* be in jail. Prisons are just academies for criminal graduates, mostly - another sad truth about the state of humanity. Considering some of the (deservedly) long-term inmates, though, you can imagine this lament from a lifer perhaps, as he looks at his situation: **So much time, so little to do!**

If that evokes a tired smile, then I'll let you have a double chiasmic construction I wrote after reflecting upon the plot of that old, and much loved, movie, *Oceans 11* (the original). Recalling the closing scene of the disconsolate and chastened gang walking away from the church, the following potential closing lines occurred to me:

Robber #1: Funny, eh, losing all that money?"

Robber#2: Losing money ain't funny!

Robber #1: Hey, can't you ever take a joke?

Robber #2: I don't joke about the take, ever!

The scene was better in silence, however; their facial expressions said it all.

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