

The OPINION

William Mitchell College of Law Student Newspaper

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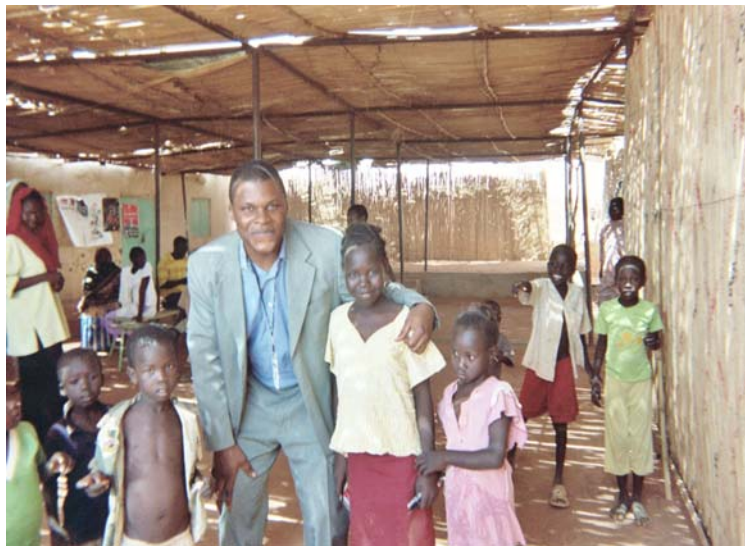
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Summer in Darfur

By Njock Eyong

Many ask what kind of law school classes prepares you to spend a summer in a place like Darfur. I spent the summer working with the United Nations in Sudan. I was assigned to the Governance and Rule of Law unit. A bigger part of the job was setting up legal aid centers, training people on peace and human rights, drafting good governance strategies and documenting human rights complaints. It was a difficult but yet rewarding experience.



I believe nothing prepared me for what my eyes saw, my ears heard, my hands felt and my soul embraced in Darfur. Looking at what is going on in Darfur, I realize it is one of the most difficult political environments I have ever been in. It is a hard place to be in, because of the lack of hope and able forces to enforce a fragile peace agreement. Hope is waning for the millions of refugees in Darfur.

So the AK 47 assault weapon becomes like the version of a credit card here. The Sudanese government backed Janjeweid militia and the rebels know they can get anything they want with it, so they do not fail to use it.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN/RAPE AS A WEAPON OF WAR IN DARFUR

If you are in Saint Paul today, and you see someone riding a horse on Grand Avenue,

you will pay no attention or maybe you might ask for a ride. But if you are a woman in Darfur, that very same horse would strike fear within you. This is because they are victims of the Janjeweid militia. A man on a horse to the women and children in Darfur signifies not safety but the beginning of a raid by the Janjeweid.

I heard many stories about many of the girls or women that left the camps to collect firewood; they would be attacked and raped. When I was in Darfur, the UN data showed that four out of ten women have been raped in the region. You might be wondering, why not the men go collect the firewood or fetch water. The Janjeweid will kill the men immediately. They do not spare them so many of the men decide to risk their women by letting them to go fetch water and wood.

The Janjeweid have used rape as a tool of war to humiliate the local indigents. In this

environment, rape is a very shameful thing and brings a curse in the family and future generations. This rape is still happening in the refugee camps even with the presence of the African Union forces that I consider to be a tourist or cosmetic force. That's why I believe in the necessity of the UN forces.

SHE WAS JUST TWELVE YEARS OLD

I had a chance to interview a girl who was raped; she asked not to be named because of the shame and fear of retribution. She was just twelve years old. She told me, she left the camp with her friend to fetch wood and drinking water from a nearby stream for their families. Seven men on horses attacked them; they had government uniforms and some of them dressed like the Janjeweed militia. They were not able to run faster than the men on horses and were caught and raped.

One of the other victims told me they were made to watch other women being raped. I just wonder what kind of human beings would do these things. She told me they might never get married because of this. She told me they will never get a chance to an education because their society will see



them as dirt or an outcast. She once had a man who promised to marry her but now she does not know what is going to happen.

I met another 14 year old girl who walked with a severe limp who recounted to me how she had been gang-raped by Janjeweed

militia. When she resisted, the men violently forced her legs apart, dislocating one of her hips from the joint. This is what many Darfuri women have to deal with every day. When people tell me their stories, I take photos and document it so the UN can use them to set up a criminal tribunal.

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE -- AFRICAN UNION TO UNITED NATIONS

In Darfur today, the African Union (AU) has only a UN chapter 6 observer mandate. They have been given orders to just look around, see what is happening, but they can not engage in combat operations and fully enforce the peace agreement. In addition, they can not disarm the Janjeweed militia and other rebels. I believe the place needs more troops and a Chapter 7, law enforcement mandate given by the UN.

They do not have a law enforcement mandate. That is what is needed to protect the rapes, killings and slaughtering of the Darfurians. The UN and the international community need to stop playing shell games on this and get into serious business to make sure this happens. The AU has a half

bate mandate with a force which is not robust enough, this mission has failed. This is an observer mandate that has been stretched to allow the AU forces to protect civilians if they see them being killed but they can not go after the bad guys, they can not engage in law enforcement. That is not enough. They need to have the authority to enforce peace, disarm the militia, and be fully backed by the UN to carry their job, with all the resources that developed nations had when they

went into Bosnia.

WE CAN NOT TRUST THE SUDANESE GOVERNMENT

The belief by many in the international community that the Sudanese government

will stop funding attacks by the Janjeweed militia against the Darfurians is absurd. I don't know how we can trust a government that has presided over a war that has killed two million people and where ten thousand die monthly. We can not trust the Sudanese government to meet its responsibilities, continued reliance on its cooperation as a pre-requisite for action against the militias with which it is allied is an egregious self-deception.

The Sudanese government likes to have the cosmetic presence of the AU forces aimed at appeasing international pressure, minimizing the political dimensions of the conflict, and inflaming ethnic divisions to achieve military objectives. Some will say this is an Africa problem and so we should let the Africans find a solution. Millions have died and the AU does not have the capacity to protect them or provide a peaceful solution. President Bush and Secretary Rice need to put the pressure on the Sudanese government to accept the UN troops.

LAW STUDENTS SHOULD ASK FOR DIVESTMENT

William Mitchell Law students should ask their state politicians, University Deans and board of trustees to publicly state and pass resolutions; that they will not invest in any corporation that conducts business with the Sudanese government for as long as Sudan is in violation of international norms of human rights and does not allow UN troops to protect the Darfurians. William Mitchell College of Law can take that step today if we are serious about genocide.

Most of us do not have the respect of Elie Wiesel or Paul Rusesabagina whose mere presence is a constant reminder of what can happen when the world remains quiet in the face of evil. We can make responsible choices; we can lift our voices and help to protect humanity; to avoid the use of rape as a weapon of war and help save Dafur.

The truth about lies: a 1L's take on law school survival

By Kate Johansen



As a 1L, the only thing I know about law school is that I know nothing about law school. Even Thomas Hobbes would be shocked at how *rasa* my *tabula* is. However, in the last few weeks, I have learned something about the effects of law school on

students. Simply put, law school is a veritable buffet of manifested coping mechanisms. Just look around and witness first-hand how the human race deals with fear, anxiety, insecurity, and above all, stress.

Standard coping methods are the most prevalent: working out, denial, caffeine, and over-indulgence in certain vices. The coping mechanism central to all law students though seems to be complaining. You may ask, what's wrong with complaining? Well, nothing, except that it undermines the momentum of your legal scholarship and fosters self-pity. I was a champion complainer until I recently discovered a great rule for law school coping; it is even better than complaining and has none of the negative side effects. Ready?

LIE TO YOURSELF

Lie to yourself. After awhile, you won't even notice your pants are on fire.

How does the rule work? Allow me to demonstrate. After a particularly rough day

in Torts, you may be tempted to think, “Torts is so hard! It makes me want to kick puppies!” Thinking this would only make you feel justified in disliking something you have to learn. It may also depress you if you subsequently fail to ascertain whether or not kicking a puppy is a tort. Clearly, this statement violates the optimism policy behind our rule. Thus, you must stop, edit, and lie! Instead, proclaim “Torts is so awesome! It makes me want to hug puppies!”

It may be difficult to come up with lies at first. After all, they’re pretty unnatural. Here are a couple techniques you can use to improve your skills.

First, imagine Candide chooses all of your words. No wait, it’s not just Candide, but Candide on Prozac. Under this technique, your statement would read something like, “Torts is the best of all possible classes! It makes me want to learn more and sue insurance companies!” Until Torts kills Dr. Pangloss, this is a sure-fire coping mechanism.

If you don’t enjoy obscure Voltaire references or think forceful optimism is too advanced for you, start out with simple negatives. For example, the original statement would become, “Torts is so NOT hard! It makes me want NOT to kick puppies!” It’s grammatically awkward but points you in the right direction.

This “Thank you sir may I have another” approach to law school has already helped me to stay motivated. Sure, I may have been unenthusiastic about aspects of legal scholarship at first, but now I make Ronald Reagan look like Debbie Downer. Hey, did I mention that I *love* the Rule Against Perpetuities? Because I do!

As you can see, for this strategy to work, you have to commit. You can’t just drink the lie-to-yourself Kool-Aid. You have to burst through the wall of the Chief Justice’s Chambers yelling “OH YEAH!”

IT’S IN THE SUPPLEMENT

Now, some of you may be hesitant to commit because you think lying is wrong.

Actually, *you* are wrong (snap!), at least in this situation. Don’t worry. You’re probably just misreading the rule. For example, those of a monotheistic persuasion might have thought, “Wait, the Ten Commandments expressly condemn lying!” That they do...unless you read the relevant Notes from the Advisory Committee on Stuff-I-Made-Up-For-The-Purposes-Of-This-Article (it’s in the supplement). You’ll see the commandment was amended back around the advent of postmodernism; now, “lie” means pretty much whatever you want it to mean. Easy mistake to make. Formalists who argue that “lie” still has a plain meaning should probably just ignore this article and go back to frenching their signed photos of Justice Scalia.



Construction is also important. Sure, the commandment says not to lie, but that’s pretty general. According to the new rule, you’re allowed to lie to yourself to overcome the stress of law school. Specific statutes prevail over general statutes, right? Let’s just ignore the fact that I’m probably less authoritative than God and/or Moses. Let’s also ignore the fact that none of those parties is a legislative body empowered to create law and that the rule is in no way, shape or form a statute. See? It works! You’re welcome.

But seriously, the lying does work. If you repeat something enough times, eventually it will be regarded as true (just ask any White House Press Secretary). Plus, a little positive thinking never hurt anybody. In addition to providing general amusement, these lies will keep your spirits up, prevent you from getting mopey law student syndrome (MLSS), and help keep you enthusiastic about legal learning, even when you’re, well, not. Most of all, the resulting optimism will provide you enough momentum to get through the worst of law school with levity and good humor.

There are, obviously, caveats. Do not lie to yourself about anything except your *affection* for law school. For example, do not look at the Contracts book you have not cracked in five days and think “I don’t need

to do the reading! Instead, I'll reward myself with yet another study break and possibly a pony." Also, if you're truly down about law school, you should probably opt for counseling over delusion.

So there you have it. Eventually, you'll be such a pro that you will identify things you actually *do* love about law school, such as

the word "tortfeasor," the occasional access to free pizza, and the puns, oh the puns. But until then, when the going gets tough, the tough get lying. So get started today! In only a few weeks, you too could be loving law school. I know I do. And that's the truth.

Students volunteer in Katrina relief group

By Stephanie Gruenhagen

The William Mitchell Katrina Relief group arrived in New Orleans almost six months after the hurricane. Many devastated areas remain basically untouched. It is disturbing to realize that because the storm and the help efforts are not front page news anymore, people have put it out of their minds. The brief updates that make the news sporadically do not begin to explain the terrible conditions and how badly help is still needed. You can't see the people through pictures, you can't understand what they have experienced, you can't smell or feel devastation 2,000 miles away.

The trip to New Orleans was an unforgettable experience. We worked with

people who rode out the storm, people who lost everything they own and have been bouncing around from hotels to friends and families houses. Some people's entire lives were worth a few thousand dollars according to their insurance policies if they were even able to afford insurance.

Imagine you are nearly ready to retire; you have made a respectable living, nice house, three cars, good neighborhood. In a matter of days, everything is gone, your house, your belongings, everything you left behind in the evacuation. You can't work because your job is gone, but the mortgage company isn't, they still want payments every month. You had insurance, you call them and they

assess your claim at \$40,000. How can you start over at with that amount of money? The fact that you are receiving insurance money means you probably won't get any from the government, you want to appeal the insurance claim but no one will field your calls and no one will help you and the mortgage payments keep coming. Some families couldn't afford insurance, the house was passed down through their family and they have to go through the



frustrating and confusing process of applying for SBA loans and then applying for government grants.

Bankruptcy is becoming a common avenue for a lot of hurricane victims. One student was able to work directly with a legal aid attorney who helps people in situations like these. People drive for 16 hours because they have a 10 minute appointment with him. They bring pictures, tell their story, sometimes they breakdown, but most importantly they need help. There is a shortage of attorneys in the area and every minute of extra help from volunteers in law offices is precious.

Victims of Hurricane Katrina come in all shapes and sizes and so do their legal problems. William Mitchell students were able to research and assist in a range of legal areas. Insurance problems are rampant. The appeal process is unclear. Students were able to research the process and put their findings in a brochure that will

be distributed to some hurricane victims. There are zoning issues, some of the hardest hit areas are being threatened by eminent domain. Voting is a mess, the elections have been postponed and trying to get a ballot in the hands of people who have been displaced to other states is proving to be a difficult process. Custody and child support problems have arisen, parents without custody have used the storm as a way to "take" their children with them and try to establish a home somewhere else. Trying to find attorneys to help all of these people is difficult; there are only so many attorneys and law students available.

Another trip to New Orleans is being planned for the summer. I encourage you to consider making the trip. It is an invaluable experience and a chance to help those who can't help themselves. If you can't make the trip, please support those who do.

What do you call a bunch of lawyers in the Gulf Coast? A good start.

AROUND TOWN -- HAPPY HOUR SPECIALS

THE LIFFEY

Monday-Friday 11:00-6:00pm enjoy \$1.50 discounts on all pints, rail drinks, and glasses of wine.

DIXIE'S ON GRAND

Everyday from 3:00-6:00pm get ½ off wings, nachos, and soul fries
\$3 Any Tap Beer \$4 Any Glass of Wine
\$2 Well Drinks

PAZZULANA

Tuesday-Friday 4:00-6:00pm
½ price tap beers and specially selected wines by the glass
½ price Kettle one Martinis and Cosmos
\$3.33 12 inch Margherita Pizza

TAVERN ON GRAND

Monday-Thursday 4:00-7:00pm Fridays
4:00-6:00pm
\$1.75 rails and domestic beers

GREEN MILL

Daily 4:00-6:00pm
½ price apps and \$1 off taps and wine

O'GARA'S

Monday-Friday 3:00-6:00pm
\$1.75 16oz Grain Belt Premium and Miller Lite
\$2.25 Grain Belt Premium and Premium Light Bottles
\$3 Absolute, Jim Beam, Windsor, Becks & Becks Light
\$3 off Apps

LA CUCARACHA

Monday-Friday 3:00-6:00pm
2 for 1's on Margaritas, Domestic Taps, Rails &
Free Apps buffet of wings, nachos, tacos, etc.

SAJI YA

Monday-Friday 5:00-7:00pm
\$1 off all Martinis, Cocktails, and Wine
\$2.75 taps, \$3 Sake, and \$2 off Select Sushi

Human Rights Week focuses on Rwanda

By Elise Peterson

Pastor Paul Ndahigwa returned home to Rwanda after the 1994 genocide, to help the Rwandan people. He had been a refugee in since 1960's; after he returned to Rwanda he started a church, which he still runs, as he works to help people recover from the genocide and poverty. He came to William Mitchell last month to teach others about the lasting problems of the violence and rape that took place 8,000 miles away, 12 years removed.



Pastor Paul Ndahigwa came to Minnesota through a non-profit group, the International Leadership Institute. He has also been a part of the Pilgrim Center for Reconciliation, located in Edina, which he joined when the executive director of the Pilgrim Center came to Rwanda after the genocide. Pastor Paul came to Minnesota to learn more about the systems and infrastructure used here. He also wanted to visit rape crisis centers, hoping to learn more about assisting rape victims. Rwanda is slowly healing, but it needs help that it can't find within its borders, especially due to the current level of poverty.

Pastor Paul's speeches were part of the William Mitchell's Human Rights week, intended to enlighten students about participation in a global community and their power, through education and activism, to understand and work on human rights issues worldwide. The week was sponsored by several campus clubs and spearheaded by the Civil and Human Rights Legal Society. The week included two speeches and a video about the Rwanda genocide.

Judge LaJune Lange, a former Judge and adjunct professor at William Mitchell, teaches the Civil and Human Rights Externship each semester. Last summer she

took three students to Rwanda. In Rwanda they worked with Pastor Paul on various projects to help Rwandan people. The students were on a panel with Pastor Paul during his visit, where they depicted the value of traveling and assisting people in need. Poverty is a worldwide problem--the students at William Mitchell are directing their work to specific areas in an attempt to make a viable difference.

The speeches by Pastor Paul focused on the widespread lack of food, water, healthcare, accessible education, etc., in Rwanda. The lack of resources in Rwanda has caused subsequent problems, especially human trafficking. According to a leader of CHRLS, Kelly McDermott, the sex trade is a pressing concern. Faced with the conditions of poverty, families can feel as if they have no other choice but to send children away for work; many aren't aware their children can be sold into the sex trade. Human trafficking isn't limited to Rwanda, but CHRLS is focusing its attention there. CHRLS leaders are working on a human trafficking manual for Rwandan women and children, which would include training them to recognize and avoid human traffickers. The plan is to finish the manual by next summer and distribute it abroad.

INTERESTED IN WRITING FOR THE OPINION?

Contact Rebecca Olson at Rebecca.olson@wmitchell.edu for more information.

Getting to know your elected representatives

By Angela Veldhuizen

As memories of the election fade, the spirit of the first ever direct elections of the President and Vice President needs to endure – we need to keep our voices heard throughout the year. To understand where I am going, it is important to know where I have been



I grew up in the Enumclaw, Washington, a medium town just outside of Seattle. There I learned to love the out doors, drink an unhealthy amount of coffee, and appreciate diverse cultures. During high school, I did not belong to one group. I studied hard with the academics, was involved student leadership groups, played the piano for the chorus, and was deeply involved with the FFA (formally known as Future Farmers of America). Today, I still have an aggregation of social groups; I have a people rich life.

FFA, I know, it is odd and unexpected. I chose to be involved with FFA because of the leadership opportunities and my love for agriculture. I did not grow up on a farm and my parents never farmed but I did raise pigs for 10 years. Not cute, pet pigs but bona fide livestock pigs. I no longer have the desire to farm, but the management skills are enduring. Now the secret is out, I was a pig farmer. Feel free to chuckle, I often do.

After I graduated from high school, I spent a year traveling Washington State and the county teaching leadership workshop to high school students. My sophomore year of college, I move to attend Iowa State University (ISU). I started out as an Animal Science major and became a statistic by changing my major more than one time. I end with a B.S. in Economics and Agricultural Business. I chose to go attend law school for the academic challenge and fascinating material.

At ISU, I vowed I was not going to get excessively involved in student groups, this did not happen. I am drawn to leaving a place better than when I found it. The same has happened at Mitchell.

To add balance to my life, I enjoy distance running including an occasional marathon. Recently, I decided to overcome one of my biggest childhood fears, putting my face in the water by taking swimming lessons. Swimming is now one of my favorite activities, following that old adage that of “you don’t know if you will like it until you try it.”

I hope an understanding of where I have been helps you understand my leadership style and my aspirations for William Mitchell’s future.

“I DESIRE TO BE AN ADVOCATE FOR ALL STUDENTS”

I have spent many hours talking about where William Mitchell is and where our college has the potential to be. I am now ready to take action. I adamantly believe that the students should have a united voice about the direction of the school. To accomplish unanimity, students need to be actively involved in the SBA.

I want to be approached with ideas as well as things that are not working well. Your

involvement should not end there. Panel discussion and town hall meetings need to take place so faculty, staff and students can have dialog to drive Mitchell to excellence. I desire to be an advocate for all students, not a select few.

Watch the docket for opportunities to be involved with committees and activities. We value your input; William Mitchell is great because of the students.

I want to be approachable and visible. Please stop me in the hall or sit down at a table and have a conversation with me. By understanding students through everyday dialog I can better represent you.

Please contract me, about
_____ at
angela.veldhuizen@wmitchell.edu

I want to live up to the belief that leadership is about doing something - not being somebody.

BIG news

By Heather Hirsch

I entered SuperAmerica like I was just there to get a doughnut or maybe a pack of smokes, but I had a much more embarrassing mission. It wasn't tampons, or even condoms; I was after the *National Enquirer*. The guys behind the counter were discussing whether short hair or long hair was hotter, one waving his hands just below his ears and the other stretching to point to his lower back. I sidled toward the magazines. Something with celebrities and exclamation-pointed-headlines caught my eye, but it was only *Star Magazine*. I walked to the other side of the counter. I had to step forward, squinting at the rack. "Anything I can help ya with?" I shook my head. I wondered if my hair was the right length.

There it was. A cover boasting secrets of weight loss, scandals of weight gain, and diets, diets, diets. I took one, then two, then—what the heck—three *National Enquirers* and slid them toward the cashier. I wanted to tell him that I wasn't the type to buy this junk; but maybe he was the type, and I didn't want to hurt his feelings. I left with the magazines discreetly folded under my arm.

At home, I paged through an *Enquirer* at the kitchen table. Apparently Kirstie Alley was still fat. Paris Hilton was still thin. Finally, a few pages after the middle staple, middle America got its due: Fat homemakers who were not fat anymore. And I was among

them, smiling up at a photographer, triumphant.

But I'm not a homemaker, I'm a law student. I questioned why I had chosen to appear here, next to a first-person article that sounded nothing like the words I had told the reporter. When I had agreed to appear in this rag, I decided that I didn't have to tell anyone about it—especially not anyone at school. It's not that there isn't a diversity of experience at William Mitchell, much of it having nothing at all to do with law; it's just that I ought to be more sophisticated than this. I have a bar application to fill out, after all. But when the over-enthused British lady called me and pitched the idea, it sounded like weird fun.

When she finally interviewed me, after weeks of vague messages and missed appointments, the reporter asked me questions about how horrible it had been to be so fat. I told her just how awful it really was, and she sighed with forceful compassion at each recollection. What did I eat, she wanted to know, and how often did I eat it? Could she please shave nine pounds from the current weight I had given her, so that I would seem to be half my original weight? Sure, I said, since that was what I had weighed just before I became a 1L. "BRILLIANT!" she told me for probably the fifteenth time. "BRILLIANT!"

