

7-1-2009

## Investor Extraordinaire

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### Recommended Citation

Richard F. Griffin, *Investor Extraordinaire*, 57 Buff. L. Rev. 1147 (2009).

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.law.buffalo.edu/buffalolawreview/vol57/iss4/8>

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## Investor Extraordinaire

RICHARD F. GRIFFIN†

It's indeed a privilege to have been asked to speak today. I suspect the reason I was asked is that I can add more gray hair and experience than anyone else, even more than Bill Greiner, metaphorically, that is. But at any event, it was September 1954, fifty-three years ago, that I appeared at 77 West Eagle Street where Jack Hyman was the Dean.

On a personal note, this was three months before I was fortunate to marry Dr. Jane Griffin—many of her friends are here today—who delivered two of our lawyer children during our law school experience. She, of course, had to review and approve my script for today. As many know, I've come to borrow Rumpole's expression, "She who must be obeyed."

It was my thought that it would be good to have a theme that would capture the essence of Jack Hyman for my brief remarks. The theme that I settled on was, and is, Jack Hyman, "Investor extraordinaire." Not investor in the financial sense, but investor in another sense as defined in the dictionary: "To devote morally or psychologically as to a purpose; to commit to others." Jack Hyman invested big time in the law, its practice, civil and human rights, our Law School, its students, and our alumni.

Now, my courses from Jack were Constitutional Law and Municipal Corporations. The problems of home rule in New York, as well as many constitutional law concepts such as due process and equal protection, were hammered into us. Of course, at the time we wondered whether we would encounter such issues. Would they ever appear in our practice, as they seemed at the time to be somewhat esoteric? Little did I realize, that in a few years with Jack Hyman's help, I would be in federal court arguing freedom of religion, and a few years after that, again with Jack Hyman's help, I would be in the same court arguing equal protection in order to obtain an order desegregating the Buffalo Public School system.

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Incidentally, a little aside on the Constitutional Law class. There was a platform in the classroom that Jack would lecture from. And the square footage of that platform wasn't too generous, so there was much apprehension in the class, because as you know, Jack was a tall person, erect. He was very engrossed in the concepts he was discussing, so people were quite concerned that he might just fall off. Now I would love to tell you that there were a couple of people who said, "Watch out Jack!" but I couldn't come up with any who acknowledged that such occurred.

Jack Hyman invested heavily in the students and in the alumni of our school. A few days ago I spoke to one of Jack's best students, Jim Magavern. Jim focused on Jack's extraordinary affection for students and alumni and his appreciation for all of us. How many here enjoyed Jack Hyman's presence at their reunion? Six years ago at our 45th he was there at the young age of ninety-two. How many events of the Law School alumni featured Jack Hyman? He was always there. He got the revitalization of the alumni started.

Jack Hyman invested in human and civil rights and lent his expertise to many causes. On page sixty-eight of the 100 year history of our Law school, there's a discussion about the case brought by William SaMarion on behalf of about fifty Black Muslim inmates in Attica prison because New York State wouldn't recognize their religious rights. It mentions that "[a]t that time, Malcolm X and the Black Muslim movement were unpopular. Hyman and Professor Wade J. Newhouse Jr. assisted attorney Richard F. Griffin '59—and later Professor Paul I. Birzon—in presenting SaMarion's grievance."<sup>1</sup> The case was ultimately successful, and these gentlemen were recognized as having rights to practice their religion in the Attica prison. As an aside, we had Malcolm X as our expert witness in the case. He was a most fascinating person. He even came to our house for dinner because Jane had given birth to one of our children and was unable to come down to the courtroom to meet him. He is, of course, the most famous expert witness that I've ever had the chance to put on the witness stand. Judge Henderson, a tough federal judge, whom many of you may remember, loved Malcolm X.

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1. ROBERT SCHAUS & JAMES ARNONE, UNIVERSITY AT BUFFALO LAW SCHOOL: 100 YEARS, 1887-1984, A HISTORY 68 (1992) (footnote omitted).

Then in the 70s, another leader of human and civil rights, whom some may remember, Norman Goldfarb, a non-lawyer, was the Chairman of the Citizen's Council on Human Rights, of which Jack was an active member. Norman assembled a group of lawyers to talk about bringing the school segregation case. Jack was there providing his expertise. He breathed *Brown vs. Board of Education* and its teaching into the lawyers who were recruited for the case.

Finally, Jack Hyman invested in good health. How do you live such a long and full life? Nearly ninety-eight years. In addition to his great intellectual health and constant exercise of the mind, he was physically fit. One day by coincidence, I was walking along the beach over in Canada, I looked out and who emerged from the lake but Jack Hyman, probably ninety then. I said Jack, "I didn't know you were such a famous swimmer." We had a great chat.

So in conclusion, we celebrate the life of an extraordinary investor. He dedicated and committed his life to others and to great causes. This life is a model for us all.