

10-1-1996

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Recommended Citation

Barry B. Boyer, *A Good Colleague and a Good Friend*, 44 Buff. L. Rev. 613 (1996).

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.law.buffalo.edu/buffalolawreview/vol44/iss3/4>

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BUFFALO LAW REVIEW

Volume 44

Fall 1996

Number 3

A Good Colleague and a Good Friend

BARRY B. BOYER†

Alan Freeman was both a good colleague and a good friend. Although Alan was a member of the Buffalo law faculty for less than 15 years, we who shared that time with him have many happy memories to look back on.

As a teacher, Alan was as strongly committed to his students as anybody I have ever known. Like all good teachers, he put a lot of himself into his teaching, and the students responded to his energy, caring, and good humor. Any time we needed somebody to “cover” a course in his parts of the curriculum or to perform some difficult administrative job, Alan was always more than willing to step forward and carry that burden for us. When he undertook a job, it was always done well, and always done with commitment.

As a scholar, Alan never was willing to repeat himself, to plow those same comfortable grooves as some of us do, or to write a boring, standard article. He was always out there trying something new, saying something different, changing the way we thought about many areas of law. His insights into the ways in which anti-discrimination law can legitimize the most pernicious forms of discrimination made it impossible to accept the lofty promises of the civil rights laws uncritically. Alan and Betty Mensch saw the serious intellectual and moral questions at the core of the animal rights movement before most academics did, and they pursued this line of inquiry to raise fundamental, painful moral and ethical questions about the abortion debate in their book, *The Politics of Virtue*. And, despite having an intense commitment to teaching and pursuing an ambitious scholarly agenda, Alan was always willing as a colleague to read that draft you wanted him to comment on, to give you a reference to some material that you needed, or simply to argue

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through some issue that was difficult. He was always there when you needed him.

Although Alan performed the professional roles of scholar, teacher and colleague better than most of us do, what stands out strongest in memory for me is Alan, the human being, and the great joy he found in life and in all the people around him. Being invited to dinner at Alan and Betty's house was not just an opportunity to sample Alan's great cooking and to enjoy some wonderful conversation, it was really a chance to become a part of an extended family that included kids, neighbors, parents, friends, even the pets. We would hear about the latest misadventures of the neurotic dog Bruno or Alan's fight with the Amherst Zoning Board to keep the family goat from being evicted from a fancy residential neighborhood. And so, it is almost impossible to think about Alan without smiling, even though it's painful to realize that he is no longer among us. He had a real gift for touching the lives of people around him, for reaching out and bringing us into his community. Our Law School community is much poorer now that he's gone.