

1-1-1981

## Jack Hyman: Comments and Review

Thomas E. Headrick  
*University at Buffalo School of Law*, headrick@buffalo.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.law.buffalo.edu/buffalolawreview>



Part of the [Legal Education Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Thomas E. Headrick, *Jack Hyman: Comments and Review*, 30 Buff. L. Rev. 3 (1981).  
Available at: <https://digitalcommons.law.buffalo.edu/buffalolawreview/vol30/iss1/3>

This Dedication is brought to you for free and open access by the Law Journals at Digital Commons @ University at Buffalo School of Law. It has been accepted for inclusion in Buffalo Law Review by an authorized editor of Digital Commons @ University at Buffalo School of Law. For more information, please contact [law scholar@buffalo.edu](mailto:law scholar@buffalo.edu).



## JACK HYMAN: COMMENTS AND REVIEW

THOMAS E. HEADRICK\*

Jack Hyman has been a member of this faculty for thirty-five years. He was dean of the school for a longer period than anyone but Carlos Alden. He has taught an extraordinary range of courses, enough to fill the curricula of many law schools. His versatility is unmatched among his peers. In recent years, Jack's repertoire has included constitutional law, torts, civil procedure, administrative law and public sector labor law. He has added his wisdom and erudition to countless law school, university and community committees, task forces, activities and programs. In so many ways he personifies what is best and important in academic life: a mind of breadth and reach, the quiet joy of sharing knowledge, insights and doubts with colleagues and selfless interest in serving his fellow women and men.

Over the last three and one-half decades, this law school has changed in subtle and dramatic ways. When Jack Hyman arrived on the scene, he had six full-time colleagues. He taught each student in the school when there were only 200 or so, less than recent entering classes. Jack was in on the early efforts to broaden the curriculum which led to the seminar option and development of electives. He oversaw the introduction of the social science perspective into the curriculum and encouraged the development of the program in state and local government law. When the merger with the State was planned, he was dean. Practically every major effort at shaping the future of the law school has been blessed by the acuity of his foresight and his understanding of the traditions of legal education.

The recent reports of the law school to the President track in a remarkable way the ideas Jack expressed in 1952 in his first report to the Chancellor. He noted the growth of new areas of the law, some disenchantment with traditional teaching methods and materials, the need for legal skills development in law school, the

---

\* Dean and Professor of Law, State University of New York at Buffalo, Faculty of Law and Jurisprudence.

welcome intrusion of social and behavioral science learning into legal thinking, and, above all, the obligation of the lawyer to the public. It is more than coincidence that the law school catalog on Jack's arrival identified the primary concern of the law school as educating "men and women for the practice of law" and that the catalog at the beginning of Jack's deanship emphasized "a member of the Bar is a public officer. He has a dual function of serving his private clients and the public." Jack has organized his life around a broad conception of serving the public. He has conveyed his sense of social responsibility to countless numbers of colleagues and students and it has rubbed off on many.

In one sense, his influence is not remarkable; and in another sense, it is quite so. Jack rarely, if ever, seeks the limelight; though he speaks with conviction, he never preaches. By example he has influenced the lives of many around him: an example of a person committed to principle and conscious of practicalities, an example of human reason blended with human compassion, an example of firmness of ideas tempered by restless intellectual curiosity. It is Jack's constant reassessment of positions taken, ideas favored and theories once accepted that has sustained him and his influence. No problem seems to him so resolved that it cannot stand the light of fresh thought or new information. If one looks for the reason why he has made such extraordinary contributions to a law school, to his students, to friends and colleagues, it lies in his unique capacity to stand as a rock of stability as he has churned the sea of change.