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The Other Moore Method

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The Other Moore Method

It turns out that mathematics is not the only field in which a great practitioner named Moore has used unorthodox teaching methods. In legal circles, William Underhill Moore (1879–1949) may have been as great and influential a legal thinker as Robert Lee Moore was a mathematician. Perhaps the name gives rise to unusual teaching, and the legal Moore, born three years before R. L. Moore, was no exception. W. U. Moore's teaching is described in Bruce Murphy's biography of his protegé, the great Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas. Murphy writes:

> The brilliant and eccentric Moore believed that no important legal principle should be taught without first pounding on the desk to get students' attention. Only when the class began responding by pounding on their own desks in response, he believed, could the teacher-student relationship evolve. [**1**, p. 48]

The legal Moore's method, however, has been less influential than the mathematical Moore's. I know of no law school in the country in which this tradition is practiced today.

—Submitted by Dominic Klyve

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