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Twilight of Honor by Al Dewlen

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the second case speculating on the worth of a man in money damages for wrongful death suffered in a train accident. Nizer, who feels confident of his ability as a cross-examiner, seems most proud of the job he did in proving his case from the mouth of the defendant doctor in the first negligence action. The final story describes a proxy fight for control of Loew's, Incorporated, a giant in the motion picture industry, wherein corporate intrigue is the keynote.

Having read and thoroughly enjoyed *My Life in Court*, I am left with several distinct impressions about the author and the practice of law in court. Mr. Nizer is the finest of lawyers who stays ahead of his adversary at all times and commits no mistakes, and who excels and flourishes on cross-examination because of his native brilliance, tireless preparation and boundless memory. Apart from his philosophies about people and their legal problems, which views are liberally scattered throughout this book, Mr. Nizer's best advice for winning in the trial of a lawsuit is to absorb, digest and commit to memory every fact in any way associated with the issues, parties or witnesses involved. And, furthermore, he advises a lawyer to spend several months or years, if necessary, in preparing a case, with no effort or expense being too great to accomplish this end. And I might add my own advice to that provided by the author: to pray with great vigor for a client who can afford your efforts.

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TWILIGHT OF HONOR. By Al Dewlen. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1961.

This piece of fiction of a courtroom drama, written by a Texas reporter, which centers around a murder trial has already received considerable acclaim in literary reviews. The book has been favorably compared to *Anatomy of a Murder*. It has received a publisher's award and at the time of its publication was a Book of the Month selection. Given these laurels, one can look forward to a fairly clever novel, one which will certainly hold the reader's interest throughout.

The book is written from the standpoint of the defending lawyer who learns, as the story begins, that he has been appointed by the state to represent an accused murderer. This comes somewhat as a blow since he has enjoyed the comparatively secluded life of the civil lawyer for the past five years. The suspense builds as our hero (Owen Paulk) prepares his case. We are presented with a partial and tanta-

lizing description of the motel murder of a prominent citizen of the Texas community by a husband and wife hitchhiking team. The details are filled in as the trial proceeds, and to our surprise, some of the facts are not revealed until after the jury has reached its decision. The surprise is shared by our defending lawyer as well, a circumstance that is somewhat upsetting for one who believes he has won the cause for justice. But after all, the accused husband, his wife, and the deceased, all share a delicate and probably indeterminable combination of guilt and innocence.

The reader finds a collection of situations and events that make up the ideal-type criminal court case. Even before the trial begins there is the sheriff who bungles the investigation of the murder, the lawyers who are conveniently unavailable to act in defense of the case, the incomplete and illegal confession, and the public opinion already built up against the accused. Then there is the tedious selection of a jury whose composition is calculated by both the prosecution and the defense. The trial itself is a specimen with the white haired judge ("thirty years on the bench") who during the trial either dozes, reads his copy of the *National Geographic*, or interjects irrelevant and disturbing comments. In addition, there are the objections, the rulings, the heated interchanges, the exhibits, the array of witnesses, the testimonies, the cross-examinations, and the beautiful closing arguments—in all, a good show.

Particularly illuminating in the novel are the extra-legal factors in courtroom behavior. In fact, some of the observations are insightful enough to suggest problems for behavioral research. Although fiction is usually ignored as a generating source for research ideas, social scientists might well profit from some shrewd commentaries found in fiction. Some observations coming from this book which might be put to more rigorous test include, for example, characteristics of jurors and the likelihood of a given decision, tactics used in the selection of a jury, effect of jury factions on the decision, the role of testimony and the decisive factors, and the defendant's conception of his own case as it is being presented. These are no mean subjects for investigation. The results are far from certain, and the implications for both theory and practice would be significant.

At any rate, for whatever purpose this book is read, it should be of interest to anyone connected with law, even the majority who have not found criminal law to be the most attractive field in the legal profession.

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