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## Dedication: John Phillip Linn

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## DEDICATION

JOHN PHILLIP LINN

On the occasion of his retirement from the University of Denver College of Law, the Board of Editors respectfully dedicate this issue to Professor John Phillip Linn—educator, arbitrator, and artist. Rarely have these elements blended into a single, extraordinary career.

An honor graduate of the University of Denver College of Law in 1955, Professor Linn joined the faculty in 1958. One year later he was appointed Assistant Dean, and he served in that capacity until 1965. During his thirty years of service to the College of Law, Professor Linn taught Labor Law, Labor Arbitration, Commercial Arbitration and Contract Law. A brilliant and demanding teacher, he encouraged his students to think creatively about the law, always urging them to go at least “one step beyond” what was required of them.

Professor Linn always went that “one step beyond.” Tirelessly devoted to his role as educator, he adopted new texts in his final year of teaching Contract Law and Labor Law, even though he had to prepare new notes and class outlines. He established and generously funded the John Phillip Linn Labor Law Award, and provided multiple awards in years when he felt more than one student deserved the award.

Students remember Professor Linn with affection and appreciation. They certainly remember the terrifying questions on his Contract Law examinations which read: “Tell me all you know . . . .” But they also remember his immeasurable interest in each student’s well being. Some students remember the time he conducted a seventy-minute lecture in total darkness when a tornado knocked out the electricity. One student reported it was a “uniquely exciting educational experience.”

Professor Linn’s arbitration courses were particularly favored by students because he asked them to assume roles of decision makers, not advocates. Professor Linn delighted in the growing popularity of arbitration classes, which paralleled the growing recognition of arbitration’s importance. He steadfastly believed that in order to best serve their future clients and profession, law students should know all methods of dispute resolution, not just litigation.

Professor Linn has been an arbitrator for more than thirty years and has developed a national reputation as an impartial arbitrator. He will continue to arbitrate both labor and commercial disputes in his retirement. In his career he has written over one thousand opinions and awards; none have ever been vacated or modified by a court.

Professor Linn is the only arbitrator in the Rocky Mountain region to have served as Vice President of the Board of Governors of the American Arbitration Association. He was the first President of the Rocky Mountain Association of Federal Labor Relations Professionals. He was

President of the National Organization on Legal Problems of Education. He has served as Special Master in labor related cases in state courts and federal district courts in the Eighth and Tenth Circuits. The College of Law has been extremely fortunate to have this distinguished arbitrator as a member of the faculty.

Professor Linn holds degrees in art and education from New York University. A graduate of the Parsons School of Design, he drew the portrait of the patron saint of lawyers which appears on the certificates of the Order of St. Ives, given to honor graduates of the College of Law. His approach to both arbitration and education mirrors his respect for the artist's creative process. He compares legal analysis to the creative composition processes of such artists as Wassily Kandinsky, envisioning the grouping of facts and legal theories on a palette, which his students recognize as "the legal continuum." Facts and theories, like colors, may be bold and have obvious impact, or may be subtle and appear to have little import until their ultimate relationships on the canvas produce powerful statements. Professor Linn emphasizes that with the initial placement of a factual configuration on the canvas certain forces are created; through successive directional lines and engaging shapes and planes (which are arranged according to laws of constructive counterpoint and correlation) a refined balance of ideas emerges as the finished composition of a convincing legal position.

Kandinsky wrote that the ideal analysis involves precise investigation of each individual phenomenon in isolation, the reciprocal effect of phenomena in combination, and the general conclusions drawn from them. Professor Linn believes that just as the painter's vision does more than sharpen the viewer's aesthetic sensitivities, legal analysis should reveal new possibilities of expression that bring us closer to the perfection of human enlightenment, as well as legal enlightenment.

In the end, one cannot render such an illustrious teaching career in a single written portrait. The portrait does not live; instead, it is Professor Linn's influence upon his students that lives. Upon his retirement, the Board of Editors thanks Professor Linn for showing his students that legal analysis, and life, can be stretched beyond a blank canvas in to the realm of possibility and enlightenment.

*Kristi N. Saylor*