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The “Other” Campus Map
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“A Day of Law”

When I decided to attend the lecture at the School of Law here at the University of Illinois, I knew I was in for a treat. Obsessive Compulsive is what my family and friends say that I am, at least about my clothes anyway so that is where my nervousness started. A friend of mine that is in his third year of Law School told me to dress regular, but while that could mean pajama pants and a hoodie on our quad, that “other” side of campus functioned differently. I finally decided to wear a button down shirt, knee boots, and jeans. The people all seemed over dressed to me. They had on polos, slacks, skirts, pumps and even suits- all for a lecture?! As I entered the building I noticed how beautiful and brand-new everything looked. The quality of the interior showed that it was done to impress. I immediately thought back to the fact that my English Building had various types and colors of linoleum in the halls, but these people had a buffet set up outside their lecture.

The lecture I chose to attend conveniently was a Commemoration for the first African American to graduate from the School of Law here on our campus. His name was Amos P. Scruggs and he was said to have graduated 100 years ago. The lecture was held in Max L. Rowe Auditorium, which was also a classroom that would operate occasionally as a courtroom. I must admit the speaker was quite funny and entertaining, at least for the jokes that I actually got. He stated that he would focus on speaking about

“Why Lawyers Matter: Building and Rebuilding Justice Systems after Katrina.” As he started his focus was initially on the contributions that lawyers have made to our world at large. Reading the small handbill about the lecture, I felt that the content of the discussion might be easily grasped; and they were for a small while. I remember thinking, “at least the information he discussed on the Katrina incident was familiar,” until he started talking about the legal ties behind it.

The most difficult concepts for me to understand were when he was relating the topic in which he was speaking on to past law cases. It could have been my paranoia, but I felt like I was the only one in the room that had no clue what he was talking about. Those sitting in my area were smiling and nodding to his description, while I am sure if God could have revealed my inner most thoughts there would have been a gigantic question mark over my head. Good thing I had brought along my friend or rather he had invited me to this lecture, once I had explained the assignment. I tried not to ask him too many questions, but some I could not compose. For example, the students had wireless hookups that allowed them access to the Internet at anytime, so while their teacher could be deep in concepts for a class lecture, my friend said 7 times out of ten the class would be facebooking. And that was actually quite similar to the side of campus that I am familiar with. If my peers and I could get away with facebooking in some classes, we would definitely do it. But, that is as far as the similarities went in my opinion.

As the speaker started talking about political issues in the world of law he began to lose me because I did not understand. But just when I thought that the lecture was a lost for me, he started talking about how lawyers relate to the world on a mass scale and I

stop agreeing with him on various levels. He stated that the world would be in shambles if not for lawyers, because they contribute greatly into society, which they do. The more he went on the more I felt like he was giving the profession too much credit. Sure lawyers do serve justice among other things. But my future profession is education and I know for sure that the world would be in shambles if the population was all ignorant. Justice would be ineffective on a society that failed to understand the laws and rights of themselves as citizens. I felt as though the speaker was so focused on moving the crowd of what he assumed was law students that he may have you fiction versus facts, because it sounded good. My expectations going into the lecture was the fact that I assumed I would not understand the concepts. But it ultimately came about that the lecture was good when concepts were comprehensible, but the lecture was bad when I not only misunderstood the speaker, but I also disagreed with his statements.

In conclusion, experiencing this “other” side of campus was a great experience. I got a chance to really see a world outside of my own. Although I may not have agreed with everything discussed, the lecture allowed me a chance to see the views of some of the same circumstances that I have an interest in. This “other” side of campus gave me an opportunity to be apart of an experience I know I would never get to in the rest of my time left on the University of Illinois campus.