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# Tributes to Editorial Assistant Patricia A. Trice

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# MARYLAND LAW REVIEW

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## Tributes

### TRIBUTES TO EDITORIAL ASSISTANT PATRICIA A. TRICE

JANA SINGER\* AND GORDON G. YOUNG\*\*

For more than two decades, Patricia Trice provided the continuity that kept the *Maryland Law Review* running smoothly. For most of those years, one of the two of us served as the *Maryland Law Review's* Faculty Advisor, but Pat was the person whose advice really mattered. Pat's title changed somewhat over the years, but an accurate job description would have included: additional advisor to the students (and to us as faculty advisors), keeper of institutional memories, mood lifter during difficult times, and master of the mysterious knowledge (as it changed rapidly over years of automation) necessary to turn raw material into a finished, published product.

Pat was able to differentiate between business as usual, requiring that students be allowed to learn by making the inevitable useful mistakes, and serious problems requiring help from advisors or the Law School's administration. Her assessments of people and situations seemed to us almost always right. Over the years, both we, and successive Editorial Boards and staff members, greatly appreciated her good counsel and the quality and intensity of her work.

One of the most admirable things about Pat's tenure was her ability to adapt to varied personalities and work styles. Each year brought a new student Executive Committee and a host of new staff members. Pat patiently introduced each group to the *Law Review's* formal and informal norms, as well as the technical aspects of producing a schol-

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\* Professor of Law, University of Maryland School of Law.

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arly journal. For many student editors, Pat was an invaluable confidante and source of advice, not only for *Law Review* matters but on larger issues as well. Moreover, Pat was able to help the *Law Review* move from the dawn of the computer era to today's fast-paced internet age.

Pat's dream was always to retire to warm sands and gentle ocean waters, and she is now living her dream on the Gulf Coast of Florida. Although we are lucky to have a wonderful successor to Pat, we miss her greatly, and wish her well in the next phase of her life.

### MEET THE NEW BOSS, SAME AS THE OLD BOSS\*

JOHN F. O'CONNOR\*\*

Imagine working for a business where half of the sixty-employee work force changes every year, and nobody ever stays for more than two years . . . except you. To top it off, your day-to-day bosses are five people who take their jobs in the spring with no idea how you do your job, how to do their jobs, or how exactly the place runs. And by the following spring, just when these five bosses are figuring out how to run the business, they disappear, never (or rarely) to be seen again,<sup>1</sup> and they are particularly scarce when it comes to completing the work that was unfinished when their tenure ended. That, in a nutshell, is the life of the *Maryland Law Review* Editorial Assistant, a life Pat Trice has lived so uncommonly well over the past twenty-three years.

Law reviews are unique because they are staffed almost entirely by law students. By design, a law review has no institutional knowledge extending any further back than the previous year's volume, other than the permanent staff, which for the *Maryland Law Review* is a single administrative assistant. Over the years, Pat has had good years and bad years, almost always dependent on the quality of the student Executive Committee elected each year to run the *Law Review*. Some years, the members of the Executive Committee are stubborn and self-absorbed. Those are the good years. The bad years are when the

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\* The Who, *Won't Get Fooled Again*, on WHO'S NEXT (MCA Records 1971).

\*\* Partner, Steptoe & Johnson, LLP. B.A., University of Rochester; M.S.Sc., Syracuse University; J.D., University of Maryland School of Law. Managing Editor, 1994–1995, *Maryland Law Review*.

1. There are exceptions. The much-admired Editor in Chief of Volume 54, Teresa LaMaster, has returned to the law school and now serves as Associate Dean for Institutional Advancement, where she no doubt continued her terrorization of Pat.

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members of the Executive Committee are *really* stubborn and self-absorbed. And if you think about the characteristics typical of those who might aspire to run a law review, well, you can probably guess whether there are more good years or bad years.

But Pat Trice handled the never-ending chaos of the *Law Review* with incredible aplomb. She was the *Law Review's* principal source of institutional knowledge, its primary historian, and the sole steward of the technology involved in the publishing process. Pat guided the *Law Review* through twenty-three volumes and some 28,000 pages of articles. She ran the show from a time when the *Law Review* was “edited” by literally cutting and pasting text, to the modernized, computerized process of today. Pat, and only Pat, shepherded the *Law Review* through this evolution. To this day, Pat can rattle off a rogue’s gallery of authors whose articles she found particularly nightmarish, either because they were poorly sourced, completely impenetrable, or unconscionably boring. And she can remember all the good authors, too, the ones who were kind, appreciative, and helpful (you can probably guess which list is longer).

Pat graciously accepted a whole new set of bosses each spring, provided helpful guidance, and never laughed (at least not to our faces) at the unrealistic plans and aspirations that would be recycled each and every year. Pat was a valued friend to the law students who spent countless hours darkening the *Law Review's* offices over the past two decades. As she relaxes in retirement, I hope she takes solace from the one unique consolation that came from her job . . . she was about the only assistant in the law school who did not have to work for the faculty.