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Woodstock Nation Goes to Law School

by
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Friends of The University of Michigan Law School might wonder, in these times of campus tumult, if the wise undergraduate is directing his steps elsewhere. In fact just the opposite of what one might assume is true. Michigan, Harvard, and Berkeley, all active campi, have all had extremely large numbers of applicants to their law schools. In 1969-70 the Admissions Office had 4,000 applications, almost a thousand more than in the previous year, which in turn had also set a record. It is comforting to know that so many college seniors have such high regard for Michigan—garnered in the main from contacts with alumni, students, and faculty, one assumes, and not from the lure of student protest—but when viewed in any other light, 4,000 is too many.

It is too many to allow for leisurely consideration of each candidate, and too many to assure complete confidence in the decisions which must be made. Indeed the pressure has become so great that the idea of a lottery among those candidates who meet certain minimum requirements has been broached. Those who remember the confusion of applying to several schools will be pleased to know that one of the ways that the schools are coping with the great upsurge in the number of applicants is by introducing cooperative services. This year Educational Testing Service will perform the task of translating all the grades into an intelligible 4=A system, and will analyze parental statements in support of scholarship applications. Work on a uniform application and recommendation form has also been done although it looks less promising.

As if an enormous number of appli-

cants were not problem enough, *Quad Note* readers will be interested to learn that 102 students were readmitted, having gained admission in an earlier year and deferred enrollment. Most of these people had been in the armed services, and the number of veterans now in the Law School must be at the highest level since the early 50's. The readmissions, honoring guarantees made two or three years ago, meant that as a practical matter there were almost 13 applicants for every slot in the freshman class.

In an article I wrote last year for this publication, I described several interviews which struck me as interesting. I should have made it clear that interviews are not required for admission and, indeed, that I feel they infrequently produce information on which it is safe to rely in making the necessarily difficult admission decisions. Hundreds of people, however, feel the urge to "talk to someone about the Law School" and I suppose I am the most visible "someone" in Ann Arbor.

This year once again I met an assortment of interesting individuals. I think most fondly of the doctor who felt that national affairs had reached such a pass that he should forsake his practice and take up the law. He was inspired by the example of Theodore Roosevelt, and urged me to read Roosevelt's biography. I had to confess that *Arsenic and Old Lace* had ruined T.R. for me as a potential model, but the thought of this man finding in Teddy Roosevelt the same inspiration others were finding in H. Rap Brown and Jerry Rubin carried me through some drab days.

In an effort to get more information about student motivation we added a

question about future plans. Most of the applicants, however, had virtually no plans beyond law school. Some indicated a wish to teach, others hoped to help the poor, but all were pretty noncommittal. It was obviously hard to answer the question and be certain that you were saying what the school wanted to hear—though in fact we had no conscious preconceptions as to the "correct" answer. Also apparent was the fact that college seniors are only just beginning to give the idealism of their age and time some personal meaning. Typical, poignant, and mildly amusing to me was the fellow who wrote that he planned to be "a businessman and civil liberties lawyer." Maybe he will indeed be both, but I could not help feeling, as I read thousands of such responses (some a good deal more subtle) that the law school would be a time for lots of growing up as well as for learning. I hasten to add that I do not feel that growing up means losing one's ideals, only that a symptom is caution about saying idealistic things.

One aspect of admissions which deserves some comment is the sustained effort which the law school has mounted for the past five years to assure the black students and members of other disadvantaged minorities are made aware of the many opportunities open to them in pursuing legal careers and the substantial financial assistance available to them if they choose to study law. In evaluating these applicants we have declined to place exclusive reliance on grades and test scores. Our experience and that of other schools lends support to this policy. We have found that the college records of many black applicants are not true indica-

tors of their abilities and potential—for such reasons as substantial term-time employment; lack of motivation and confidence in early years of college; lack, or inadequate number, of successful models to emulate; sub-standard training, not infrequently in segregated schools; problems of adjustment from all-black high schools to mostly-white colleges, often in small towns. Weak early schooling also has a marked effect on the test scores presented by the average black or Mexican-American.

The school's admission efforts in this area have been cautious, but the commitment which underlies them has been constant. Black enrollment has grown steadily as we gain confidence in our ability to identify young men and women who will be able to make a success of their study here in spite of unspectacular grades and test scores. We remain, of course, happy to get black students who have spectacular grades as well, and there are signs that the day when such applicants will appear in substantial numbers may not be far off. In 1970 many of the institutions which traditionally send us outstanding students graduated their first classes with sizeable black enrollments. We have black students in the first-year, for example, from Duke, Oberlin, Stanford, Williams, and Yale. The all-black schools with which we have steadily built up good relations, such as Howard and Dillard, continue to be represented as well.

The success which our black graduates are finding in their chosen areas of the law is some evidence that the school has chosen wisely both in selecting the individuals it did and in responding to the need for black attorneys at a time when the confidence of black people in the legal system was low and diminishing. This year the Law School enrolled 50 black freshmen.

I am a bit more hesitant than last year to spot trends on the basis of the freshmen class's make-up. My prediction that we would see a decline in the number of Ivy-Leaguers around Hutchins Hall has proved wrong. Princeton (13 Law School freshmen) and Harvard (10) are the fourth and fifth most heavily represented colleges in the current first-year class. The bastion of the Ivy-League, Yale (8), is

tied for sixth place with Indiana and Oberlin. The first three are our old friends Michigan and Michigan State, and a new hot-shot school from the far west, Stanford (14).

One of the premises on which every admissions office operates is that somewhere amidst the pile of manila folders is another Holmes and Cardozo. It is this hope which makes the crush of numbers so discouraging, because one cannot be certain that the leaders of the bar in the rest of this century and the beginning of the next will all have high LSAT's or good grades in their freshman science courses. Indeed, one can be almost certain that some of the leaders will not have had outstanding pre-law credentials. On the other hand if a great potential lawyer failed to apply to Michigan, then we would never even get a chance to discover him. We have therefore made efforts in the past few years to insure that Michigan's strengths were fairly put to graduating seniors. The make-up of the first-year class may to some extent reflect this recruitment program. Professor John Jackson, a Princeton alumnus, visited Princeton last year to talk to interested seniors, and Professor Whitmore Gray has filled a similar role at Stanford for several years. Professor Richard Lempert, a graduate of Oberlin, has returned there for the past two years and the result has been an increasing flow of promising students, including some outstanding black students.

The rise in the number of law students from Oberlin and Chicago (6 students in the first year) is some evidence that undergraduates who might formerly have gone on to graduate studies are turning to law school. Disillusion with life in an ivory tower seems to be a factor, and the poor job market for PhD's provides a practical incentive for doing what one is inclined to do anyway. We have come some distance from the time when the dean spoke to me of his concern that the best college students were not heading into the law, but into esoteric corners of academe. T.V. program manufacturers are not the only ones who get all starry-eyed when they think of "Storefront Lawyers." College seniors do too.

I would apologize for continually returning to the idealism of the applicants

to law school, but it is the single most obvious, impressive, and dramatic fact about them. They display no motives but high motives. They expect great things of the Law School and the profession. One feels continually challenged to live up to his principles as he faces this well-intentioned crowd and I think it important to try to get across some sense of what is in the minds of our students, even a vague and general sense. We can all be proud that the law, and the Michigan Law School, exert the appeal they do to such able people with such lofty goals. I am even hopeful that some will develop a sense of humor after the rigorous competition of law school admission has ended.

Geographically the class is as diverse as its predecessor. As usual the states of Michigan, Illinois, Ohio, and New York have sent us the largest numbers of students. California seems to be in the top six or seven states to stay, and some thanks for this should be expressed to our alumni on the West Coast who have set up a special scholarship for residents of California. For the first time in four years we have students from New Mexico, Alabama, Mississippi, Rhode Island, and New Hampshire.

We were able to award full-tuition scholarships to 39 of the freshmen, and 17 were able to get some help in loan form when they were turned down by their state bank loan programs. The parents who read this publication need hardly to be told that the cost of higher education has risen rapidly in the past few years, and the needs of the incoming students have risen at the same pace. We may soon have to abandon our boast that no one has to drop out of Michigan for financial reasons, but raising money is Roy Proffitt's province, and an admissions officer can only go so far from his bailiwick and expect people to listen to him.

I anticipate an admissions year very much like the one just past in 1970-71. There will be pressures from all sides, another one hundred or so men returning from the service, and another shock wave from the post-World War II baby boom. Next year's article might well be called "Son of Woodstock." One consolation for a beleaguered paper shuffler is the fact that this year's freshmen are so extra-ordinarily able that among their ranks may well be a Holmes or Cardozo (or both).

Some of the characteristics of the first-year class are:

Size of Class	419
Number of Women	35
Number of Blacks and Mexican-Americans	52
Number of Veterans (not counting reservists or ROTC members)	52
Median LSAT [91st percentile]	648
Median GPA	3.30



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