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Recommended Citation
Peter W. Martin, Dedication to Professor Kurt Lowus Hanslowe, 69 Cornell L. Rev. 925 (1984)
Available at: http://scholarship.law.cornell.edu/clr/vol69/iss5/1

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A Dedication to Professor
Kurt Löwus Hanslowe

"He was a student’s professor; he was a professor’s professor; he was a dean’s professor."¹

"Kurt Hanslowe showed me the way."²

"Kurt [would] be seized by a genuine excitement about an intellectually worthwhile idea."³

"Kurt filled the corridors and offices and classrooms . . . with the sunshine of his laughter."⁴

The Cornell Law Review is proud to dedicate this issue to our friend,⁵ the late Professor Kurt Löwus Hanslowe. On September 23, 1983, friends and family of Kurt Hanslowe gathered in Sage Chapel at Cornell University for a memorial service. The remarks at that service of Professor and former Dean of the University of Utah Law School, Walter Oberer; Professor of Stanford University Law School, William B. Gould; Professor of the New York State School of Industrial and Labor Relations, James A. Gross; and Dean of the Cornell Law School, Peter W. Martin are reproduced below. This issue of the Law Review is a Cornell issue; the work of Cornell’s students and faculty predominate. It is fitting that this Cornell issue begin with a memorial dedication to Kurt Hanslowe, a Cornell professor for his entire twenty-five year academic career. We will dearly miss our friend.

Kurt Hanslowe and I were young together. We met in 1957 in Detroit, Michigan. Kurt was then Assistant General Counsel of the United Auto Workers Union. I was on leave of absence from the law faculty of the University of Texas to serve as Executive Director of the brand new UAW Public Review Board, created by the Union to serve as a kind of Supreme Court to resolve internal union disputes.

Our roles brought us into frequent contact, both of us whirling in the vortex of Walter Reuther. Lawyering for an industrial combatant—even one as exemplary as the UAW—was not, I shortly inferred, Kurt's natural milieu. Not that he wasn't good at it; it was rather that he had a range of knowledge, of insight, of sensitivity, of perception, of curiosity, of judgment—of intellectual power—that was too broad for the narrow role of such an advocate.

He was, in a word, a student, one of the best-read people I have ever known, formidably knowledgeable—and he longed for academe. Moreover, he was, despite his craggy facade and basso profundo, a gentle soul, more likely to be at home in the then campus calm than in the whirlpool of Walter Reuther. We conspired for the three hours of Irenore on Good Friday of 1958 in a Detroit bar as to how and where to get that Hanslovian chin over an ivied lectern. I wrote several letters in his behalf, including one to Professor Jean McKelvey of the Industrial and Labor Relations School at Cornell. Sometime later, I had a long-distance call from Dean Gray Thoron of the Cornell Law School asking me about this youngster, Hanslowe. Reports from elsewhere apparently conformed with mine, and the upshot was a joint appointment for Kurt in the two schools.

In 1959 I returned to the University of Texas, ending my two-year leave of absence, and, as fate would have it, found myself in 1964 on the faculty at Cornell—back with Kurt Hanslowe. No mere coincidence. Suffice it to say that we became exceedingly well acquainted, as did our families. Nan Hanslowe, David, Nickie, and Teddy were adopted by us Oberers, and vice versa.

Along the way Kurt and I got a commission from the West Publishing Company to write a Labor Law casebook, and spent four years, Saturdays and Sundays frequently included, sitting next to one another producing the first edition. For me it was a labor of love, forced association with one of the dearest friends any man could ever have—exhila-

† Professor of Law and former Dean, University of Utah College of Law. B.A. 1942, Ohio Wesleyan; J.D. 1948, Harvard Law School.
rant with the sense of production, almost always in good temper, and sometimes downright hilarious. For much of that four years, Kurt's deep, booming laughter would roll out of the corner office in which we worked and into the deep recesses of Myron Taylor Hall, down the dark passageways of the library, up and down the stairwells, out into the corridors, past the Secretarial Pool.

We became almost symbiotic in our relationship. One of us would start a sentence, and the other would finish it, in the exact words the first one had in mind. We would walk down that long library passageway from that corner office together, one going for a drink of water and the other to the urinal.

The secretaries began referring to us as the "odd couple." (I'll leave you to guess which of us was who.) As my daughter Jill was remembering for me the other day, Kurt would come into that corner office where this long desk was covered with very neatly arranged piles of books and papers and very carefully push the piles slightly out of alignment. Then when I noticed, and in a stage bellow complained about what he had done, he would jump up and in exaggerated fashion lean down, sight along those piles and ostentatiously move one a 1/4 of an inch this way and another an 1/8th of an inch that way to get them back in line. And then he would look up at me with a big stage smile and brush his hands.

When we paused in the exciting pace of creation to discuss what Kurt came to characterize as a "marginal" question ("marginal" because it didn't really matter how the question was answered—e.g., how many sets of asterisks we should use where we were omitting from a quote the end of one paragraph, the entire next paragraph, and the beginning of a third paragraph), we would argue it out with burlesqued thoroughness. He might say, "More Oberer," and make some nice point of lawyers' logic. I might respond, "On the other Hanslowe . . . ."

When we discovered, as inevitably over four years we must, that in some of those marginal situations we had used three sets of asterisks, while in others we had used only two, maybe even one, we were confronted by another marginal question—what to do about it? I, of course, was for going back through everything and making it all consistent. But Kurt, after appropriately thorough discussion of the point, managed to talk me into the following compromise, which we recommended in the preface to our second edition "to all editorial teams as a lubricant to peace and publication": "Inconsistent consistency." In such manner, repeatedly, over the four-year period, did Kurt Hanslowe talk me out of an eight-year book and into a four-year one.

He couldn't resist making this point in poetry. I found on my desk one day, in Kurt's inimitable, indeed almost illegible hand, the following:

Pretty fine becomes the grist,
When milled by a perfectionist,
But finer still does it become
When milled by a compulsive one.

Nor was that, by any means, the only versified needling he gave me. Another was accompanied by a large picture of that mountain in the Swiss Alps, the Matterhorn—prominent, snow-covered. Kurt’s verse:

Rare indeed is the man who is born
With the will to climb the Matterhorn;
Rarer still can a man with grace
Wear the Matterhorn upon his face.
But our big Walter does with ease
Both climb that mountain and through it sneeze.

As you may gather, Kurt had a knack for getting rid of aggressions without seeming to have acknowledged their presence, and I returned loving kind for loving kind. I left him poems of needling counterpoint—among them this:

I have a friend, as learned, lucid, bright
As any friend a learned friend could cite,
Flawed only by the fact that basest song
Emits from him, at either end, full strong.

In any event, my years at Cornell were golden years—the most productive of my life—in large part because of collaboration, in scholarship, in the classroom, even on the road—with two of nature’s noblemen—as wise and delightful colleagues and companions as I have ever known—Kurt Hanslowe and Bob Doherty.

I began these rueful remarks by saying that Kurt Hanslowe and I were young together. I close by adding, we will grow old together. For he will remain with me—a glowing, golden part—as long as I remain. As long, indeed, as my family of daughters remains. They love him as I loved him—an unassuming gentle bear of a man, who brought more than he took. He was a student’s professor; he was a professor’s professor; he was a dean’s professor. He graced the faculties of which he was a member and would have graced any other. In retrospect, I have never spent any hours more socially-contributive than those with Kurt Hanslowe during tre ore on Good Friday of 1958 in a Detroit bar.
Recollections of Kurt Hanslowe

*William B. Gould†*

Kurt Hanslowe showed me the way. Kurt Hanslowe’s first year as a Professor here in Ithaca was my first year as a student at the Cornell Law School. At that time, Kurt was not yet teaching the basic Labor Law course in the Law School, but rather, as a rookie law professor, he was assigned to the research and writing course given to first year students. I am not certain how Kurt viewed the task of coping with the uninitiated in a wide variety of areas of law, some of which must have been new to him as well as the students. But it was a most fortunate event for me—probably the most fortunate of my professional career.

Through an enormous stroke of luck, I was assigned a topic in his class involving both the duty of unions to represent employees fairly and racial discrimination. I had been motivated to enroll in law school by the Supreme Court’s 1954 desegregation decision and a passionate interest that I had developed around that time in liberal politics and the trade union movement. Nothing that I touched during that first dreary year at Myron Taylor Hall was remotely concerned with these interests—nothing, that is, except the paper that I was able to write for Kurt Hanslowe.

That paper brought me to his attention and formed a close and lasting professional and social relationship. Later Kurt was to recommend me for a clerkship with the United Auto Workers in the summer of 1960, and that permitted me to work in an area that was relevant to my interests and, in the process, opened the right doors. Thus, it was Kurt who really gave me my professional start.

And in an age of more distant professor-student relationships than that which presently exists, I recall viewing and discussing the British movie “I’m All Right, Jack” with him in a downtown Ithaca theatre, discussing his oral argument before the Supreme Court in *UAW v. Wisconsin Employment Relations Board,* and a lovely evening at his home with Nan and the children, at the conclusion of which he gave me a book on the Scottsboro Boys.

From the beginning he took an interest in my writing. As one who always believed that a good Conrad or James novel would set the right tone for exposition, I remember being taken aback at Kurt’s comment to me that “the best writers are not always the best readers.” Future de-

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6 351 U.S. 266 (1955). In arguing this case, Kurt Hanslowe, Harvard Law School 1951, became the first member of his class to argue before the United States Supreme Court.
mand on my time and less organized reading habits made me think back to that maxim frequently.

Some of the most vivid recollections of my student days and Kurt Hanslowe are the uproarious and uninhibited laughter, the loud and yet gentle voice booming down a hallway, and the stolid forward-lurching walk; the fine university-wide talk that he gave on the evening of Walter Ruether's speech at Cornell; his sudden appearance in the law lounge as we students celebrated the radio description of Bill Mazeroski's dramatic World Series home run against the hated New York Yankees.

After my graduation our relationship continued. Among my earliest recollections are a meeting put on by the ILR School in New York City in the spring of '62 when Kurt invited me to present what was my first paper and Kurt's letters containing such matters as his concerns with the European Economic Community and with the British Labor Party's foibles. Again, his personal warmth and interest in me as a former student and labor lawyer encouraged and, at times, sustained me.

But there is another impression that I retain of the time during my early years after Cornell—that I was exposed to someone who possessed qualities of intellectual curiosity, scholarship, and growth to which I aspired. Kurt's generous comments about an article that I had written only two years ago were the best praise that I could receive.

I do not think that either Kurt or I ever imagined that I would follow him as a law professor. And it was fortuitous when I arrived in Stanford in 1972 that Kurt's casebook appeared at the same time. I adopted it for my students out of instinct! But both then and now it brought the subject together more effectively than anything that I have used.

This past month while at my mother's house I uncovered correspondence from Kurt advising me about how to negotiate my conditions of employment with the United Auto Workers in 1960. When I returned to my study in Stanford a few weeks ago, I reread a letter written by him only last summer, full of counsel and advice on other matters. When I saw him for the last time at a conference in Warsaw, Poland, two years ago, we remarked to one another about how silly and ironic it was that we had to travel thousands of miles more than those which separate Stanford and Cornell to see one another.

My relationship with Kurt Hanslowe is an important one for me. I shall miss him sorely. His memory is with both me and others for whom he showed the way.
Each day I sit in my office next to Kurt’s and sense that any moment he will come banging through the adjoining door, as he always did, to trade stories—usually an account of one of our latest misadventures—and to have a good laugh together. We would also talk about serious matters, such as problems of labor arbitration, for example: how to eat a large sausage and mushroom pizza with one hand while driving home on the New York state thruway with the other.

Kurt could be seized by a genuine excitement about an intellectually worthwhile idea. When I first came to the ILR School to give a seminar, I knew about these distinguished faculty members but I didn’t know any of them personally. After the seminar, as people were beginning to gather around, this gray-haired, heavy-set man barged into the crowd, took me by the arm, and said “Come with me.” I followed him out of that building and into another. He walked fast about two strides ahead of me. We went into some office with at least two feet of what appeared to be trash on the desk. He plunged his hand into the middle of this mess, pulled out a book, opened it, and sort of bellowed “Read this! This is what you need to do now; this could be important.” I was so nervous I had no idea what I was reading. When I finished, he led a return sprint to the seminar room. When someone asked me where I had been, I turned, looking for the gray-haired stranger, but he was gone. That, of course, was Kurt Hanslowe; he just forgot to introduce himself.

Kurt also had his own way of expressing his affection for those he considered friends, such as giving them carefully selected books or trading insults in a way that let you know you were a special friend.

He was a very special friend to me in so many ways. One stands out in particular: my tenure review was imminent and I felt that one more article, which I had submitted to a journal, would be decisive. I was anxiously waiting each day for the verdict on that manuscript. One day Kurt came by and asked me to play tennis with him—we usually did not do that. After tennis, he suggested lunch. I said, “OK,” but I had to go back to my office first. On my desk I found a rejection note and my manuscript returned.

I know now that Kurt knew beforehand that this would be a tough day for me. But, he did more than ease things by preoccupying me with

† Professor of Labor Law, New York State School of Industrial and Labor Relations at Cornell University. B.S. 1956, LaSalle College; M.S. 1957, Temple University; Ph.D 1962, University of Wisconsin.
tennis and lunch. That day, he suggested that I join him and another colleague and dear friend to combine our efforts. Not only did Kurt manage the resulting manuscript to publication, but he subsequently went to the tenure review meeting and gave me much more credit than I deserved for that article. He was a rare and beautiful friend indeed.

He was also totally without pretension. On his dressed-up days, for example, his "T" shirts would cover all of that bulging middle. Except for one day, when I'm sure he paraded into my office by careful design. I was sitting behind my desk and there he was in a dark blue suit (I had never seen him in a suit), white dress shirt and tie (I had never seen him wear a tie). I said "Kurt, you look great!" He said an eminent jurist was visiting the Law School and he needed to go formal. I got up to get the full view, top to bottom, and he was wearing black, high top, basketball sneakers.

Life must go on and does. But it surely won't be the same without my dear friend—the distinguished professor in the black high top sneakers.
Kurt L. Hanslowe

Peter W. Martin†

For his epitaph, the Greek poet and scholar Callimachus wrote: "This is the tomb of Callimachus that thou are passing. He could sing well, and laugh well at the right time . . . ." I have not known another who had Kurt Hanslowe's capacity to sing well, and laugh well—at the right time.

To my last day, I shall hold the memory of the many evenings when I found my spirits lifted and day restored by a visit from Kurt on his way home. Generally, it began with a laugh, a chuckle, or scrap of song bounding in from the hallway. And in a minute, following a cheerful exchange with my staff, he would be in. "Spectabilis" he would exclaim, using the Austrian salutation for a dean, in mock reverence. And good talk would flow. Serious talk, but inevitably laced with good humor.

Kurt's seriousness and caring and good judgment were all enhanced by his great good humor. He used it not against individuals but against such proper enemies as pomposity, pettiness, bureaucracy, narrow vision. And he turned it liberally on himself. Recently, I found this memorandum from Kurt to Ray Forrester, my predecessor once removed:

I am advised that the fire marshall has determined that the occupant of my office (me) is remiss in his housekeeping practices and that a report [must] be made of action taken to correct [the] situation. I am herewith taking such action by requesting a housekeeper, and you are hereby requested to treat this memorandum as my petition for such assistance.

As William Thackeray wrote "A good laugh is sunshine in a house." Kurt filled the corridors and offices and classrooms of Myron Taylor and Ives with the sunshine of his laughter. For those who knew him, it will always be there.


7 J. Bartlett, Familiar Quotations 104 (E. Beck 14 ed. 1968).

8 W.M. Thackeray, Sketches and Travels in London 283 (1869).