

# Memorial to Rona Mears

DANA NAHLEN<sup>1</sup>

The first time I heard Rona Mears give a CLE presentation it was on Legal Ethics in International Practice. I was totally impressed. I already knew she was really smart. That was apparent from the many opportunities we had found to chat since we had both started as new associates at the same time, but at different firms, in Dallas doing international business transactions. It was a small community of international legal practitioners in Dallas, and in 1982 an equally small number of women at the major law firms in the city. Consequently our paths crossed often at legal conferences and bar functions. Although we could have in those circumstances become adversaries, she extended herself to me as a natural ally. So I also had come to know how especially kind and gracious Rona was and that, combined with the life experiences she already had as a professional and mother before she went to law school, made me want to seek her out as a mentor. I did not yet know how incredibly passionate she was about social justice, or the role she had played in support of what eventually came to be known as *Roe v. Wade*, because Rona was much too modest to have told me about that herself in the circumstances in which we met. There were a lot of wonderful things about Rona Mears I did not yet know. But what I learned that day, and came to marvel at most over the years I knew her, was that Rona had an incredible gift for communication. Rona was not just a good public speaker or talented writer; those abilities were only tools for Rona. What set Rona apart was her special combination of the intellect to analyze complex ideas, and the empathy to be able to share those ideas with the rest of us in a way that took away the complexity. Rona's belief not only in the value and importance of ethics and the law in international transactions, but also of the value and importance of international business in our increasingly interdependent world, came through in the words Rona spoke that day, and in the way she lived her life. Rona left an enduring mark on our profession, and will be missed.

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1. Dana Nahlen serves as International Compliance Counsel for Hewlett-Packard Company.

