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Hibernia Turbeville

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HIBERNIA TURBEVILLE

WINDLE TURLEY*

Today, as I walked through our law firm's library and pulled a couple of the books forward to the shelf edge, I remembered again that simple lesson on shelving books taught to me thirty-five years before. "*Books should always be out flush with the shelf edge, never pushed back.*" A few times each year, that lesson is recalled along with the wonderful lady who taught it. The names of some law school professors are lost to me, but the person who showed how to correctly shelve books is vivid in my mind.

Miss Turbeville hired me, a second-year law student with a wife and two kids and no money, to work in the SMU Law School library. But one never felt they were "working" for Ms. Turbeville. Her enthusiasm for the library and what it offered was contagious. You could not be around her long before you caught that same spirit and excitement over the books and papers. She was certain that within those books was the definitive answer to every question. It was just a matter of finding it. To me, and I know to many others, she was more an instructor than an employer.

But it was not legal research alone that she unofficially taught. Hibernia Turbeville taught patience, kindness, and commitment to the task. She was all business, with a capacity to focus on a project until she saw it completed.

Her books were her children. She knew them and loved them and expected others to do the same. If you were around her long, you did.

Even if I had never known Ms. Turbeville, I would probably have graduated from law school and practiced law just as I am now, but I would not have been as complete a person. I have

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not yet explained to my two-year-old grandson why he cannot push the books to the back of every shelf. Some day I will, and will do so with fondness and deep appreciation.

Articles

