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Tribute to Professor Linda Eads

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TRIBUTE TO PROFESSOR LINDA EADS

*Melinda Arbuckle**

BY the time I graduated from SMU with my J.D., I had taken four classes with Professor Eads. She taught me Constitutional Law, Evidence, and Professional Responsibility, which is to say that Professor Eads taught me how to be a lawyer. Professor Eads taught me that moral relativism may have its place, but not in law: “Some people deserve to be judged!” Professor Eads taught me so many things, but she did not teach me how to express how vital she was (and, I imagine, still will be) to SMU’s Dedman School of Law. Indeed, I procrastinated on this tribute until the last moment because I did not want to emotionally confront this task. That’s why lawyers need deadlines, I suppose!

I recently heard Professor Eads speak upon her retirement of one regret. She claims she could have done more to support her community. I am sure she is mistaken, not only because of her commitment to her students and the amazing community she built around her at SMU, but also because I know how she operates. Professor Eads’s supposed regret was in fact a call to action—a reminder to each of us to take all of our abilities and all of our privilege and use those gifts, not just for our own benefit, but also to benefit others. To remember, as we go up the ladder, to reach back and pull up those further down on the rungs.

I will never forget the things Professor Eads taught me, but I choose to use this tribute to her to amplify that message of engagement. Do not forget to deploy your skills for the betterment of others. Do not forget to reach back and pull up. Do not forget Professor Eads (like that’s even possible).

* SMU Dedman School of Law, Class of 2011.