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A TRIBUTE TO PETER WINSHIP— ACADEMIC LAWYER PAR EXCELLENCE

*C. Paul Rogers III**

PETER Winship has certainly earned his retirement from the SMU Dedman School of Law faculty after forty-five years of service. Selfishly, from SMU's perspective, it leaves a very large gap to fill, for the skills and experience Peter brought to the table as a comparative, public, and private international law teacher, and as a commercial law teacher and scholar are pretty much impossible to replicate. Not surprisingly given that vast expertise, Peter was always in demand and taught, lectured, and consulted literally all over the world. In return, Peter brought his wealth of experience to the classroom to the benefit of generations of SMU law students.

Upon reflecting on Peter's long and distinguished career at SMU, my first thought is that Peter is an academic lawyer in the best sense of the term. He has, to put it mildly, gotten and remained involved with the legal profession, both here and abroad, in countless ways as any good academic lawyer should. Further, Peter is both pragmatic and thoughtful, and brings intellectual rigor to all that he does. A good example is his work with the development of the United Nations Convention on Contracts for the International Sales of Goods (CISG). The harmonization of private international law is never an easy task. But Peter chaired the American Bar Association (ABA) subcommittee on International Sales Conventions and was in large part responsible for the ABA's endorsement of U.S. ratification of CISG.¹ In large, important projects like the CISG, Peter managed to not lose sight of the overall goals of the project while paying attention to the details.²

Peter also has an intellectual curiosity and breadth matched by few others, fueled by a lifetime of broad reading. He taught, at my count, fifteen different law school courses, ranging from Commercial Law to Admiralty Law to European Legal History. Years ago, he organized a faculty reading group on the economics of the law when that movement

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1. E. Allen Farnsworth, *The Vienna Convention: History and Scope*, 18 INT'L LAW. 17, 20 (1984).

2. Peter is also unfailingly modest. He was awarded the prestigious Leonard J. Theberge Award by the ABA's Section of International Law in 2007 for contributions to private international law, but he made no mention of it.

was just taking hold. It was a great forum that allowed us to voice our skepticisms early and often. And Peter took his responsibilities as a supportive colleague seriously; he was always willing to read and comment on drafts of articles, whether the articles were in one of his fields or not.

As a true comparativist, Peter believes that a quality legal education should expose students to different legal systems and so, in the early 1980s, he and Joe McKnight founded our summer Oxford program at University College. Joe and Peter designed the program so that our students would be exposed to the Oxford tutorial method taught by Oxford dons. Suffice it to say, our Oxford program has greatly enriched the educational experience of those students fortunate enough to go. Over the years I have heard only glowing reports from students who have attended Univ; most regard it as the high point of their legal education. Another tangible benefit is that the program has provided the opportunity for SMU law faculty to teach in Oxford, and many, me included, have taken advantage over the years.

Law schools are sometimes thought to be academic silos, with little faculty interaction with the rest of the university. But Peter's curiosity and interests are not limited to the law. He regularly attended talks and presentations on campus on any number of subjects. I recall, for example, going to a book presentation on Wyatt Earp a few years ago, where I didn't recognize anyone, and looking up to see Peter in the small audience of about twenty-five people. He has for many years been part of an informal university breakfast group at Kuby's, a local, unpretentious German restaurant, which has included, variously, faculty from engineering, physics, economics, and history, as well as the men's tennis coach and the director of study abroad.

Thus, it is not surprising then that Peter was always an exemplary university citizen as well, in virtually every sense of the term. For years he was involved in SMU's Faculty Senate as well as the American Association of University Professors. Indeed, he drew the proverbial short straw when he served as president of the Faculty Senate in the late 1980s during the academic year in which an athletic scandal rocked the university.³ In

3. Peter also, probably unwittingly, was responsible for my getting involved in college athletics in a more formal sense. Upon arriving on campus, one of the first chores of our new president, A. Kenneth Pye, was to hire a new athletic director. President Pye asked Peter, as the Faculty Senate president, for recommendations for faculty members to serve on the search committee. Peter knew that I enjoyed college athletics and asked me if I would serve. I, of course, said yes.

President Pye thought that the selection of the new athletic director to chart the course for SMU athletics was so important that he chaired the committee himself, which gave me a chance to get to know him very early in his tenure here. When SMU's faculty athletic representative, Dr. Lonnie Kliever, stepped down shortly thereafter, the president asked if I would succeed him. I again, this time perhaps more foolishly, said yes. That was thirty-three years ago and I'm still serving as SMU's faculty athletic representative and still have Peter to thank, or blame—I'm often not sure which. See C. Paul Rogers III, *A Historical Perspective on the Role of Faculty Athletics Representatives: The SMU Experience*, 7 *MISS. SPORTS L. REV.* 142 (2018).

that role, Peter provided faculty leadership that was sorely needed as SMU sought to reestablish its values and rebuild its reputation.

To end where I began, we will not be able to replace Peter. Although one might characterize him as a jack of all trades given his wide-ranging experience, he is also a master of many. In his long and distinguished career, he left his mark not only in legal education but also in the legal profession, both at home and abroad. Peter has set a high bar and established a legacy to which all academic lawyers should strive. His is a job well done, and we wish him a long and fruitful retirement.

