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Introduction

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A TRIBUTE TO THE HONORABLE MICHAEL A. WOLFF

INTRODUCTION

DEAN JEFFREY LEWIS*

This issue of the *Saint Louis University Law Journal* is dedicated to a gentleman and a scholar. This is the highest accolade my own father (a self-described country lawyer) would offer of another. It is an accolade that so well describes Chief Justice Michael A. Wolff—a man who is also a fine lawyer, teacher, and judge.

In the pages that follow you will read the remarks of judges and law professors who have known Michael Wolff for many years. They have enjoyed the special combination of wisdom, humor, and practical understanding that so infuse daily interactions with him.

When I first arrived in St. Louis in the summer of 1999 as the new dean of the law school at Saint Louis University, I mentioned to Mike that I would miss the relationship I had with the members of the Florida Supreme Court during the years I was the law dean at the University of Florida. Before I knew it, Mike arranged for me to visit with the members of the Missouri Supreme Court in Jefferson City. It was a very special opportunity for me. The gracious hospitality of Mike and his colleagues gave me a good beginning in the state of Missouri. Mike also took me by Governor Carnahan's office. As I think of that day in Jefferson City nearly seven years ago, I see behind it the quintessential Mike Wolff—someone who makes things happen.

Since Mike was a long time member of the law faculty at Saint Louis University, it is natural for me to look for his published opinions. The professor—now judge—has provided many teachable opinions in a relatively short time. One of my favorites is an opinion in which he concurs in part and dissents in part in the case of *State Board of Registration for the Healing Arts vs. McDonagh*, decided in 2003.¹

The case on appeal centered substantially on the standards governing the admission of expert testimony in a civil case. The litigants apparently focused primarily on federal case law (especially the *Frye* and *Daubert* cases) and

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1. 123 S.W.3d 146 (Mo. 2003).

Federal Rules of Evidence 702 and 703.² The court resolved the matter under section 490.065 of the Missouri Revised Statutes.

I assign this case to my Evidence class for the discussion of the Missouri rule, and also for the teaching moment Judge Wolff provides in his opinion. He dissents in part to “offer advice to lawyers on expert witnesses”³ And it is also terrific advice for law students: “Forget *Frye*. Forget *Daubert*. Read the statute. Section 490.065 is written, conveniently, in English. It has 204 words. Those straightforward statutory words are all you need to know about the admissibility of expert testimony in civil proceedings.”⁴

A great lesson for lawyers and students!

Enjoy the pages that follow. You will see the Chief Justice through the eyes of those who know him well. You will see a gentleman and a scholar.

2. *See id.* at 152–53.

3. *Id.* at 160 (Wolff, J., concurring in part and dissenting in part).

4. *Id.*