

David Gossett[†]

When I think of Professor Currie—and even a decade after graduating from The Law School I could not bring myself to call him anything but *Professor Currie*—the first thing that comes to mind is that twinkle he almost always had in his eye. I was a student of Professor Currie’s in the mid-1990s; I am also one of the three co-founders of *The Green Bag*, the so-called “Entertaining Journal of Law,” of which Professor Currie was an immense supporter. I was honored to be invited to share a few words about Professor Currie from both of these perspectives—and in particular, to discuss how that twinkle has made such a difference in my life and the lives of many others.

As a teacher, Professor Currie’s talents are truly legendary. He was amazingly—shockingly—good at inspiring his students. It was in his Civil Procedure class, during the first week of law school, that I decided I had not erred in giving up graduate school and going to law school. It’s hard to put my finger on exactly why. I think it was a combination of his evident love for the law, his deep intellectual curiosity, and his unerring ability to see through the holes in an argument—and to point them out. And boy would he point them out—though always kindly. He was never one to make the mistake of confusing the *student* with the student’s *argument*.

That’s not to say that Professor Currie suffered foolish arguments kindly, though. One of the memories from law school that has stuck with me most strongly, and which continues to affect me on a day-to-day basis even now, thirteen years later, was again in that 1L Civil Procedure class. We’d spent the entire period talking about the relationship between summary judgment and the Seventh Amendment right to jury trial, and the class period was almost over. Professor Currie had just about convinced all of us that summary judgment was an unconstitutional violation of the right to trial by jury, but then he turned around—literally and figuratively, as was his wont—and noted that this just couldn’t be right. He asked the class why, and I, young pipsqueak that I was, volunteered. I was sure I knew the answer, and gave one—which was manifestly wrong. It was one of the few times that I saw that glint leave Professor Currie’s eye. I had disappointed him; *he*

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was going to have to explain the point before we ran out of time and spent the weekend thinking that summary judgment was unconstitutional. I still feel bad about letting him down, thirteen years later. And I still remember that look every time I catch myself about to speak without thinking my answer through. And, much of the time—well, at least some of the time—I catch myself, and think further before speaking. I wouldn't want to disappoint Professor Currie.

In addition to classes with Professor Currie, my other main contact with him has been through *The Green Bag*. The *Bag* was started by three students in the class of 1997, shortly after we graduated. We were tired of endlessly long law review articles and wanted to publish shorter, interesting, well written pieces of legal scholarship—the kinds of things Professor Currie wrote regularly. There had been a law journal at the end of the nineteenth century called *The Green Bag* that specialized in this sort of work, and we thought we could, perhaps, recreate it at the end of the twentieth century.

Well, we just published our 40th issue—Volume 10, Number 4. And not a single issue of the *Bag* would exist were it not for Professor Currie. When Ross Davies, Monty Kosma, and I had this crazy idea, we started going around to talk to faculty at The Law School to seek their input and support for it. There are many people on the faculty who were amazingly supportive—it probably took us five years before we first published an issue without at least one piece from a member of the Law School's faculty—but I hope no one will be hurt by my acknowledging that Professor Currie was truly the star. Not only did he write the introductory article for *The Green Bag*—Volume 1, Number 1, page 1—and many, many other pieces over the years. (I counted, and he published nineteen separate articles in the *Bag*.) Equally important, he gave us his blessing, he gave us his support, he gave us his counsel, he lent us his name, and . . . he convinced us that this was something worth doing. The three of us could never repay him that debt. And *The Green Bag's* readers, too—law professors, judges, lawyers, and lay people nationwide—also owe him a deep debt for that.

So Professor Currie, I thank you for everything you've done for me, for other students who have been privileged to sit in your classroom over a forty-five-year period, for everyone who has been touched by your scholarship, your brilliance, and your charm. I feel sorry for all the future law school students who will never get the chance to experience that twinkle in your eye. David, I'll miss you.