

Lawyers have public appeal

Public opinion rates lawyers above company directors, business executives and television reporters, according to the annual TIME Morgan Poll in the April issue of the magazine.

Lawyers ranked 11th out of 23 professions listed, with 30 per cent of people saying they maintained high or very high standards.

This compares with a ranking of 32 per cent last year and 44 per cent a decade ago.

The survey, based on interviews with 1,212 people throughout Australia early in April ranked nurses as the top occupation (86 per cent) for public standing.

They were followed by pharmacists (78), doctors (66) and school teachers (65).

The list finished with advertising people (8), newspaper journalists (8) and car salesmen (sic) (3).

(QLS News, Proctor, Queensland Law Society, June 1994)

Involuntary pro bono

The US \$14 million estate for which the Californian Menendez brothers allegedly murdered their parents is no more, reports The Guardian Weekly (UK).

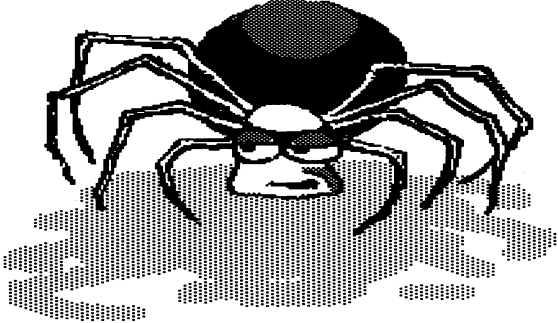
Much of the money went on lawyers and one who took \$930,000 wants more.

Fifty-year-old Leslie Abramson — Erik Menendez's lawyer, who is described as a tiny, mesmerising, brilliant and overpowering woman — said she could not afford to go bankrupt.

This is despite receiving fees of \$790,000 and costs of \$140,000 for the brothers' first trial.

This followed a judge's ruling that she had to defend Erik until the end of the case.

THE SPIDER'S WEB



Ms Abramson describes this as perpetual care and lifetime employment — but without pay.

The judge said that taxpayers had no obligation to pay Ms Abramson's \$100 per hour fees.

Ms Abramson has now turned to begging to ensure she continues to earn six-figure sums.

She has written to the 3,000 people who wrote sympathetically to Erik in prison, asking them to send monetary proof of their devotion.

(Outside View, Law Society Journal, The Law Society of NSW, June 1994)

Heavy 'petting' at the office

An American group called People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) is urging law firms to consider bring-your-own-pet-to-work policies, according to a report in the ABA Journal.

According to the PETA group, research shows a companion dog can temper emotions — and that people will speak more freely with a dog or a cat present.

Astonishingly, PETA got a positive response from one firm, which has a resident black cat.

One of the firm's partners said simply: "The clients like it."

(The Gist, The Law Institute Journal, Law Institute of Victoria, May 1994)

Castration: the kindest cut

A recent editorial in The New Yorker has argued for allowing sex offenders to opt for castration as an alternative to jail sentences.

The magazine notes that a 1973 Swiss study found that sex offenders who had opted for castration had a recidivism rate of 4.1 per cent, as opposed to 76.9 per cent for those who had not, and argues that moral objections to castration are misconceived.

"A woman who suffers from excessive premenstrual tension may choose to have her uterus removed," the editorial said.

"A woman who is carrying a baby she does not want (and many such women are rape victims) may elect to have an abortion.

"But a man who molests children or brutalises women can't ask to have his testicles removed because that would be barbarous."

(The Gist, The Law Institute Journal, Law Institute of Victoria, July 1994)



Thought for the month:

Doing a good job around here Is a little bit like wetting your pants in a dark suit ...

You get a warm fuzzy feeling But nobody else notices.