

Courting disaster

COURT TALK 1

Counsel: Were you present when the matron told Annie Jones to clean up the body?

Witness: I am Annie Jones.

COURT TALK 2

Counsel: Did you answer to the questions the detectives put to you — tell anything or things that you are not sure of?

In fact not sure of but said something to make it look as if you were?

That you knew things you didn't know?

Witness: What are you talking about?

COURT TALK 3

Witness: I'll put my head on a block!

Counsel: Just answer the question. We will come to your execution later.

(Drover's Dog, Brief, The Law Society of Western Australia, August 1994)

It's Mr Bear to you

Magistrates in Leeds, England, were not amused when a defendant's name was read out in court, reports Solicitors Journal (UK).

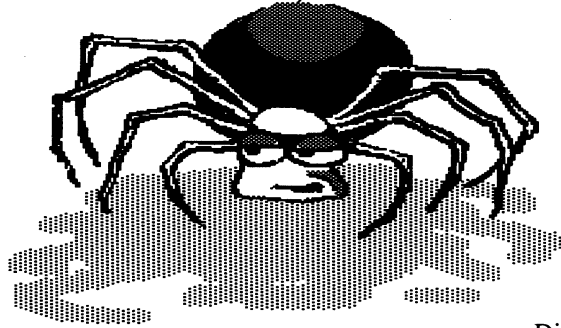
Glyn Robinson had changed his name to "Rupert the Bear Mickey Mouse ... Roger Rabbit Thorpe Willerby Mangrove Pork Butchers To The Trade ... Huckleberry Hound ..." and so on — 125 words in all.

Mr Robinson's solicitor said: "As things stand in law he can change his name to whatever he wants and the court has to use the title he chooses.

"There's always fun to be had in criminal law ... we get some real characters."

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

THE SPIDER'S WEB



As clear as mud

Solicitor John Mackenzie says the UK's Criminal Justice Act is the "dying spasm of a government that has finally lost its marbles".

Writing in *New Law Journal* (UK), he said:

"As the Bill does not expressly abolish the right to remain silent or the obligation of the police to give the caution, how is the solicitor to advise the suspect in the light of the new sections [which allow the court to draw such inferences from the suspect's failure to answer questions as appear proper]?"

He suggests:

"The officer has warned you that you do not have to say anything but I am afraid he's wrong.

"You do have to answer questions ...

"That is you don't have to ...

"But if you don't you'll probably be convicted of whatever it is they're going to charge you with...

"Of course, if you don't say anything they may not have enough evidence to charge you at all ...

"But if they do and you don't answer ...

"I'm afraid you're going to have to sort this out for yourself. I'm too confused."

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

Where there's a will ...

At a time when the Queensland Law Society (QLS) is relaxing its advertising rules to allow firms greater marketing flexibility, the QLS 'Prepare to Die' wills advertisement has won an advertising award for excellence.

The advertisement — featuring the words "PREPARE TO DIE: Make a Will." — featured on the back of taxis.

It won a gold award at the Art Directors' Annual Awards in July for the best transit advertisement throughout Queensland in the previous 12 months.

The campaign was a joint effort between the QLS and the Public Trustee and was developed after research showed that half of all Australians did not have a will.

Brisbane advertising agency Knowles Bristow developed the creative concept for the advert.

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



Thought for the month:

The bitterness of a poor quality job will remain ... long after the sweetness of meeting a deadline is forgotten