

NT Young Lawyers Minter Ellison Golden Gavel Competition

FRIDAY 12 OCTOBER AT CHAR RESTAURANT, DARWIN

Metamorphosis: The life cycle of a lawyer

By Caroline Heske

I'd like to start by showing you something quite rare and special, and almost impossible to observe in the wild.

I'd just like everyone to listen for a moment... bit of shush thanks... (pause, let silence stretch).

Ah, there we are! A room full of lawyers with their mouths shut.

A type of bipedal primate, lawyers can be difficult to distinguish from the more common varieties of homo sapiens. However, their complex life cycle has a number of distinctive stages, which are easily recognisable when you know what to look for.

The foetal lawyer suffers from a congenital disorder resulting from a superfluous chromosome, commonly dubbed the "L" chromosome. Unfortunately, there is no ante-natal test which detects the "L" chromosome, and parents may be unaware of their child's handicap until some years after birth.

However by puberty, most "L" chromosome children have begun to show distinctive symptoms. They are unusually argumentative, and tend to substitute bullshit for well-researched data. At times, this makes them difficult to distinguish from embryonic politicians. Indeed, the

two disorders may be linked.

Humans are generally attracted to money and prestige. The unfortunate "L" chromosome sufferer is unable to distinguish between a job offering such benefits, and the imitation pheromones emitted by legal establishments. These imitation pheromones have been shown to stimulate certain areas of the legal brain, resulting in delusions of grandeur and dreams of future financial entitlements. While in the grip of these delusions, young adult "L" sufferers will keenly spend several days in the photocopier room, fetch cups of coffee, and courier documents all over town in the sweltering heat.

The "L"s quickly mature into their junior lawyer stage, where new hormones prompt a new conservative dress style. Women in this stage of development show a preference for clothing in various shades of black, whereas the men exhibit peacock-like behaviour, strutting about in their first proper shirts, and the occasional incongruous akubra.

A junior lawyer develops into the "middle-management lawyer". This is a more expensive version of the junior lawyer, but



CJ Brian Martin, Caroline Heske, Fiona Tillmann of Minter Ellison, and Justice Angel at the Golden Gavel

is otherwise largely indistinguishable.

At this stage, both the solicitor and barrister varieties of lawyer are naturally occurring. For the latter, the "L" chromosome may prompt bizarre behaviour, as it generates a belief that robes and wigs must be worn when undertaking tasks that are not strictly legal, such as crossing the road to the Supreme Court, or ordering a cappuccino.

By this age, an "L" chromosome sufferer is unable to survive in the wild without assistance. It has been well documented that when a lawyer is caught in the mangroves and confronted by a crocodile, she or he will not take sensible evasive action, but will try to brief out or seek to adjourn.

Somewhere between the ages of 40 and 55, some lawyers may be

found riding motorbikes or convertibles, attired in leather jackets and/or muscle shirts. Nocturnal activities including dancing rituals at the Throb nightclub. The purpose of this strange behaviour is not yet known.

Eventually, lawyers may progress to being Senior Partners, Directors, or are Appointed to the Bench, from which it is almost impossible to get them to retire.

At this stage, some develop a hearing impediment known as judicial tinnitus. Sufferers are only able to hear sounds in the frequency range of human speech if they are alerted to concentrate by the words: "Your Honour". This condition has worsened over recent years; sufferers who previously responded to "Your Worship" now

Continued page 21

Cont...

require higher dosages of obsequious honorifics.

That, in short, is the life cycle of a lawyer. Which brings us to the age old question: Where do lawyers go to die? The answer – as I’m sure you all know - is that lawyers don’t die, they just lose their appeal.



Candice Maclean, Selina Pollard, Elizabeth Furlonger & Kate O’Fathartaigh enjoy the 2007 Golden Gavel.

Major Sponsor

Minter Ellison Lawyers

Supporting Sponsors

Department of Justice

Law Society Northern Territory Public Purposes Trust

Clayton Utz Lawyers

Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions

Lexis Nexis

Bowen Lawyers

Contributing Sponsors

Char Restaurant

Kris Norrington

Suzan Cox QC



Kris Norrington, Caroline Heske & Kristy Rogerson



Greg Smith, Corrina Baohm and Jodi Truman



Enjoying the Golden Gavel



Sue Phoo & Marguerite Bowen



Matthew Garraway & Kristy Rogerson



Maria Savvas & Damien Jones

Continued page 22

2

Top 5 Lawyer Reality Show Ideas

By Tom Kaye

Your Honour, this is an application for an urgent injunction. It has just come to my attention that several television networks have stolen my ideas for reality television shows. This breach of copyright must be halted at once! True, they have removed the lawyers from their shows to avoid detection, but their shows are substantially mine!

The Biggest Loser

Scrape together 10 down-and-out solicitors each with an IQ of less than 50. I understand that the scientific term for such a solicitor is prosecutor and the collective noun is a murder.

So scrape together a murder of prosecutors. You can often find them trying to pass themselves off as defence lawyers at the Roma bar, but they're easy to spot. They're the ones with the blood dripping from their fangs and the knives sticking out of their backs.

Anyway, you give each of them a packet of chewing gum and a turkey slap and the first to say something other than 'Your Honour this is a very serious offence' wins their dignity back.

Survivor

Thirty-seven commercial lawyers are made to live in a public toilet in Palmerston. They are forced to do degrading and humiliating things like wear DPP ties and vote for John Howard. They are allowed to leave at any time but the last to leave wins a dollar so we foresee that this show will go for a very long time.

In the event of a tie, their trophy wives fight to the death each armed with nothing but a copy of the *Corporations Act*.

Big Brother

Ten butch lesbian family lawyers



Brian Martin CJ, Tom Kaye, Fiona Tillmann & Justice Angel

arm wrestle naked whilst overweight prosecutors in nurse uniforms stand around humming. The saddest thing here is that nobody wins.

Extreme Makeovers/ Extreme Takeovers

The show on television involves performing invasive plastic surgery to make ugly people beautiful. Judging by the people in this room that would be a fantastic idea for a lawyer show. But no, my show is slightly different - it's called Extreme Takeovers.

Government ministers (who are usually lawyers) are the players. The aim is to demonise Aborigines in the media, steal all their money and land. The winner is the one who claims that it is all aimed at protecting sacred little children.

Australian Idol

Lights! Camera! Action! Imagine

a world with cameras in the court room and lawyers singing their submissions. Mr Tippet for the defence. Chief Justice Martin is the beak. Any old person off the street can be prosecutor.

Mr Tippet would sing in his beautiful silken voice:

"Your Honour my client is a nice guy please don't remand him"

And the prosecutor sings:

"Your Honour he must be guilty or we wouldn't have charged him"

And the Judge sings:

"Mr Prosecutor you should be a lover not a hater,

This man only stole a mask of Darth Vader."

Please grant this injunction. Those are my submissions.

