

Noble Purposes: Nine Champions of the Rule of Law

Edited by Norman Gross, published by Ohio University Press (2007), hardcover, 155 pages, \$26.95
<http://www.ohio.edu/oupres>

Reviewed by Debra A. Garlinghouse

Noble *Purposes* recounts the deeds of nine remarkable legal trailblazers, most of whom are unknown to the general public. All were lawyers or judges who advocated often unpopular positions in notable cases or events over the last two centuries. Their stories span from the Salem witch trials to the South Carolina Ku Klux Klan trials of the 1870s to the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II. During these turbulent periods, they dedicated their lives to the pursuit of justice and the rule of law, often at great personal risk.

The book covers the lives of Samuel Sewall, a judge in the Salem witch trials; James Alexander, an attorney who defended a printer in a colonial trial, which laid the foundation for freedom of the press; Lemuel Shaw, the chief justice of the Massachusetts Supreme Court in the mid-1800s, who wrote over 2,000 opinions, which largely shaped tort and property law in the antebellum age; Hugh Lennox Bond, a judge in the South Carolina Ku Klux Klan trials of the 1870s; Clara Shortridge Foltz, a crusader for women's rights in the late 1800s whose greatest legal accomplishment was her proposal for a public defender; Noah Parden, a young African-American attorney who changed the landscape of criminal law in the early 1900s by invoking federal habeas corpus following an unjust state trial; Octaviano Larrazolo, the first foreign-born Latino to become a U.S. senator and governor; Louis Marshall, champion of the rights of Jews and other minorities here and abroad in the early 1900s; and Francis Biddle, Franklin Delano Roosevelt's attorney general during World War II who op-

posed the internment of Japanese Americans and infringement of other civil liberties during wartime.

The book is easy to read. The foreword is authored by Karen J. Mathis, president of the American Bar Association. In her words, "The individuals whose lives are reflected in these pages demonstrated single-minded devotion to fulfilling the promise of justice and extending the Constitution to all citizens." (vii) I wholeheartedly agree.

The editor, Norman Gross, director of the American Bar Association Museum of Law, prefaces the nine chapters with a brief

After reading *Noble Purposes*, I have a renewed sense of purpose and hope.

introduction. The preface is worth reading, as Mr. Gross explains why he, with input from legal scholars, historians, colleagues, and friends, chose lesser-known, largely forgotten individuals for inclusion in the book.

After the short foreword and preface are nine chapters, each covering the life of one of the nine chosen individuals and written by a different author. A picture or a drawn likeness of the individual precedes each chapter, which I enjoyed. The chapters are short and individually titled, making it easier to read if you cannot finish the book in one sitting.

As I sit at my desk grinding through my daily stack of pleadings, I sometimes lose sight of the ultimate goal of helping people. After reading *Noble Purposes*, I have a renewed sense of purpose and hope. I recommend this book to new graduates and long-term practitioners alike. We could all use a little inspiration in our lives. ■

Debra A. Garlinghouse is an associate attorney at the Law Offices of Lee B. Steinberg, P.C., with a specialty in legal research and writing. She is a 1996 graduate of Thomas M. Cooley Law School.

Chapter Contents

- Samuel Sewall: *Defender of the Rule of Law?* —John R. Vile
 James Alexander: *Prophet of a Free Press* —John D. Gordon III
 Lemuel Shaw: *The Shaping of State Law* —Paul Finkelman
 The Courage of His Convictions: *Hugh Lennox Bond and the South Carolina Ku Klux Klan Trials* —Kermit L. Hall
 Clara Shortridge Foltz: *Inventing the Public Defender* —Barbara Allen Babcock
 Noah Parden: *In the Eye of the Storm* —Mark Curriden
 Race, Party, Class: *The Contradictions of Octaviano Larrazolo* —Phillip B. Gonzales
 Louis Marshall: *Attorney General of the Jewish People* —Henry M. Greenberg
 Francis Biddle: *Protecting the Rule of Law during Wartime* —Cornell W. Clayton