

E-Prime Works!

To the Editor:

What a great idea! Why didn't someone tell me about this before?

I read Christopher Wren's article ("E-Prime, Briefly: A Lawyer Writes in E-Prime," July 2007) on a coffee break, then hurried back to the office to try it on a four-page brief I had just finished (so I thought) editing. I found translating my work into E-Prime harder than expected, and I didn't fully succeed. But I did end up with an even shorter and harder-hitting brief.

This won't make writing any easier, but I expect it will make my output clearer and more persuasive. Thank you, Mr. Wren.

John Quinn
Detroit

A Political and Conscious Muddling

To the Editor:

The Thursday, July 26, 2007, edition of the daily case summaries in the State Bar e-Journal left me scratching my increasingly barren head. This issue of the SBM reporting of cases illustrates a phenomenon that is rearing its ugly head on an escalating basis. I encourage you to simply go to that date in your summaries and

read the Supreme Court dissents by the predictable minority. If the differences between the members were simply political-preference differences or legitimate issue orientation supported by intellectually sustainable objectivity, it would be a nice, stimulating debate. It has become obvious, however, that the "dissents" are vacuous in the extreme. My favorite, *Robde v Ann Arbor Public Schools*, is where the usual suspects all agree with the holding, but dissent because they apparently don't like the reasoning. Further, they all file a separate dissent because they don't even like each other's opinions.

If this were simply sophomoric, it would be tolerable while this juvenile behavior abated with maturity and experience. But look who they are. This isn't youthful exuberance or academic nuance; this is a political and conscious muddling. I recommend you read these dissents word for word, and you might be left wondering if we shouldn't require some legal proficiency standard before allowing folks to stand to sit. I don't care what part of the spectrum or substrata you support or believe in, but at least have the common decency to base your opinion on something more than knee-jerk ideology that forces you to contrive arguments through which boulders

could fall without interrupting the fabric. 'Nuff said.

Gilbert C. Potter
Hillman

Waste of Space

To the Editor:

The president's article in the August issue ("Pro Bono," August 2007) is a waste of magazine space and members' time. It is inconceivable to me that anyone would be concerned over whether pro bono contributions include volunteer work outside the scope of the practice of law. Lawyers are citizens, and as such should participate in bettering their communities. Likewise, there is an obligation to assist those in need of legal services who cannot afford to pay. These concepts seem so elementary that they hardly need the discussion afforded in the *Bar Journal*. I also query who cares if bettering your community falls within the purview of "pro bono." It seems to me that it is an academic discussion that has no impact on the life and practice of any lawyer. Perhaps the president could see if she could find topics slightly more relevant to the practicing bar. I might suggest she take on the issue of the miserly fees court-appointed counsel receive.

When I am asked the question as to whether I do "pro bono" work, I respond that I do. It isn't intended that way, but that is how it turns out.

John L. Lengemann
Imlay City

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