The final chapter, called 'The Quest for a Core' (possibly the search for the holy grail of legal education?), is a good point to end Twining's dissertation. At the outset he expresses scepticism about the desirability of even having a settled core or essence of a discipline. However, because of the persistence of this sort of thinking, he says he has decided to look at some of the salient examples of attempts to define a core of legal knowledge, out of which he has chosen the following: conceptions of legal science; law as a branch of rational ethics; the core subjects debate; ideas about law as craft and technology; do-it-yourself pluralism; and the idea of rules as a necessary focus of legal study.

Twining reviews the development of the core subjects debate, which he recognises to most practising and academic lawyers in England refers to the subjects prescribed by the legal profession as granting exemption from the first or academic stage of the qualification for practice. He discusses the list of core subjects originally recommended in the Ormrod Report, how this core began to 'creep' and the emergence in the 1970s of lists of desirable skills, all leading to sustained pressure on the undergraduate curriculum. However, Twining also acknowledges that only rarely did academic lawyers assert their status as professional educators and advance a coherent and cogent rationale for undergraduate legal education and a principled solution to the problem of curriculum overload. He points out the semantic confusion that has bedevilled what different people have meant by a core, that is whether it refers to an irreducible minimum of knowledge that might be expected of a fledgling practitioner or trainee or to those foundation subjects which are necessary or useful building blocks for the study of further subjects at the academic or later at the vocational stage.

There is also some discussion of the modern skills movement and the introduction of legal practice courses. However, Twining contends that a switch from knowledge to skills does not necessarily solve the problem of determining a core for legal training purposes. The problem is expressed thus: 'Instead of asking: what should every lawyer know? the question becomes: what should every lawyer be able to do? But if legal practice is both varied and changing, is this a meaningful question?' He also raises doubts about the educational value of problem-solving skills, although admittedly very useful in analysing the nature of lawyers' work, which he considers by themselves to be too general to be very helpful.

Finally Twining provides a brief (9 page) 'Epilogue' to his seven Hamlyn Lectures in which he reflects further on the proper role of the modern English law school and provides his considered advice on the future directions they should take.

In many respects, this is quite a remarkable book, displaying the powerful intellect of the author as one of the foremost thinkers on how law functions in society, with a clear vision, despite the pluralism in approaches evident in the professional, academic and wider communities, of the contribution that law schools can make in the provision of legal education. Although lucidly written, with a wealth of footnoted references in support of his arguments, it can be a mite heavy-going in parts. However, there can be no doubt that this book is a major addition to the literature on law schools and legal education which is bound to stimulate a great deal of reflection in the discerning reader.

Editor

JUDICIAL EDUCATION

[no material in this edition]

LEGAL EDUCATION GENERALLY

Of rat time and terminators
D Barnhizer
45 J Legal Educ 1, March 1995, pp 49-60

Rat time refers to the time when a given population begins to exceed the resources needed for its basic sustenance. At this point it is unrealistic to expect individuals in the population to behave civilly and the rats exhibit increasingly aggressive behaviour until the population falls to a level where civility can re-emerge.

A version of rat time is being created in the legal profession as 40,000 new graduates a year enter an already saturated system. The concept of rat time can help us to isolate the problems of the legal profession, identify the future responsibilities of law schools and the profession and create more effective solutions than the stop-gap measures usually employed.

Lawyers and law schools are in a transitional period and the legal profession is being transformed as it adjusts to the shift in demand for its services. Moreover, the glut of lawyers is not necessarily bad, as it will make for a more competitive

and efficient legal service. Costs will fall as quality rises.

The MacCrate Report is a recent attempt to describe the problems of law schools and the legal profession and is centred on the formulation of a statement of skills and values. Although many critics have seen it as an attack on law schools, it is in fact a critique of the profession which it sees as beset by fundamental changes that are causing a decline in professionalism and the quality of legal services.

However, the focus on specific skills divorces power from consequence, responsibility and morality. Lawyers become like Terminators in the movies starring Arnold Schwarzenegger - high tech robots without a soul. Whilst legal education has improved over the years, the dissatisfaction with lawyers and lawyers' own dissatisfaction with their jobs are indicative of a problem deeper than technical skills or awareness of values.

Practising lawyers are driven by dollars and this brings out the darker side of lawyerly skills, such as minimising the actual time spent on a case whilst maximising the billing time. Lawyers perform badly, not so much from lack of skills caused by law school failure, as through economic pressures, lack of commitment, laziness, burnout, or dishonesty. We need to be less simplistic and embarrassed when we address values. Law schools should be teaching efficient office practices and case management techniques so as to reverse the need to develop the darker lawyerly skills. The problem does not lie merely with lawyers, but with American society, grounded in material well-being, advertising and marketing schemes and television-influenced mentalities.

Part of the solution is the identification and removal of the really bad lawyers. Law schools need to assist the profession in population planning for the legal profession. Perhaps a restriction in the number of students entering law school and a reduction in the number of law schools are required, harsh as they may seem. Alternatively, as law has developed into a generalist degree, law schools might look at preparing their students for other, non-traditional legal vocations.

One of the major shortcomings of the MacCrate Report is its avoidance of hard choices about funding mechanisms. Legal education is one of the least expensive and prestigious forms of graduate education. Effective skills and values instruction is however labour intensive and therefore expensive. A significant infusion of funds and the development of better methods are required if the MacCrate Report goals are to be implemented.

The author makes eight specific recommendations as to how resources can be obtained and the goals achieved: 1. Do away with the core coverage and reduce bar exams to no more than one day; 2. Use the bar exam preparation time and resources for Summer Inns of Court; 3. Charge all law students a skills-training fee; 4. States should change their educational funding structures to reflect the costs of expanded skills education; 5. Increase national and state bar dues by $100 to $200 per year and earmark that money for Summer Inns of Court and live-client clinics; 6. Establish a limited number of super-libraries and reduce or redirect law school library budgets; 7. Create an independent non-profit institution to administer the resources so created; 8. Earmark some of the new resources for live-client clinical programs and the legal equivalent of teaching hospitals.

LEGAL ETHICS

[no material in this edition]

LEGAL PROFESSION

[no material in this edition]

LIBRARIES & INFORMATION

Law library evaluation standards: how will we evaluate the virtual library
G M Daly
45 J Legal Educ 1, March 1995, pp 61-78

In the computer age, it is difficult to evaluate library resources. Previously, size in terms of volume counts determined the quality of the library and the bigger-is-better attitude dominated. However, volume counts are often inaccurate and not all materials are easily located. Library resources were historically used as a determining factor in the accreditation and ranking of research institutions. This antiquated measure of library quality has continued and the inability of the legal accreditation establishment to change to qualitative measures of information access has persisted despite the advances made in information technology and access.

In the early 1990s the ABA issued a draft revision of the library