terminant in the allocation of limited educational opportunity.

The graduation rates among those students who would not have been provided an opportunity to enter law school under the LSAT/UGPA model is impressive, strongly supporting the claim by legal education administrators that law schools offer admission to only those students of colour who are qualified to meet the demands of law school academic work.

Some commentators suggest that there are a variety of factors that should be used in the admission process that might identify diversity contributions or evidence of lack of educational opportunity. Such factors could result in a student body that would be diverse along a variety of dimensions, including race. Based on the data from the samples used in this study, three of the often-identified factors that might foster diversity — economic status, selectivity of undergraduate school and undergraduate major — were evaluated. None of these factors produced a highly qualified, ethnically diverse student body when considered in the admission process without simultaneous consideration of race.

The data presented in this study provide bleak prospects for continued ethnic diversity in legal education if admission decisions depend on a model defined exclusively by LSAT score and UGPA or, by extension, an admission practice that yields results that parallel those predicted by an LSAT/UGPA model. The issue rises from an inappropriate use of those measures that results, not only in a loss of validity, but systematic and predictable discriminatory selection in our nation's law schools.

LEGAL EDUCATION GENERALLY

3 *The Law Teacher* 3, 1997

Editor's Note: This issue is by and large given over to a group of four articles which reflect an international perspective on legal education. It canvasses the problems and challenges that arise in law teaching in several very diverse jurisdictions: the South Pacific island states, South Africa and post-Communist Bulgaria and Russia. Each of the four articles, necessarily somewhat descriptive but nonetheless supported by argument and analysis, examines the impact that major change in the political and economic environment have had on law teaching.

LIBRARIES & INFORMATION

Fishing on the Net: solicitor training on the Internet
J Timke
5 *Aust Law Librarian* 2, 1997, pp 113–116

In the recent past, online services and systems meant training for librarians and other library staff because each system seemed to have its own particular search operators and techniques. Charging was, more often than not, based on the amount of time spent 'online'. This meant only well trained users would conduct these searchers so as to keep the cost within budge restraints. Law librarians also needed to know which online systems contained which database of information and how to access that information as quickly, cheaply and accurately as possible.

While this was not an unsatisfactory method of researching, the CD-ROM helped revolutionise legal research. In a relatively short period of time, the amount of information that became available in this format was staggering. But the real bonus for the legal profession was and is the 'user friendly' approach that most publishers took in producing this material. On the whole, these databases have been aimed at the practitioners themselves, as opposed to librarians.

Librarians are now looked to as professionals with experience who can act as trainers as well as users. As trainers they helped train those practitioners who needed to learn how to use this information in this format, and as users they had the knowledge to access the information accurately if practitioners did not have the time. CD-ROM publishers provided user manuals and 'help sheets', as well as support and training for librarians. In many instances it was more practical to have trainers from the production companies that produce the compact disks to provide the initial instruction for practitioners. Compact disc technology was a challenge to practitioners, but also to librarians who were expected to be trainers as well as users.

While compact discs still play an important role in legal research, for the time being it seems that all attention has turned to the Internet and the World Wide Web. Many of the applications of the Internet fall into one of two categories, communications or research. Both are of equal importance but it takes more knowledge and background in researching fully to do research on the Internet and achieve satisfactory results.

With pressure from all directions to access the Internet for researching purposes, practitioners are stepping into a possible minefield of the unknown. Although many law firms have been rushing to provide desk top access to the Internet and the World Wide Web, this access, without adequate training, will be useless.

One of the most important elements in relation to the Internet can be explained even before logging on. Reliability is a major concern that should be discussed. Simply because it is on the Internet does not mean that it is up to date or accurate, which many practitioners automatically assume. Although in theory information is available almost instantly on the Internet, this is not so. In

some situations, paper versions of the material are more accurate and up to date.

While locating Web sites with addresses and using the links to find the relevant information is a step by step process, it is hardly suitable for complex research queries. By using this method, practitioners are able to locate certain information themselves, although the accuracy and reliability must then be queried. And while there are many practitioners who are confidently using the Internet in this way, they rarely stray beyond similar sites.

With multitudes of search engines to choose from to research the entire Internet, how can a practitioner decide which will be the most suitable? Due to the size of the Internet, searches have to be carefully constructed and refined time and again. Sites are added or deleted or changed, and the same search can provide a different result from one day to the next. It is these in-depth research skills that librarians have developed and fine tuned, and searching on the Internet requires all this and more. Having dealt with the prospect of manual and electronic searching, librarians are trained to deal with and search this volume and type of information.

Unlike the compact disc technology, the Internet is never in a constant state (and sometimes not even consistent). With new sites appearing, new search engines and directories being developed, sites changing and providing more or less information, it is imperative to be aware of what and how things are changing.

In the same way that practitioners are experts in their own particular field, they must acknowledge that librarians are experts too. While it is important for users to be trained and to understand how to use the Internet, it takes a librarian to find some elusive fragment of information that lies hidden deep within the confusion of the Web.

PURPOSE

Law and the possibility of justice
V C Sanchez
19 *Western New England Law Review*, 1997, pp 183–191

The focus of the legal academy is on teaching the law and the rule of law. This is not, in and of itself, wrong. What is difficult to explain is how, when and why the issue of justice got separated out from the law. How is it that one may study three years in law school, read hundreds of cases and learn, articulate, and apply an equal number of rules of law, without ever considering or even hearing mention of justice? What we, as law professors, think about justice may not be as important as the obligation that we do think about it.

What is even more critical is that we get our students to think about it, at least as often as they are thinking about rules of law. The word 'justice' is not often heard (or at least not often enough) in law schools, except to refer to Supreme Court judges. Too often students are only taught the formalistic requirements of legal thought and analysis: brief the case; learn the facts; find the issue; find the holding; isolate the rationale for the decision; apply it to a hypothetical set of facts. How often do they get taught that each case they read is about real people and real lives? Do we remind them that beyond the issue and the rule in the case, there is a profound impact on one or more people every time a court rules? Discussion of the law and legal analysis ought to include a different kind of 'hide and seek' than the type usually encouraged in the academy. That is, let's also look for and try to find what is *not* there and see if it has had any influence on the outcome.

The mythology of the 'traditionalists' in the academy is that the 'legal realists' or 'critical legal theorists' are seeking, inappropriately, to further a political agenda, in a world where, instead, the law is actually decided and taught in a neutral, value-free fashion. If one operates from the latter perspective, it is then quite easy to think about and teach the law without ever considering the meaning out of much that we read and teach. The idea of justice can, in the 'traditionalist' context, be seen to be absolutely irrelevant to the teaching of law.

It seems clear that there is no real consensus about what justice means. Some have argued that justice is an elusive, philosophical idea. Even if this is so, society can only benefit by continued debate and discussion about it. We are harmed, within the academy and without, by turning away from or benignly neglecting the topic. But ours is a society that seems to have moved further and further away from respecting ideas or the life of the mind.

When you have a society that has connected up the idea of freedom or liberty with ownership and the pursuit of 'things', then the right of the individual emerges as paramount to the right of the community. It becomes ever more difficult to try and persuade people of the intrinsic value of a just society when you may not be able to offer tangible proof of the benefits, especially for each individual person. This explains why we have seen such a distortion of the constitutional right to bear arms. This 'right', taken totally out of any historical or constitutional context, has ended up being translated into the idea that society has absolutely no right to try to limit the number or type of guns one can purchase each month, or assert that there might be a legitimate reason to ban certain types of weapons, such as assault rifles. We hear the refrain, chanted like a mantra that, 'It's my right as an American to ...' What is really meant is that it is my absolute right as an individual to be free from any restraint, irrespective of the impact of that idea on society as a whole.