

Review: 2007 Legal Comedy Debate

MEGAN DRYSDALE, CO-CHAIR SOCIAL COMMITTEE

**RUDE &
CRUDE**
Do lawyers need to go there?

Ever wished you could “let fly” with a client? Remove that professional veneer and be completely honest about the practical realities of your client’s chances of success or their unrealistic point of view?

Inspired by real-life scenarios, the 2007 Legal Comedy Debate saw our hearts melt for judges with feelings and frustrated lawyers faced with impossible clients.

New to the Legal Comedy Debate scene, moderator Bruce McNab warmed up the audience with revealing interpretations of the *GST Act*, as well as of one of his personal favourites, the *Prostitution Control Act*.

Bleeping his way through tangible arguments and recounts of cases gone by for the affirmative, his Honour Judge John Bowman stripped off his court robes to reveal a large red heart on his T-shirt.

In response, Catherine Dunlop, partner from Maddocks, made it clear that there is no need for lawyers to be rude or crude in their daily endeavours to achieve billable targets.

A dose of humility and frequent “sucking up” will ensure that the path to partnership is secure.

Mark Woods of Tyler, Tipping & Woods argued that regardless of practice area, all lawyers are subject to the crudities of law – which are generally forced by inane client needs.

Outside of these moments, Mark assured us that all lawyers are like Peter Pan.

With her Dr House analogies, Rachel Doyle, barrister, stated that lawyers are lovely and courteous on the outside but on the inside want to tell their clients to shove it! Importantly, she noted that the legal fraternity can use everyday language to be rude and crude to clients, including in rendering the fee slip.

Final speaker for the affirmative, Judge Liz Gaynor, recounted a challenging day out at the Broadmeadows police station and a subsequent Magistrates’ Court appearance in the early 80s.

The epitome of politeness and oozing sexual charm, she ultimately toughened (and roughened) up, entering a “not guilty” plea for Glen Scrotum who was caught red-handed stealing a television.

An unf-f-f-fortunate speech imp-p-p-pediment on the evening meant Yianni Agisilaou, comedian, had to cope as best he could whilst arguing that swearing in a legal c-c-c-context is c-c-c-completely un-n-n-necessary.

By audience vote, the team for the negative out swore, out punched and out witted the affirmative, confirming that lawyers are just misunderstood.

Thank you to all debaters and the hilarious mediator, Bruce McNab. ■

