

Excerpts From A Book Called "Disorder In The American Courts"

These are from a book called Disorder in the American Courts, and are things people actually said in court, word for word, taken down and now published by court reporters who had the torment of staying calm while these exchanges were actually taking place:

q: : How far from the accident were you when it happened?

a: : He replied "36 feet, 2 and a quarter inches"

q: : Nonsense how can you be so precise?

a: : Well I knew some bloody fool would ask me so I measured it.

q: : What is your date of birth?

a: : July fifteenth.

q: : What year?

a: : Every year.

q: : What gear were you in at the moment of the impact?

a: : Gucci sweats and Reeboks.

q: : This myasthenia gravis... Does it affect your memory at all?

a: : Yes.

q: : And in what ways does it affect your memory?

a: : I forget.

q: : You forget. Can you give us an example of something that you've forgotten?

q: : what was the first thing your husband said to you when he woke up that

morning?

a: : he said, "where am i, doris?"

q: : and why did that upset you?

a: : my name is susan.

q: : she had three children, right?

a: : yes.

q: : how many were boys?

a: : none.

q: : were there any girls?

q: :Are you sexually active?

a: :No. I just lie there.

q: :could you see him from where you were standing?

a: :I could see his head.

q: :and where was his head?

a: :just above his shoulders.

q: :any suggestions as to what prevented this from being a murder trial instead of an attempted murder trial?

a: :the victim lived.

q: : how was your first marriage terminated?

a: : by death.

q: : and by whose death was it terminated?

q: : now doctor, isn't it true that when a person dies in his sleep, he doesn't know about it until the next morning?

a: : did you actually pass the bar exam?

q: : the youngest son, the twenty-year-old, how old is he?

q: : How old is your son - the one living with you.

a: : Thirty-eight or thirty-five, I can't remember which.

q: : How long has he lived with you?

a: : Forty-five years.

q: : And where was the location of the accident?

a: : Approximately milepost 499.

q: : And where is milepost 499?

a: : Probably between milepost 498 and 500.

q: : Do you know if your daughter has ever been involved in voodoo or the occult?

a: : We both do.

q: : Voodoo?

a: : We do.

q: : You do?

a: : Yes, voodoo.

q: : Trooper, when you stopped the defendant, were your red and blue lights flashing?

a: : Yes.

q: : Did the defendant say anything when she got out of her car?

a: : Yes, sir.

q: : What did she say?

a: : What disco am I at?

q: : I show you Exhibit 3 and ask you if you recognize that picture.

a: : That's me.

q: : Were you present when that picture was taken?

q: : Were you present in court this morning when you were sworn in?

q: : Do you know how far pregnant you are now?

a: : I'll be three months on November 8.

q: : Apparently, then, the date of conception was August 8?

a: : Yes.

q: : What were you doing at that time?

q: : How many times have you committed suicide?

a: : Four times.

q: : Did he kill you?

q: : You don't know what it was and you didn't know what it looked like, but can you describe it?

q: : Have you lived in this town all your life?

a: : Not yet.

q: : How far apart were the vehicles at the time of the collision?

q: : You were there until the time you left, is that true?

Lawyer: (realizing he was on the verge of asking a stupid question) "Your Honor, I'd like to strike the next question."

q: : Did you ever stay all night with this man in New York?

a: : I refuse to answer that question.

q: : Did you ever stay all night with this man in Chicago?

a: : I refuse to answer that question.

q: : Did you ever stay all night with this man in Miami?

a: : No.

q: : Doctor, did you say he was shot in the woods?

a: : No, I said he was shot in the lumbar region.

q: : Were you acquainted with the deceased?

a: : Yes sir.

q: : Before or after he died?

q: : How many times have you committed suicide?

q: : And you check your radar unit frequently?

a: : Officer: "Yes, I do."

q: : And was your radar unit functioning correctly at the time you had the plaintiff on radar?

a: : Yes, it was malfunctioning correctly.

q: : Lawyer: "What happened then?"

a: : He told me, he says, 'I have to kill you because you can identify me.'

q: : Did he kill you?

a: : Witness: "No.

q: : Now sir, I'm sure you are an intelligent and honest man--

q: : Thank you. If I weren't under oath, I'd return the compliment.

q: : You were there until the time you left, is that true?

q: : So you were gone until you returned?

q: : So the date of conception (of the baby) was August 8th?

a: : Yes.

q: : And what were you doing at that time?

q: : You say the stairs went down to the basement?

a: : Yes.

q: : And these stairs, did they go up also?

q: : Can you describe the individual?

a: : He was about medium height and had a beard.

q: : Was this a male, or a female?

q : Is your appearance here this morning pursuant to a deposition notice which I sent to your attorney?

a : No, this is how I dress when I go to work.

q : Doctor, how many autopsies have you performed on dead people?

a : All my autopsies are performed on dead people.

q : All your responses must be oral, OK? What school did you go to?

a : Oral.

q : Do you recall the time that you examined the body?

a : The autopsy started around 8:30 p.m.

q : And Mr. Dennington was dead at the time?

a : No, he was sitting on the table wondering why I was doing an autopsy.

q : Doctor, before you performed the autopsy, did you check for a pulse?

a : No.

q : Did you check for blood pressure?

a : No.

q : Did you check for breathing?

a : No.

q : So, then it is possible that the patient was alive when you began the autopsy?

a : No.

q : How can you be so sure, Doctor?

a : Because his brain was sitting on my desk in a jar.

q : But could the patient have still been alive nevertheless?

a : It is possible that he could have been alive and practising law somewhere.

q : You were not shot in the fracas?

a : No, I was shot midway between the fracas and the navel.

q : What did the tissue samples taken from the victim's vagina show?

a : There were traces of semen.

q : Male semen?

a : That's the only kind I know of.

q : So, after the anaesthetic, when you came out of it, what did you observe with respect to your scalp?

a : I didn't see my scalp the whole time I was in the hospital.

q : It was covered?

a : Yes. Bandaged.

q : Then, later on, what did you see?

a : I had a skin graft. My whole buttocks and leg were removed and put on top of my head.

q : Please repeat after me: "I swear by Almighty God..."

a : "I swear by Almighty God."

q : "That the evidence that I give..."

a : That's right.

q : Repeat it.

a : "Repeat it".

q : No! Repeat what I said.

a : What you said when?
q : "That the evidence that I give..."
a : "That the evidence that I give."
q : "Shall be the truth and..."
a : It will, and nothing but the truth!
q : Please, just repeat after me: "Shall be the truth and..."
a : I'm not a scholar, you know.
q : We can appreciate that. Just repeat after me: "Shall be the truth and..."
a : "Shall be the truth and."
q : Say: "Nothing...".
a : Okay. (Witness remains silent.)
q : No! Don't say nothing. Say: "Nothing but the truth..."
a : Yes.
q : Can't you say: "Nothing but the truth..."?
a : Yes.
q : Well? Do so.
a : You're confusing me.
q : Just say: "Nothing but the truth...".
a : Okay. I understand.
q : Then say it.
a : What?
q : "Nothing but the truth..."
a : But I do! That's just it.
q : You must say: "Nothing but the truth..."
a : I WILL say nothing but the truth!
q : Please, just repeat these four words: "Nothing", "But", "The", "Truth".
a : What? You mean, like, now?
q : Yes! Now. Please. Just say those four words.
a : "Nothing. But. The. Truth."
q : Thank you.
a : I'm just not a scholar.

A carpenter was giving evidence about an accident he had witnessed.

q : How far away he was from the accident.

a : The carpenter replied, "Twenty-seven feet, six and one-half inches."

q : What? How come you are so sure of that distance?

a : Well, I knew sooner or later some idiot would ask me. So I measured it!

q : On the morning of July 25th, did you walk from the farmhouse down the footpath to the cowshed?

a : I did.

q : And as a result, you passed within a few yards of the duck pond?

a : I did.

q : And did you observe anything?

a : I did. (Witness remains silent.)

q : Well, could you tell the Court what you saw?

a : I saw George.

q : You saw George *****, the defendant in this case?

a : Yes.

q : Can you tell the Court what George ***** was doing?

a : Yes. (Witness remains silent.)

q : Well, would you kindly do so?

a : He had his thing stuck into one of the ducks.

q : His "thing"?

a : You know... His thing. His di... I mean, his penis.

q : You passed close by the duck pond, the light was good, you were sober, you have good eyesight, and you saw this clearly?

a : Yes.

q : Did you say anything to him?

a : Of course I did!

q : What did you say to him?

a : "Morning, George

