

Florida State University College of Law

Scholarship Repository

Scholarly Publications

Spring 1995

There Is No One Who Can Do What He Did

Charles W. Ehrhardt

Follow this and additional works at: <https://ir.law.fsu.edu/articles>



Part of the Law Commons



DATE DOWNLOADED: Wed Sep 1 10:39:05 2021

SOURCE: Content Downloaded from [HeinOnline](#)

Citations:

Bluebook 21st ed.

Charles W. Ehrhardt, There Is No One Who Can Do What He Did, 22 FLA. ST. U. L. REV. 803 (1995).

ALWD 6th ed.

Ehrhardt, C. W., There is no one who can do what he did, 22(4) Fla. St. U. L. Rev. 803 (1995).

APA 7th ed.

Ehrhardt, C. W. (1995). There is no one who can do what he did. Florida State University Law Review, 22(4), 803-806.

Chicago 17th ed.

Charles W. Ehrhardt, "There Is No One Who Can Do What He Did," Florida State University Law Review 22, no. 4 (Spring 1995): 803-806

McGill Guide 9th ed.

Charles W Ehrhardt, "There Is No One Who Can Do What He Did" (1995) 22:4 Fla St U L Rev 803.

AGLC 4th ed.

Charles W Ehrhardt, 'There Is No One Who Can Do What He Did' (1995) 22(4) Florida State University Law Review 803.

MLA 8th ed.

Ehrhardt, Charles W. "There Is No One Who Can Do What He Did." Florida State University Law Review, vol. 22, no. 4, Spring 1995, p. 803-806. HeinOnline.

OSCOLA 4th ed.

Charles W Ehrhardt, 'There Is No One Who Can Do What He Did' (1995) 22 Fla St U L Rev 803

Provided by:

Provided By:
 FSU College of Law Research Center

-- Your use of this HeinOnline PDF indicates your acceptance of HeinOnline's Terms and Conditions of the license agreement available at

<https://heinonline.org/HOL/License>

-- The search text of this PDF is generated from uncorrected OCR text.

-- To obtain permission to use this article beyond the scope of your license, please use:

[Copyright Information](#)

THERE IS NO ONE WHO CAN DO WHAT HE DID

CHARLES W. EHRHARDT*

To talk about Steve's life at the law school is to talk about one who was a role model for students and faculty alike.¹

Steve was hired in 1974, by Dean Josh Morse, to work in the Legal Services Clinic we had at that time. In 1977, he became a regular member of the faculty, writing and teaching primarily in the criminal law and poverty law areas.

For a number of years, he was in charge of our internships in Public Defenders offices around the state, while I supervised those with the State Attorneys. We both gave that up a number of years ago. His interest in clinical education continued and in the past few years, he was the driving force behind our clinical offerings including obtaining the funding and arguing forcefully for the Children's Advocacy Center.

Steve was a creative teacher. He initiated and was the sparkplug behind an intensive litigation skills course in which students devoted a semester to learning the skills necessary to be a trial lawyer. To teach this course, he persuaded the very best of the Florida bench and bar to volunteer a few days of their time to train students through lecture and example.

Not only was Steve a good teacher, but he was also a productive scholar, most recently publishing an article in October.² He was also the co-author of a major treatise on habeas corpus.³ However, unlike most of us in the academe, Steve's most effective scholarship was where it really counted—in the many briefs he filed in the state and federal courts on behalf of the poor and the condemned.

We talked about many of his causes; the results that were good and those which were not. One of the things that impressed me about Steve was his commitment to and belief in our legal system. He was

* Mason Ladd Professor of Evidence, Florida State University, College of Law; B.S. 1962, Iowa State University; J.D. 1964, University of Iowa.

1. This tribute to Dean Goldstein was originally shared by Professor Ehrhardt at the Goldstein memorial service.

2. David E. Hicks & Steven M. Goldstein, *Defending the Domestic Violence Client*, 68 FLA. B. J. 42 (1994).

3. JAMES S. LIEBMAN & STEVEN M. GOLDSTEIN, *FEDERAL HABEAS CORPUS PRACTICE & PROCEDURE* (Cumulative Supp. 1991). Steve Goldstein was planning to co-author the new bound version of the *FEDERAL HABEAS CORPUS PRACTICE & PROCEDURE*.

an advocate for his causes in the finest sense of the word, and even when he lost, he did not believe the system was broken. He generally thought lawyers and judges were good people. His commitment of time, energy, and emotion to these causes was recognized by the Supreme Court of Florida when it selected him for the Tobias Simon Award.

Serving as Associate Dean is probably the toughest job in the law school. That person has to listen to all complaints and problems of students and faculty. Three years ago Steve agreed to serve in the position for a second time even though it meant cutting back on the time he could spend on his other interests. Steve was genuinely concerned with people's problems. He was a patient listener and would share his advice in a manner that was effective. Students knew that they had a friend in Steve who would give them a fair hearing.

Steve was conscientious. He was willing to tackle tasks no one else wanted to do and would do them well. For example, when the law school had to complete a self-study last year, Steve accepted the job nobody wanted and was the principal author of our long report.

The respect and admiration that the law school had for Steve was shared by the university community.

In addition to being thorough, his work was well-reasoned. When Steve became Associate Dean, his memos were long and thoughtful—but there were a lot of them. It was his habit to write drafts of letters and class notes on yellow legal pads. His class notes were written in great detail and we would joke about whether he would begin his third class of the second week of the semester with the same words that he did two or three years before. He could laugh at himself.

Although he was a very progressive guy, he was not in one area—technology. A law school computer sat on his desk for a number of years before he learned to turn it on. However, within the past year Steve had developed and learned to use his computer. He also discovered e-mail. That was good because the number of memos decreased but the volume of e-mail soared.

Steve had the talent to organize people, programs, and events and was competent at whatever he did. For example, without his skills and involvement the law school's program in Barbados, our program in Martinique, the Children's Advocacy Center, and the festivities honoring Rosa Parks would not have been nearly as successful.

Of all the projects that Steve oversaw, one of the most effective in the law school was his administration of the Simon Chair Visitors. Under that program, nationally prominent faculty and lawyers were invited to the law school to teach two or three week course in public interest law during to Spring semester. Not only did he recruit faculty

from Harvard, Columbia, and other distinguished schools but he arranged for their housing and entertainment while in Tallahassee. His program was so successful, that this year we have had Harvard Law School faculty competing to come to Florida State.

In the past two weeks, I have had conversations with lawyers involved in various public interest groups in the state. Their reaction is the same as the law school's: "I don't know how we are going to get along without him. There's no one who can do what he did."

For eight-ten years I ate lunch with Steve three or four days a week. Nothing was ever formally said but Steve, Josh, and I had an understanding that if we did not have special plans we would go to lunch together. We usually joined a number of lawyers and judges who had gathered for good food and more importantly for an hour of friendly banter on the issues of the day: sometimes legal; sometimes political; sometimes football or basketball; and often the trivial. Frequently there was some good-natured kidding of Steve and the rest of us. Steve always joined in the conversation in good humor, always logically defending his position (and sometimes pitching in to defend mine). I have no doubt that the members of the Tallahassee bench and bar held him in high affection.

He was a great believer in having three or four bumper stickers on his car and we used to joke with him about them. He was selective; he would put one on his car and it would remain there for a long time until a better one came along. I knew his last weekend of canoeing was a great success when I came out of the law school on the Tuesday before Thanksgiving and walked to the parking lot where I saw on his car a shining, white canoeing bumper sticker. I smiled when I saw it.

Steve's earlier athletic interest remained. He ran regularly and played tennis frequently. He was not afraid to tackle new pursuits. Snow skiing last winter in Colorado and an overnight canoe trip his last weekend. He was a great Seminole basketball and football fan. He liked to go to the ACC Tournament and stay to the final game, even if we had been eliminated earlier.

Steve had a real sense of friendship. If you wanted to talk to him about something, whether you were student or faculty, he always made time and seemed genuinely concerned about whatever was bothering you. He was a warm, caring person who never spoke a harsh word about anyone.

I do not know whether I have adequately described the traits that Steve possessed; the traits that made him so valuable to the law school and the university and caused all who knew him to respect and like him. What I do know is that he is about the finest person that I have ever met and that I am proud he was my friend.

