5-13-2013

Coquillette Delivers Keynote on Legal Education to Conference of Bar Examiners

Boston College Law School

Follow this and additional works at: http://lawdigitalcommons.bc.edu/law_school_publications

Part of the Legal Education Commons

Digital Commons Citation
http://lawdigitalcommons.bc.edu/law_school_publications/726

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Law School Archive at Digital Commons @ Boston College Law School. It has been accepted for inclusion in Law School Publications by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ Boston College Law School. For more information, please contact nick.szydlowski@bc.edu.
Newton, MA--In the keynote address at the National Conference of Bar Examiners, which took place at the Marriott Copley Plaza in Boston in April, J. Donald Monan Professor of Law and former BC Law Dean Daniel R. Coquillette argued that the current crisis in legal education of declining employment and applications requires the profession to address the dilemmas present in the structure of the current system, not abandon them.

Coquillette’s speech, "American Legal Education: Where Did It Come From? Where Is It Going?" was given in front of 450 bar examiners, as well as 65 state Supreme Court justices. The speech examined the three great ideas that have made American legal education what it is today: that legal education should ideally be embedded in a true university; that law schools do not just exist to train practicing lawyers, but also exist to train the leaders of the Republic, including diplomats, politicians, statesmen, judges, industrialists and scholars; and that law is a science, capable of being taught to large classes using cases as the empirical data and through Socratic interrogation and competitive exams.

"To abandon [these great ideas] in a moment of panic about declining applications is absolute folly," Coquillette said. "We must address the dilemmas inherent in each of these ideas -- and, historically, the accelerating cost of legal education today is not an essential part of any of the three -- but these three great ideas are invaluable parts of the heritage of the rule of law in America."

Read full text of the speech (to be published in NCBE Magazine’s June edition)

The author of Lawyers and Fundamental Moral Responsibility, The Anglo-American Legal Heritage, Francis Bacon, and The Civilian Writers of Doctor’s Commons and editor of Law in Colonial Massachusetts and Moore’s Federal Practice, J. Donald Monan Professor of Law Daniel R. Coquillette teaches and writes in the areas of legal history and professional responsibility.

Professor Coquillette was a law clerk for justice Robert Braucher of the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts and Chief Justice Warren E. Burger of the Supreme Court of the United States. He taught legal ethics on the faculty of the Boston University Law School, taught as a Visiting Professor at Cornell Law School and Harvard Law School, and became a partner for six years at the Boston law firm of Palmer & Dodge, where he specialized in complex litigation. He served as Dean of Boston College Law School from 1985-1993, and was named J. Donald Monan, S.J. University Professor in 1996.

Among his many activities, Professor Coquillette is an Advisor to the American Law Institute’s Restatement on Law Governing the Legal Profession, a member of the Harvard University Overseers’ Committee to Visit Harvard Law School, and Reporter to the Committee on Rules of Practice and Procedure, Judicial Conference of the United States. For five years, he was Chairman of the Massachusetts Bar Association Committee on Professional Ethics and Chairman of the Task Force on Unauthorized Practice of Law. He also served on the American Bar Association Committee on Ethics and Professional Responsibility, the Board of the American Society of Legal History, the Massachusetts Task Force on Model Rules of Professional Conduct and the Massachusetts Task Force on Professionalism. He was also a member of the Special...
The National Conference of Bar Examiners (NCBE) is a not-for-profit organization that works with other institutions to develop, maintain, and apply reasonable and uniform standards of education and character for eligibility for admission to the practice of law. It assists bar admission authorities by providing high quality standardized examinations to nearly every jurisdiction in the United States.

Please note: This page links to Microsoft Word formatted files. To view them, you will need to download the free Word Doc Viewer.