

MARTY ARONSTEIN: TEACHER AND MENTOR

MICHAEL L. TEMIN†

Marty Aronstein is a teacher. Because of him, I am also teacher. Marty describes himself as a wholesaler of knowledge. Because of that I am a retailer.

In 1980 Marty and I participated in a seminar. Working with Marty was an educational experience for me as well as for the students. As a result of discussions that we had while preparing, Marty asked me to lecture at a bankruptcy seminar which he was teaching at the law school. Subsequently, he told me that he preferred the larger arena of the lecture course and volunteered to be my advocate to succeed him in the smaller arena. The law school accepted his suggestion and I have taught ever since as his "successor."

According to my dictionary, to teach is "to impart knowledge or skill to; give instruction to; to give instruction, especially as an occupation." Synonyms for "teach" include instruct and educate. "Instructing" usually suggests methodical direction in a specific subject or area. "Educating" is comprehensive and implies a wide area of learning, achieved either by experience or, more often, by formal instruction in many subjects. Marty did both.

Legal education depends upon the ability and desire of law professors to impart knowledge of specific subjects. Law professors must also teach the more generic skill of acting like a lawyer, or, in other words, of bringing a lawyer's skills to identifying problems and to solving those problems. To this task, Marty brought unusual ability.

Some of us know whereof we speak. Fewer of us have the facility to communicate that knowledge to others. Marty has both. This combination of talents has made him an exceptional teacher.

The best testimony to his abilities were the number of students who flocked to his classes. They bore witness to his superior communication skills. The law school will be poorer for his decision to take early retirement and resume the practice of law.

† Lecturer, University of Pennsylvania Law School.