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In Memoriam, Phillip Blumberg (1919–2021)

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In Memoriam

Phillip Blumberg (1919–2021)

CAROL WEISBROD

Phillip I. Blumberg served as Dean of the University of Connecticut School of Law from 1974 to 1984. These remarks were first shared, via email, with the University of Connecticut School of Law's faculty after Dean Blumberg's death. They have been lightly edited for publication.



Phillip Blumberg (1919–2021)

CAROL WEISBROD *

When Phillip Blumberg died, I sent this statement to the University of Connecticut School of Law faculty:

Phillip Blumberg was a man with an almost military sense of order, correctness, and purpose, whose pursuit of excellence took many forms. He left an intellectual legacy as a Dean, as a corporate law specialist, and as the author of a book on legal history. Phillip was capable of great generosity and loyalty. He appreciated the strengths of others and could be paternal in his concern for young academics. He was a friend who asked about the activities and progress of children.

I knew him first as a beneficiary of his determination, early in his Deanship, to diversify the faculty. Later, we all were the beneficiaries of his work to get the school a physical setting, which he believed appropriate to the school he wanted to shape. Still later, he was a model of the academic whose scholarly commitments continued late in life. We all learned from him.

I referred, in this statement, to a number of Phillip's sides. One could add country gentleman, benefactor of the law school, corporate lawyer, and son of an immigrant union leader. Phillip came to faculty workshops long after his retirement, sitting at the front table so that he could hear better, sometimes ready with the first question. He took seriously the role of Senior/Scholar.

If Phillip was in various ways a father of the modern UConn Law School, he was also one of the sons of Harvard. Despite his intense criticism of some of the developments at the schools, Harvard—College and Law School—seemed to give him a sense of best practices and appropriate behavior which he retained long after graduation.

Phillip, as Dean, was the captain of the ship. He was also a model and mentor. The Dean he most obviously influenced was Hugh Macgill. In many ways, they were very different. But one similarity is worth noting: both of them lived in large intellectual worlds and believed that the law school should reflect those worlds.

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