

CITY BAR STORIES



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Former Treasurer and Executive Committee Member
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From my current residence in the hills overlooking Managua, Nicaragua, I attended the virtual annual meeting on May 19, 2020, and was delighted to be introduced to the new President, Sheila Boston. So much has changed since I joined the Association in 1960, I decided to accept the offer to jot down a few of my experiences to explain my retrospective view of these changes.

In 1960, the Association's principal support came from the City's elite law firms, most of them then located around Wall Street. At the urging of one of my firm's senior partners, I joined the Association in that year, first serving on the Law Reform Committee and then as secretary of the Committee on Professional Responsibility, of which this partner was Chairman. My first effort was a Herculean, or more accurately Sisyphean, effort to reform the drug laws, including a proposal to make heroin administration freely available at City clinics to registered addicts. Needless to say, the proposal did not prosper, but my next one did. This was an effort to evade Governor Rockefeller's proposed tax on lawyers by creating a Lawyers' Registration Fund, with funds allocated to reimburse clients who lost funds deposited in attorneys' security accounts and also to support a program to oversee discipline of erring professionals.

Thereafter I served as Chairman of a number of committees, including the Committee on Professional Responsibility (1971-74), Committee on Audit (1978-80), Finance Committee (1982-84) and Lawyers' Role in the Search for Peace (1969-71). I was elected Treasurer (1982-84) and served on the Executive Committee.

During this period, we conducted conferences and published books on topics ranging from "The Role of Lawyers in Population Planning" and "Professional Responsibility of the Lawyer: the Murky Divide Between Right and Wrong" (1976), to "The Cambodian Incursion – Legal Issues" (1971).

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With two Harvard College classmates, now deceased, I founded in 1968 a "boutique" law firm specializing in transnational matters, now Fox Horan & Camerini, LLP. After returning from a Fulbright scholarship at the University of Paris, I had been an Instructor in NYU's Foreign Law Institute and developed an interest in providing apprenticeships in our law firm to young foreign lawyers. When the firm celebrated its 50th Anniversary, many of these former interns, nationals of countries ranging from Ukraine to Argentina and Korea, returned to celebrate the firm's new offices at 885 Third Avenue and to attend a dinner dance at the Colony Club.

Since I retired from the practice of law, I have been active at the Center for Entrepreneurship that I organized at INCAE, the Central American Business School established during the Alliance for Progress by enlightened members of the Central American private sector and the Harvard Business School. INCAE had earned an enviable record providing skilled graduates whom transnational companies were pleased to hire. I convinced the directors that it was time to promote entrepreneurship, increasing employment and economic dynamism. My long experience in fundraising for NYU has enabled me to collect the funds necessary to create the Center and expand its influence.

From this vantage point, I am delighted to see how the Association of the Bar has increased its Membership, its activities and its diversity. I welcome President Boston's activist agenda, particularly her determination to increase the opportunities for underrepresented minorities, to advance the rule of law and to improve the administration of justice. May the reputation of the Association and its effectiveness as an organization devoted to the highest ideals of the legal profession long continue!