



1-1-1993

Bill Landers: A Treasure of Contrasts

Barbara Kheel Freeman

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.lmu.edu/llr>



Part of the [Law Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Barbara K. Freeman, *Bill Landers: A Treasure of Contrasts*, 26 Loy. L.A. L. Rev. 272 (1993).
Available at: <https://digitalcommons.lmu.edu/llr/vol26/iss2/4>

This Introduction is brought to you for free and open access by the Law Reviews at Digital Commons @ Loyola Marymount University and Loyola Law School. It has been accepted for inclusion in Loyola of Los Angeles Law Review by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons@Loyola Marymount University and Loyola Law School. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@lmu.edu.

BILL LANDERS: A TREASURE OF CONTRASTS

*Barbara Kheel Freeman**

I knew Bill Landers as a man of contrasts, a man who defied any single definition.

He was equally at home in Washington, D.C., or in Orange County, California, where his family lives. He was as passionate about trekking in Nepal as he was about a formal dinner party for twelve. He could debate the virtues of fine wines and could advocate the constitutionality of the latest search and seizure ruling. He could play with Legos on the floor with my three-year-old daughter and an hour later relish the beauty of Wagner. He had great energy but was a calm and caring listener. He had a sharp, analytic mind and was deeply committed to his own religious community. He was a handsome, six-footer who danced with the grace of a delicate gazelle.

Bill was a model of urbane sophistication; yet he never lost the boyish charm and genuine sincerity that no doubt were products of his small-town, midwestern beginnings. He learned from many in his lifetime, but surely it was his mother, a strong and courageous woman, who instilled in him his just, moral and compassionate values.

At first, Bill was a true "liberal"; but, in his Washington years, he became an unusual blend of liberal and conservative, such that neither label would really apply to him. Though he began his career as a young litigator in a high-powered Los Angeles law firm, he ultimately became that rare combination of contrasts—a tireless, relentless prosecutor with an exemplary moral conscience.

In his relationships with people, Bill blurred all lines of distinction—colleagues became friends, subordinates became colleagues. It was impossible not to. He and I began as co-students—he was the Editor-in-Chief of this Law Review, and I was on his staff. We quickly became close, supportive friends; he was my best friend for many years. Bill's ability to reach out and open his soul to others continued throughout his life. Many of his closest friends were those who initially worked with or for him. Yet even as personal friends, we admired and perhaps were awed by his exceptional professional skills.

* Former Vice President of Administration and General Counsel for Telecredit, Inc.; J.D., cum laude, 1977, Loyola Law School, Los Angeles; Articles Editor, 1977, *Loyola of Los Angeles Law Review*.

Bill had only the highest standards for himself. He was impeccable in dress, at work and at home. He pushed himself hard in the last months of his life to get well, as he had pushed himself throughout his life. He also expected much from those around him. Yet he was never upset if someone he cared about fell short. He was the most tolerant person I have ever known.

Bill's intensity in his work and even at play was always swaddled in a blanket of warm humor. We called him "wild and crazy" because he was, and because he liked that description. He was always "up" and ready to laugh. He took his work seriously, but not himself. He took his world seriously, but not too much. In the end, he took his illness seriously but, I think, not his death. It was, for him, part of life.

If there is one category that might fit Bill Landers, it is one for those who are treasured by others. I treasured Bill as much as one human being can treasure another. He and I shared our lives and our souls. After seventeen years, I knew I would feel a void when Bill was gone. But my sorrow has been greater than I expected. I miss him so very much.