

**Transcript of the Oral History Interview with  
Claudia Angelos  
January 5, 2006**

Ogilvy: Claudia, what was your first exposure to clinical legal education?

Angelos: I was a second-year student in law school, and I took Gary Bellow's course, the Lawyering Process. So I entered into one of the first clinics I guess at Harvard.

Ogilvy: Tell me a little bit about the course.

Angelos: The course was – Gary had a course of about 50 students maybe, somewhere between 40 or 50 students, that he taught in a stand-up way. He used a set of Xeroxed materials really quite sort of obscure, difficult Xerox materials which became the published book *The Lawyering Process*. But we were sort of the experimentees with that. I found them, by the way – really I think I had the typical experience – found them quite difficult as a student, and they continued to reveal themselves to me as I go back to them in wonderful ways.

So, anyway, Gary taught that course to 50 of us in a regular law school classroom,

and then in small groups of maybe four or five we were assigned to one place or another for fieldwork. And I was assigned to Cambridge and Somerville Legal Services, where I worked under a Cover fellow on some cases.

Ogilvy: What year was this?

Angelos: That would have been – I graduated in '74, so that would have been '72-73, that academic year.

Ogilvy: So that would have been the first couple of years of the –

Angelos: Yeah, maybe the second or the third year.

Ogilvy: And what kind of work did you do at Somerville?

Angelos: At Cambridge and Somerville Legal Services I'm sure I did several things, but the

thing I remember was representing a 17-year-old Irish girl from Somerville in a child abuse case. She had given birth to a mixed-race child, who had been – her baby was black. She had been kicked out by her Somerville Irish family, and she was having some troubles with the child, and she had been accused of physical abuse of this baby. And my job was to represent her. It's an experience I'll never forget. I was entirely unprepared, completely ill-supervised, totally in over my head. It was a real baptism by fire.

Ogilvy: Do you think that influenced what you've done?

Angelos: Yes. It certainly influenced me never to do that again. I wouldn't go near family law work. That was so troublesome and I was left so without help in figuring out what was the right thing to do and how was the right thing to do it, and what this person needed and what my role was. So it burned me for that kind of work for the rest of my life. It did have an influence.

Ogilvy: And your supervisor was one of Gary's fellows, or –

Angelos: It was one of Gary's fellows – is actually still a clinical teacher – and was in over her head too. She was just a kid. You know, looking back on it, to me she was a grown-up, and I needed more help from her than she was able to give. Looking back on it, she was just terrified and as ill-prepared for this as I was.

Ogilvy: That was a semester-long course?

Angelos: That was a semester-long course. And the following year I did an advanced clinic, and that was much more – that was a much better experience on the whole, in which for the entire year I represented kids in delinquency proceedings in an outlying area of Boston, up in Lowell, Massachusetts, a sort of dying mill town, with a bunch of other really capable fellow students, and very capable supervisor, where we were a substantial presence in Lowell's juvenile court, and that was a terrific experience, and led me to go on and do juvenile defense when I graduated from law school.

Ogilvy: Was that through Gary's program?

Angelos: That was through Gary's program, yes. It was advanced – Gary had a Level II in the Lawyering Process, and that's what I did.

Ogilvy: Was there a classroom component to that as well?

Angelos: There was a seminar run by the fieldwork supervisor. I also did a sort of clinic, a sort of experimental program that Gary did when I was a third-year student. I was quite a devotee of Gary's, as so many of us were, and I took a course that he taught with who was then Jean Kettleson, who later became his wife, in public housing in which students were placed either with the public housing authority, with a tenant group, or I can't remember – there was a third placement – and we went out to our placements and observed what went on and came back and talked in a seminar about the various sort of institutional interests in and the institutional relationships among the players in the public housing situation in Boston. That was really quite interesting too. It was sort of a participant-observer kind of seminar more than a clinic actually.

Ogilvy: And you graduated in '74?

Angelos: Seventy-four, yeah.

Ogilvy: What did you do after you graduated?

Angelos: I went to Greater Boston Legal Services, where I was in a terrific LEAA-funded program. Many people will not remember the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration in the days – maybe you'll remember this, Sandy, in the days of Great Society there actually – the federal government actually funded all kinds of progressive criminal justice ventures. And I worked in a terrific program funded by the LEAA, in a local office, in a neighborhood office at Greater Boston Legal Services, where juveniles were represented both by lawyers, and for every case and every kid there was not only a lawyer but there was also a social worker, what we then called a street worker. And we represented neighborhood kids, and we took them – we followed the neighborhood kids wherever they got caught having stolen the car, wherever they stole it from – we'd get called all over Massachusetts, and we would go there. And that was a great program and a great experience.

Ogilvy: How long did you stay?

Angelos: I stayed there for two years. And then, because I wanted to come back to New York, I left Boston and went and did other things. I did a couple of years doing prison work, and then went into teaching.

Ogilvy: Prison work where?

Angelos: In New York at an agency called Prisoners Legal Services of New York doing – did you know them? You're nodding as if you know them – founded by a guy named Pierce Geraghty.

Ogilvy: I don't know the details.

Angelos: Anyway, so I did federal prisoners' rights cases.

Ogilvy: And what kind of cases?

Angelos: We did – actually I was an expert in religious rights. I did a huge number of Muslim cases, a lot of those early religious rights cases about diet and haircut and praying and so on. So I think that was my expertise. But also persistent patterns of brutality cases, and all kinds of major class action cases at a time when the courts were receptive to those kinds.

Ogilvy: And then what?

Angelos: And then I went to NYU, to the clinic –

Ogilvy: Why the jump?

Angelos: Well, that's a good question, because my own – although I loved my clinic and loved Gary, my own experience in law school was on the whole dreadful. I did not feel welcomed in and a part of the fabric of or the culture of Harvard Law

School. It was a shocking place to me. I was surrounded by – the class had very few women certainly, virtually no people of color. I was a revolutionary. And there were all these guys with ties with Phi Beta Kappa keys. My class was referred to as "fellahs" and "gentlemen." So it was quite – I don't think it's putting it too strongly to say I was hostile to law school, so that I would go back to a law school – it was actually kind of odd. But it was a wonderful opportunity to – I mean, it was, like it was for so many of us – wonderful chance to do the work you wanted to do, and at the same time sort of collect young people and indoctrinate them and make them fellow travelers. So it looked like a great job.

Ogilvy: Did you know people there before you came on?

Angelos: Not really. No. I'm trying to think if I knew anyone at NYU. I didn't.

Ogilvy: And what kind of clinic did you come into?

Angelos: A prison clinic.

Ogilvy: Was it ongoing?

Angelos: Yes, it was ongoing. It had been run by Barbara Schwartz who had left – sort of just had left, and I got hired to do it. I got hired in a very informal way.

Ogilvy: How so?

Angelos: Ultimately I think I got hired as a substitute, and I just – I interviewed with Sylvia Law and a couple of other people, and I just got hired. Now, within a year or two I got hired in a more formal way, or at least I got some kind of more permanent position for which I had to give a faculty presentation and be interviewed in the sort of ordinary way. But my initial appointment was quite informal.

Ogilvy: Was this a one-person clinic, or were there other people involved?

Angelos: It was a one-person clinic. It was not the only clinic at NYU. There was a

Criminal Clinic, a Legal Services Clinic and Juvenile Clinic.

Ogilvy: And essentially the same sorts of cases, or other sorts of things that you had?

Angelos: The cases that I had? I had the same sorts of cases as I had been doing. Eventually they became the same kinds of cases that I had been doing. The cases I inherited were kind of family cases – a lot of divorce, a lot of uncontested divorce. It was sort of – I mean, the clinic was providing a wonderful service for women at the women's facility near New York, but it was very routine. The people were following kind of clinic – lots and lots and lots of foster care review cases and uncontested divorces. So I finished up that caseload and moved into the kind of work that I had been doing.

Ogilvy: How many students were in it?

Angelos: Eight. It was always eight to one at NYU, and it remains so today – eight students.

Ogilvy: Had you supervised students before in other contexts?

Angelos: Not really. I mean, there had been summer interns that I had interacted with, but, no, I had not supervised students before. I sort of was like – I wasn't so much different from them. I was pretty close to them in age. When I think back on it, I don't know what I thought I was bringing to this.

Ogilvy: And how did you teach yourself these techniques?

Angelos: That was a long, slow process. There was certainly no theory of how to do this then. There were other people at NYU who seemed to know more than I did about what they were doing, and they were very helpful. So I had some models in the office and help in the office. I read what there was: Meltzner and Schrag had written a book on simulation in legal education, which I used. And I certainly used *The Learning Process*, though unsuccessfully with students. I used it for myself, and I assigned pieces of it to students to read.

In terms of how to supervise the cases, I think I supervised the cases as a young

legal aid supervisor might have supervised junior people. You know, you should do this, you should do that, and you should do the other thing. I have to say I still hear from students in those days, no small number of whom are now clinical teachers, that it was a wonderful experience and they learned so much, although looking back on it I think they learned by accident, not by any design of mine. But I became involved in the clinical community, and I went to some of those early conferences. And I think I was there as some theory began to be developed, so fell behind that development.

Ogilvy: Do you remember any of the first conferences?

Angelos: I absolutely remember the first conference I went to, which was one of the greatest times of my life to this day. It was the one in Big Sky, Montana. You've heard about this one, which was the year after the Snowmass conference. And I don't know why we don't do this again, why we can't go back to Snowmass or Big Sky. It was like an Outward Bound adventure for our young clinicians, where we had lots of time off to go whitewater rafting together. But we also spent lots of time under the trees and in the meadows at Big Sky sort of puzzling out what we were doing and trying to advance our thinking about that. And I learned a lot at that conference. It was really eye-opening to me. And it was largely about

supervision and critique.

Ogilvy: What was the community of clinicians like at NYU when you started?

Angelos: We were a very close family of people who felt very strongly a sense of common purpose and a sense of beleaguerment, which I think was a not bad thing. It was a good thing. It made us – it brought us together. It made us focus on what it is that we wanted. It made us focus on a strategy for getting what we wanted. It was I think a very close and cohesive community of people with a very strong sense of solidarity in a very strong sense of beleaguerment, as I say.

Ogilvy: About how many people?

Angelos: There were always I think more of us there than in most other law schools. There were at least 10 – I think 10 of us when I started there.

Ogilvy: All in a single –

Angelos: No, no, not at all in single clinics – mostly not in single clinics. And I only taught in a single clinic for two years. And I then joined forces with the person who was doing discrimination work to create a civil rights clinic which more generally we're doing all different kinds of federal civil rights work, including some prison work and including some discrimination, but including also new and other things. And I taught with her from then on.

Ogilvy: What year was that?

Angelos: I think that would have been the year '82-83 school year maybe, maybe '81-82.

Ogilvy: And who was the other person?

Angelos: Laura Sager.

Ogilvy: And did you continue to do prisoner cases as a part of that? Or did you –

Angelos: I continued always to do the prisoner cases, although from time – you know, there were periods when the ratio shifted to other more general civil rights cases. But the prisoner cases have been sort of the staple of my work since then, and now are the exclusive work I do. It's now all I do – has been for some, five, six years.

Ogilvy: And you work with other colleagues in that clinic as well? By yourself again?

Angelos: I'm by myself again, yeah, I've come right back where I started.

Ogilvy: How do you manage that?

Angelos: Being by myself? Actually, I'm not really all by myself. Again, there is – in addition to being on the NYU faculty, I'm the president of the New York affiliate of the ACLU, so I have very strong ties there, and we have hired an adjunct who's the deputy legal director of the Civil Liberties Union, who also supervises some

students from my clinic doing very traditional civil liberties cases. So half of the clinic works on the prison cases with me, and half of the clinic works on really demonstration cases and First Amendment cases with the Civil Liberties Union. So I'm not alone. But I don't have a full-time co-teacher.

How do I manage it? You know, collaboration is wonderful, and then having complete ownership of something is also wonderful. So I think – and having been around so long I certainly know that every now and then you have to completely remake what you do. You have to throw out all the notes – you have to burn them – throw out the concepts and the files and start all over. Without rigorously rethinking what your goals are and what will work and collaborating with your students on what it is they need and what it is they most profit from, you really do get stale. So some of those structural changes have really been important to me, just to wake me up, to slap me in the face and make me rethink things. And whenever I do that I do better.

The one thing I have not ever wanted to change is the casework, because I think the casework is so rich. We are lucky enough to have full-year programs with lots of credit. So students can handle really a quite complex case and can push it from the point at which we take it, which is usually a point just where the case is already in discovery to trial within a year. So we do a lot of really very substantial work. But the fact that I handled mostly brutality cases, so the fact

that it's a purely factual dispute, reasonably limited in terms of the landscape of discovery, and success very much depends on the quality of the theory, the quality of the presentation of the theory. It really challenges the students to do things that they don't do otherwise in law school. So from a kind of learning point of view with respect to litigation, it's a great format. But then in terms of what they learn about our society, about justice and about institutions, there's nothing like prison to open up one's eyes. Because I so much like the casework and the context, what I have to fool around with is other aspects: what I have to change and stimulate my self-bias with other aspects in the clinical teaching.

Ogilvy: Can you give some examples?

Angelos: Well, for example, when I co-taught with Laura Sager. I think I was going to tell you when the time came for – and it happened because of sort of technical reasons, but the time came for me to stop teaching with Laura. I used the – when Laura and I taught together, our joint curriculum was a compromise. I mean, I was doing prison cases, she was doing discrimination cases. So our teaching together was, although it was a good compromise and the subject of I think a productive collaboration, it was a compromise. It didn't really work for me, and it didn't really work for her, but it worked okay for both of us.

When I was on my own I was able to make prison the subject of much more of the students time, the context of prisons. So we were able to spend a lot of time thinking about the perspective of prison administrators, of wardens, of commissioners, talking to those people, talking to the people who represent prisons as institutions, and puzzling out what their role was, studying the role of the union in corrections, visiting prisons, talking to former prisoners. We were able to devote lots of hours of our time to things that were really interesting to us in a way that wouldn't so much interest anybody who wasn't doing the kind of work we do. That was really very exciting for me, and it was really very exciting for them. So I'm sure other people who run prison programs would find it flabbergasting that I hadn't been doing that all along, but for me it was a return to what I had done in the beginning, and it was very energizing and exciting – I think energizing for the students as well.

Ogilvy: I want to come back to an earlier time when you just joined the faculty, and you said that the group of you felt beleaguered. What was the basis for that? Was the status issue a part of it?

Angelos: Well, certainly our own personal status issues, but really more the legitimacy of

the work we were doing. I mean, our work was considered entirely illegitimate by very important and outspoken members of the faculty. We had a dean who supported it, but the dean came under a lot of criticism for supporting it to the extent that he did. To the extent that we were I think supported by a majority of the faculty, we were supported by a majority of the faculty as sort of cute, as a sort of nice thing for our students to be able to do. It was like viewed kind of as volunteer work, but not taken seriously. So our sense of outrage was not so much about our own status I think as it was about the stature of the work we did – although there were certainly issues with respect to our own status as well, but that really came later as the work became more and more legitimized, and the question of the status I think moved more to the forefront.

Ogilvy: And what was the change that made the work more accepted?

Angelos: I think the change at NYU was the serendipitous arrival of Anthony Amsterdam as the director of the clinical program. Tony just brought legitimacy to anything that he did, and I think the academic faculty felt like, Well, if he was in charge, two things were going to be true: One, it was going to get better and it was going to have more intellectual content; two, they didn't have to worry about it and sort of pick at it, because he could take care of all of those things. And let me say

another thing which was that he actually did bring more intellectual content to what we were doing. He in fact made us think harder, made us talk to ourselves in more challenging ways and made us think a lot harder conceptually about what we were doing and what directions we want to move in. So for us I think we were lucky enough at NYU to have Tony come, and that made a big difference in terms of the status of our work, and I think also the quality of our work.

Ogilvy: And you said that the status issues came later.

Angelos: Status issues came later.

Ogilvy: That surfaced in –

Angelos: In the mid-'80s and towards the end of the '80s a clinical tenure track was established, so we ultimately had a clinical tenure track. We had grandfathered sort of long-term clinicians who had the option of going on the clinical track – I mean, literally – it wasn't literally the option, but there was no question that any of us who wanted to do it could do it. And most of us did not exercise – some of us,

but not all of us, didn't exercise that option, including me, who had no interest in scholarship. I'm not going to say I don't regret my decision, but at the time there were several of us who thought, "I'm never going to be a scholar. That's not what I'm good at. That's not what I'm interested in. That's not what I'm here for." So we ended up with a regular tenure track, a clinical tenure track and a long-term contract track. And that's how we resolved it, you know, for better or for worse – I think not entirely for the better. We have a very divided faculty today.

Ogilvy: And it's still –

Angelos: And it's still that way.

Ogilvy: And what's the difference between regular tenure track and clinical tenure track?

Angelos: The difference is in a – actually it was a device of Anthony Amsterdam, so you can imagine it's more complicated than clever – but it's a weighted voting system with respect to appointments and tenure, where clinicians – the accumulated clinician vote with respect to clinicians counts more and the accumulated academic faculty's vote counts more. But everybody votes. So it is possible,

theoretically possible at least, for one faculty to influence the outcome of the other faculty, but only if there's unanimity of feeling essentially on the one faculty.

Ogilvy: In terms of scholarship is there a difference in tenure track?

Angelos: That's a very interesting question. I'm not sure it's been tested in a way that's really significant, because the clinicians who have tenure have done traditional work. I think it's probably fair to say that the traditional work they did would not have earned them academic tenure – it would be unlikely to have earned them academic tenure, but it looked and smelled a lot like academic stuff, and it was damn good – maybe not good enough to get you tenure these days at NYU Law School, but – so I wonder what would happen. I don't know what would happen if the materials submitted for tenure was substantially different from others.

Ogilvy: Are there specific criteria for scholarship that somehow expanded what would be appropriate for clinical tenure?

Angelos: You know, it was so long ago that that document was drafted, and it does suggest – but I can't remember in exactly what words – it does suggest that it might be

different.

Ogilvy: And you opted not to do that?

Angelos: And I opted not to do that, yeah.

Ogilvy: So what kind of contracts are you on now?

Angelos: Seven-year contracts.

Ogilvy: That's good.

Angelos: Yeah. But it's a different status. It certainly is a different status. I mean, one doesn't feel as free to make one's own decisions about what you're going to do – not that I would do anything differently anyway. But I think it certainly is true that the sense of common purpose is not the same as it was. And the sense of

beleaguerment is certainly not the same as it was. I think there's a relationship between the two. NYU is a very, as you know, a very wealthy institution, and our program is very rich. And that's both a good thing and a bad thing.

I think that loss of a sense of struggle makes us less sharp; makes us think less about what we're doing and what we need to do, and has made us look much more like the rest of the academy. Now, there will be others that would disagree that that was a bad thing, but I think to me I regret the loss of the sense of – I think the sense of being an outsider as an energizing thing that made us more progressive. And to the extent that we no longer feel like outsiders, I think we're no longer as challenging or as creative as we once were.

Ogilvy: Is there a –

Angelos: But that may be just a personal idiosyncrasy of my own, because I've always felt like an outsider. I'm much more comfortable on the outside than not, which is I think probably true of lots of people of my generation.

Ogilvy: How did your work with the Civil Liberties Union mesh with your clinical –

Angelos: Poorly. I just have two full-time jobs, two completely inconsistent sets of demands. There's really very little relationship actually.

Ogilvy: What do you do for them?

Angelos: For the Civil Liberties Union? Well, I don't know – I mean, anybody who has ever been I think a board chair of a non-profit knows that what the board chair does is try and sort of avert disaster. So it's a matter of problem-solving, of keeping the board focused on what its job is, keeping the staff focused on what its job is, but really protecting the staff from incursions by the board, and at the same time making sure that the board gets to exercise its own prerogatives. But you can only imagine that on the board of the New York Civil Liberties Union, what that group looks like. It's a contentious, difficult – wonderful, but contentious and difficult group of people who require a tremendous amount of attention and energy.

Ogilvy: How long have you been doing this?

Angelos: I've been on the board for a long time. I've been the chair for four years.

Ogilvy: Is it a termed –

Angelos: It's a year – it's an annual election.

Ogilvy: You keep coming back.

Angelos: I hope to retire one of these days.

Ogilvy: What's your sense of the future of clinical legal education, at NYU specifically and then more broadly, in general?

Angelos: That's a very good question, and I think a really hard question to answer. I think I

feel fairly certain that core clinical work is going to be the kind of work that I've been doing all these years, that the core of clinical work is law students learning to represent clients by being in role, representing real human beings, and attempting to solve their real problems under faculty supervision; that that will continue to be the core. I know at NYU we have lots of offerings which are not like that, which students take with interest and pleasure and profit, but that what they really want to do ultimately, most of them, is represent clients under the supervision of faculty. So I think that will continue to be the core.

Where else we go is interesting, and where else we have been going – certainly at NYU there has been a lot of I think something which is relatively rare elsewhere, which is a lot of much more academic approaches, or much more academic uses of the "clinical program." So we have a number of programs in which students really are kind of like I was in that public housing course I took with Gary Bellow in the early '70s, where students really are participant-observers, where their clinical work is not in role clinical work but is a matter of observations of institutions and how they functioned, and then return to the classroom to process that information and propose strategies for effecting good changes in those institutions. And that's really quite different, but I think it's legitimate whether one person or another would define that as a clinic is just a matter of nomenclature. It's certainly different.

Then the non-litigation clinics, representing community organizations, representing issues advocating for particular issues, international human rights work which involves doing work for NGOs – all of those are directions I think that we've moved in and that we are going to stay in. And where that will lead us is very hard for me to know, since I sit back in the core – happily sit back in the core. Know that there's very often people who worry that clinicians, once they get status and once they get settled, have children and grow up, will no longer want to go to depositions with students, will no longer want to critique a client interview – will have burned out on all of that stuff. Maybe that's true of some people. I can't think of anything I'd rather do. And I think there are lots of us who can't think of anything they'd rather do. Well, you need a break, you need to make some changes. But I am confident that there will be enough of us who will want to do that all our lives that that core will stay there, and that there are people who want to come and do that. There are lots of young people who want to come and do that. And certainly that's been our experience at NYU, that we've had both junior faculty and fellows who have come and taken on that work with enormous enthusiasm and with great skills. So I think the future is the past in some ways, and then the future will be also unpredictable things.

Ogilvy: For the courses that you mentioned that are the participant/observer type of thing, are those taught by people that we would call traditional teachers?

Angelos: No, those are taught by people on the clinical faculty, by people who don't come from – don't have the roots in clinical teaching that I have, who come to clinical teaching much later, and conceive of it somewhat differently.

Ogilvy: One of the things that NYU bills itself as is the "global law school." Has that had any impact on –

Angelos: No, only in the sense that when we did our last hire, we were only going to hire one person and it was not at all clear what that person was going to be asked to do, but in the end we hired two people, both of whom are doing an international human rights clinic, both of whom are terrific, and we are very blessed to have them, and both of whom are really clinicians in their souls and in their approaches to their work. So that's the only – I think that's the only way in which the global aspect of the other part of our law school has affected the program. But we're very happy to have those two, and we're very happy to have their clinic.

Ogilvy: I assume you would list Gary Bellow as one of your influences?

Angelos: Oh, absolutely.

Ogilvy: Other people?

Angelos: Tony Amsterdam. I was really lucky to have been a student of Gary's, and to have been a colleague of Tony's. I can't think of anything that would be a greater privilege for a clinician – not only because they're both giants, but because they're both such different giants and they are sort of thinking about what the work is so different, so to have been influenced by both of them was I think a really great gift.

Ogilvy: Can you kind of briefly contrast?

Angelos: Yes. I think they sort of stake out the two positions in clinical legal education that we still celebrate and debate, which is the extent to which we are there to educate law students and the extent to which we're there to do justice and bring justice to

communities of poor people. Neither of them disrespects the other's priorities, but they set out the priorities differently. So from Gary one learns the passion for bringing justice, and from Tony one learns the need to be rigorous and punctilious with respect to the education of law students – all of which is in service ultimately of justice. Certainly nobody has worked harder than Tony to bring justice to the most disenfranchised. But their approaches to clinical legal education work really quite differently. And I – as far as I can tell, Gary's – you know, tell me if you've heard differently – but as far as I can tell, Gary remained in his educational philosophy to the very end, and Hale and Door Legal Services is very much the sort of sink-or-swim kind of place that I found Cambridge and Somerville Legal Services to be when I was a student back in the early '70s. And NYU has sort of a very expensive program in which – you know, my students represent one client at a time – usually no more than one in a year – although we believe we have an impact on the prison system, because we are the only ones who handle prison guard brutality cases – and, if not us, no one. We don't do – whether we have a tiny interrorem effect or not I guess is open to debate, but that's the only real impact we have – is possibly that one. So, anyway, I think that's the contrast, and I think I learned a great deal from both of them.

Ogilvy: Is there a case or two throughout your career in legal education that stand out in your mind?

Angelos: There are different kinds of cases that stand out. Every now and then I can't resist – you know, every once or twice a decade – I can't resist doing a big case, an important case, a case which is fun for me, a case that sort of tests my own skills. And so those cases, of course, big class actions – the most recent one I did was a challenge to the practice in New York – very rare, but very terrible practice in New York of having male correction officers pat-frisk female inmates. And the pat-frisk is not a little pat down, but just a very extensive two-minute-long grope of every part of her body from behind. So those kinds of cases which have an impact, which have a lot of sort of public profile, are fun for me, and they're fun for the students – particularly good for the students in the first year or two. The students get to draft a complaint, interview clients, and make some of the court appearances – not all – take some of the depositions, not all. But largely they're an indulgence for me, because they're just a little bit more interesting for me. So those cases stand out to me.

But the cases that I think would stand out to the students are those cases – and there are many of them – where the student was the first person to meet the client, and took the depositions and tried the case and got the jury verdict. And there are numbers of those. And those are really the ones that, you know, at the end of the day someone else could have done the class actions, but nobody else was going to

do these prisoner cases. And I think the students learned so much in so many ways from those things that those would be the ones that I would talk about. I could give you some examples, but they're all kind of the same.

Ogilvy: How about one story?

Angelos: Well, one – this is actually kind of an interesting one. Vincent Van Ness was beat up by a very notorious guard at Sing Sing Correctional Facility. Students took his case, worked day and night, took 12 depositions. Vincent Van Ness was an unappealing – I don't know if I should say this for the record – was a personally unappealing person – took his case to a jury trial and won it about five years ago. In the course of that case, it became clear to us that the officer who had done this was a very scary sadist, and we made other efforts to get the prison administration to sit on this guy and watch him – efforts which I think had some impact, and they did sit on him, and they did watch him, and they did start disciplining him, and they did start transferring him.

Last fall students went – we get our cases often from the pro se office. I like to get cases that are filed, because they move a lot faster. Students can reasonably hope within the course of a year to dispose of them. Students came back with a

case saying we want to do this one – came back with a file – it's that same guy, who was ultimately fired for the assault on the inmate of the case we have now. But it's very interesting to be able to sort of watch the career of one sadist and come back. So we're very much enjoying now digging out all our old files on this guy. And the judgment in the first case was way too low, and we are really very much enjoying the prospect of finally really getting this guy. That's one example sort of following the terrible career of one very brutal officer. The best cases really sort of unfold that way. These cases are great. I try and limit myself to state corrections cases because the state corrections department has a policy of not settling anything. So virtually everything gets tried, so it's a great experience for students. There's no negotiation experience, but it's a great experience, because they get to try everything.

Ogilvy: Why do you think they've taken that?

Angelos: They take that position because they think – first of all, they have no litigation costs. They don't have to pay the cost of their lawyers, they don't have to pay the cost of any judgment. So there's no budgetary implications for their decisions. I think they'd rather suffer an occasional loss at trial than suggest to inmates that if they file suits they might be able to get a nuisance settlement. So I'm not sure that

I think their judgment is very good. And certainly the City of New York behaves quite differently. They settle almost everything. But for better or for worse, though, state corrections will settle nothing, so we're in the happy position of – happy confidence that our cases will be tried.

Ogilvy: Do you limit the cases you take to a geographical portion of the state?

Angelos: We're only limited by the jurisdiction of the court, which is fairly limited. New York is a crowded place, so the jurisdiction of our district is small.

Ogilvy: What's the future hold for you in clinical education?

Angelos: The future for us?

Ogilvy: For you.

Angelos: For me. I actually don't anticipate – I anticipate doing what I do until I can't do it anymore. I'm not anxious to change. I'm not ambitious to go someplace higher up in the chain. I don't 'see that as – it doesn't appeal to me especially. I'm reasonably content in my school. I'm very interested — I'd love very much to work in some other schools for short terms. I think we should visit more for each other. And I'm sure I would learn a lot from going to another law school and doing something similar to what I do, but seeing how other people do it. So I maybe hope to do that. You know, one of the things, as those of us who are of this generation went through a long period of time where we were also raising children, and so – and now that I think those children are beginning to leave the next, we can stop and really think about ways in which we might be more flexible and more mobile in terms of how we think about the work we do. So that's the kind of – I think that's a lot of what I would like to see all of us do more of, and I surely would like to do more of myself – even if means just going to Fordham or to Brooklyn or someplace else in town, have an exchange program.

Ogilvy: The cases that you do, have they ever gotten you into trouble with the administration, the state of New York?

Angelos: No. No, they never have. I have – for cases that I thought would be very

expensive, I have always gotten cover. I have always gone to someone and get some cover, because I've done cases which we've had to advance hundreds of thousands of dollars in deposition costs and expert fees. I've always gotten it back so far. But, no.

I have had pressure to do more of the notorious cases and fewer of the routine cases as they appear to bring more – you know, they seem to be more high profile and therefore bring more glory on the law school. So that's an interesting twist on pressure, to do something which in my judgement is not as pedagogically sound, although certainly not something I mind doing, but to do more of the class action kinds of cases and therefore less of the kinds of cases where students can really take complete ownership of the litigation. But I've resisted it.

Ogilvy: Have you seen any change in the attitudes of the students that come into your clinic over the years?

Angelos: We're really lucky at NYU to be the beneficiaries of a mythology that NYU is the school to go to – among the top 10 law schools it's the place to go if you're interested in public interest work, and that the student body is more public interest oriented. And that's a self-fulfilling thing, because we will tend to draw those

students making a choice between Columbia and NYU, the ones who are more public interest oriented will tend to come to NYU. So we are lucky I think to have a student body which is on the whole really quite public interest oriented, comes to law school to do public interest work, but leaves law school on the whole going to big law firms – but at least comes in with those ambitions.

And then among that wonderful pool of students, the volunteers who come to my clinic are yet another subset. So in terms of their commitment to the work and their commitment to justice, I don't really see a big change. I see other changes in them, but not in terms of really the important thing, which is their commitment to the work. They're much less inclined to volunteer to do things which are unnecessary to the representation of their client. I think they're much more sort of focused on the assigned task. That's an interesting difference. They are also, although enormously gifted, all of them, they are very homogenous in terms of their intellectual strengths. You know, 20 years ago there were quirky people at NYU Law School. There's not so many quirky people there any more. They're sort of all straight-A students from Princeton. They're terrific, but they're much less intellectually diverse than they used to be. So those are the changes. But when I'm asked by the outside world, you know, Aren't these students conservative and difficult and selfish and ill-educated? – my answer is, "No. They are generous and progressive and well-educated and wonderful."

Ogilvy: What about clinical legal education generally? I guess what things have changed for the better? What kinds of things in your mind have changed for the worse as we've gotten older and bigger and –

Angelos: I think the things that are the better are also the things that are the worse. You know, as I said before, for someone who thrives on the sense of being an outsider, thrives on the sense of being a rebel, to be accepted is an identity crisis. But, you know, that's ultimately foolish and self-defeating. I think we really have to take pleasure in our victory and take pleasure in our acceptance, and find other ways to stimulate ourselves and our students to feel a passion for our work and for justice, and be very careful not to let our relative acceptance in the academy and in the legal world not dampen our sense of outrage at injustice and our passion for doing justice. That's the worry that I have that we'll be "co-opted," to use a term from the '70s.

Ogilvy: This question wasn't on the list, as you probably noticed many of them weren't – but I wonder if you have any advice that you would give to a newly-hired clinician, someone just now coming into –

Angelos: Oh, so much advice, I guess, but so much to learn from newly-hired clinicians. I really had the treat last in Chicago of being a drone in the new clinicians conference, being sort of a small group leader and participant – realized how interesting the issues of new clinicians in law schools all across this country are – really wonderful insight into what's going on in other law schools and the status of new clinicians, and all of these ambiguous statuses for young people, these fellowships. Those folks seem to really experience a lot of the same kinds of issues that we did a long time ago in terms of their status and their sense of themselves. I don't think I could pick pieces of advice to give. I'm not sure I have the wisdom to give any advice. But I think it's really important for us to have a lot of conversations between the sort of old and the new, because I think we have a lot to learn from each other, and I think people who come in and take a fresh look at all of this stuff really can give us some very valuable insights into what we do.

The real challenge for people like me is to not get stale and not get stuck. So we really need the inspiration and the critique of people who are joining us with a fresh look. So I don't have big words of advice for young clinicians, but I think having – or new clinicians – but I think having conversations with them is really vital, both for them and for us. We don't want them to sort of fall into the traps we fall into, but we really need them to get us out of holes that we may have dug

ourselves into.

Ogilvy: There's only a couple more minutes left on this tape. I can go for another tape. I've got plenty of tapes.

Angelos: No, we don't need more tapes.

Ogilvy: Is there anything that we haven't talked about that you'd like to spend a couple of minutes exploring?

Angelos: Exploring. I do want to say one thing, which is that I think the community of clinicians is so empowering, such a wonderful group of people. As I say, you know, over the course of 20 years, there are times that you can be more of a participant in the community nationally, and times that it's harder to, because of there are years when my children were little when I was just not going to go to a conference because I couldn't imagine tearing myself away from my kids. But I think we have done a terrific job of embracing one another and reaching out to new people. And I'm very proud, and I draw a tremendous amount of strength

and solace from everyone – from people I don't even know but know I know, like you I do know, and people who were my teachers in Big Sky, and people who were my students in my clinic. So that's – one thing I really want to acknowledge is the greatness of the community of clinical teachers.

Ogilvy: Thank you.