

The Crowell-Borkowski Connection

John,

I just finished my 38th year here on the faculty. As I reflect back on these years, I am very mindful of the key role you played in offering me an initial one-year contract to fill a temporary position in the Psychology department at Notre Dame. Clearly, both of us were taking a risk at that point, since I had time left on my post-doc, and you could not have had any certainty about how things would work out. While I'll let history decide if your risk paid off, I know for sure that mine did! Over the years since then, you have played an ongoing and important role in my academic life as advisor, supporter, friend, and especially role model. More than anyone else at Notre Dame, your example of the teacher-scholar blend that Notre Dame aspires to achieve among its faculty is the one I have most attempted to emulate. Of course, the student has fallen far short of the teacher in this case, but hopefully I am still a work in progress! :)

John, as you know, we had much common ground even before I joined the Notre Dame faculty. Our time together when I was a psychology major at Notre Dame with you as a new faculty member, the path I travelled in following your footsteps to the University of Iowa for graduate study, the community experiences we both shared in Iowa City and East Hall, not to mention our common sense of the rich Iowa psychology tradition, certainly have given us a special bond. An important part of that bond has been the time we both spent with your mentor Rudy Schultz. I vividly remember my first encounter with Rudy in the group meeting at the initial new graduate student orientation. Rudy was the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) at that time, and the first words out of his mouth were: "If you get more than five hours of sleep a night as graduate students you are not working hard enough." And, wouldn't you know that some years later in a similar meeting at Notre Dame with me as the then DGS, the exact same words came out of my mouth at the start of the meeting.

But, our common ground did not end with shared experiences at Iowa. Much water has continued to flow under the bridge between us as fellow faculty members here at Notre Dame. Starting with our "occupation" of Hagggar Hall right out of the chute in my first month on the job, and continuing with the Counseling merger discussions and vote, your early years as chair can be described variously as "hectic," "exciting," and "controversial." Our joint adventure here continued from that point through the morphing of departmental divisions into our current program structure, two failed attempts to give Social Psychology a foothold in our department, the coming of numerous current faculty, the going or retirement of many former colleagues, the emergence of a strong Developmental program, and the creation of two world-class programs in Quantitative and Clinical Psychology, to name just a few of the significant and transformative events that have transpired during our time together as faculty colleagues.

While there are many stories that could be retold about this period, one early episode you will recall pretty much sums up the peculiar role I have played in our department over the years. At the dedication of Hagggar Hall, I was commissioned to lead the tours of the newly minted "germ-barrier" animal facility that occupied what now is part of the Cognitive Research space on the second floor. When I showed up that day, I was not wearing a suit and tie, but rather a dark blue jacket, a sky blue turtle neck, and pair of Hagggar slacks made from a very interesting (some may call "loud") bluish fabric pattern. As soon as he saw me, Fr. Botsum, our beloved former graduate dean and long-term departmental colleague, called me on the carpet. "Why in the world are you wearing that?", he said. "Don't you have a coat, tie, and normal pants?" Well, yes I did have all of those things, but it was the

70s, after all, and I was a 25 year old new faculty member with my own way of doing things. Moreover, I had a somewhat risky ulterior motive in mind that I chose not to share with Father in case things went south. So, off I went to the tours in my unconventional garb. The first party that arrived for a tour was a group of dignitaries including none other than Joe Haggar, Sr., himself, founder of the Haggar Company and chief benefactor for our remodeled and renamed building. As I was leading the tour, I noticed that Mr. Haggar kept checking out my clothes, especially my pants. Despite my brash confidence, the thought did flash through my mind, "what if Mr. Haggar agrees with Fr. Botsum about my attire and makes his views known? I could be in serious trouble by the end of today!" Well, fortunately for me, I had anticipated correctly because as I was leading the tour group back down stairs, Mr. Haggar pulled me aside and said, "You know son, I picked out that fabric in your pants myself." "Yes!!!," I said to myself. What I didn't tell Father was that when I learned that members of the Haggar family would be coming through the building, I had a hunch that out of respect I should wear at least one piece of Haggar clothing. The pants were the only thing I had, but they definitely would have clashed with the only coat and tie I had at the time. So, just as I have done many other times in the last 38 years, I took a chance and defied conventional wisdom. But, little did I know that my pants would turn out to be one of the highlights of the building tour for our chief Haggar Hall benefactor. Thank goodness, I was still employed the next day and, as it turns out, a great many days thereafter, as my initial one-year contract eventually became much more!

So, John, it has been a long and wonderful journey with you from my undergraduate days in this department when you were my professor and teacher to the present day with you as colleague, friend and role model. Along the way, as you well know, we have not always agreed with one another about what was best for the department, but I have always respected your vision, integrity, high standards, and personal commitment to this special place we have shared. Looking back now on those disagreements, there are more than I care to admit when you were right and I was dead wrong. All I can say about this in my own defense is that I am not only unconventional, I am also a slow learner! :)

In the final analysis, it should be clear to anyone who looks at your career that Notre Dame Psychology would not be what it is today without your influence, guidance and direction over the years. Your fingerprints are all over the growth, development, and achievements of our department. All of your colleagues are indebted to you for the many outstanding contributions you have made to the department and the university. And, personally, I am indebted to you for your positive influence on my life.

Let me conclude with a little story you told me many years ago. Some of the details are a little fuzzy, so I'll go for the gist, not necessarily the facts. Interestingly, it's another story about pants. Ironically, this story may sum up your career in the same way my pants story sums up mine. I guess we have yet another connection in this respect. :)

As the story goes, John had a new pair of pants with a defect, so Martha told him to take the pants back to the place of purchase (Robertson's a famous old department store in downtown South Bend) and get a new pair. Knowing John's reluctance to deal with such matters, she quickly added, "And don't take no for an answer. I don't want to see you back here until you have a new pair of pants." So, off John went. When he got to the store and showed them the pants, they were not buying into his request. "We don't sell pants to our customers in this condition," they said. So they argued, got a manager involved, John explained, then cajoled, then borderline pleaded, since he knew what was waiting for him at home if he returned empty handed. In the end, he was persuasive, and proudly returned home, new pants in hand,

with a big smile on his face. But, as soon as he entered the door, Martha said, "John, you took the wrong pair of pants. You took the pants I had laid out to give Good Will."

What this story tells me is what we already know about John: He is eloquent and persuasive. He gets things accomplished. He listens to his boss. And, as we know from his record of grant success at NIH, he can sell worn out pants to a tailor.

John, Godspeed to you, Martha, and your family in all your future endeavors!

With much gratitude and admiration,

Chuck