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# Gary Vance Schaber

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## Gary Vance Schaber

He started at McGeorge College of Law at the age of seventeen. That is a bit young for a student, but it was all right in his case as he was only hired to sweep the floors and clean the toilet. Annabelle McGeorge and her capable assistant, Anna Rose Fischer, were his taskmistresses, and one can imagine that things stayed clean.

One year later, Dean Swan hired older brother Gordon as a Professor of Contracts, and shortly thereafter, when Gordon became Dean, the modern era of McGeorge began. One of Gary's favorite lines in later years would be: "I have nothing against nepotism. I did not object when McGeorge hired my brother." The two men became such a fascinating team—so different and yet so complementary.

In the early 1960's, Gary was one of the principal planners and promoters of the changes and development which led to the UOP merger and the opening of a full-time program. I found his grasp of the human aspect of problems and his vision of how things could and could not be accomplished to be profound. The sophistication which he developed in the ways of the world and particularly in the ways of this law school was such that it still is a bit difficult for me to appreciate the fact that this was a self-educated man.

The range of talents which Gary possessed was unusually broad. For instance, his ability to estimate the construction costs and to compare relative costs of alternate methods of remodeling was phenomenal. You could sit in a brainstorming session discussing various ways of providing more space for the library and enjoy the luxury of his steady input of cost figures for each alternative. The inflation factor was included. Some of his figures were subsequently proved to be off by as much as five or ten percent. We were quite fortunate that some construction company did not steal him from us.

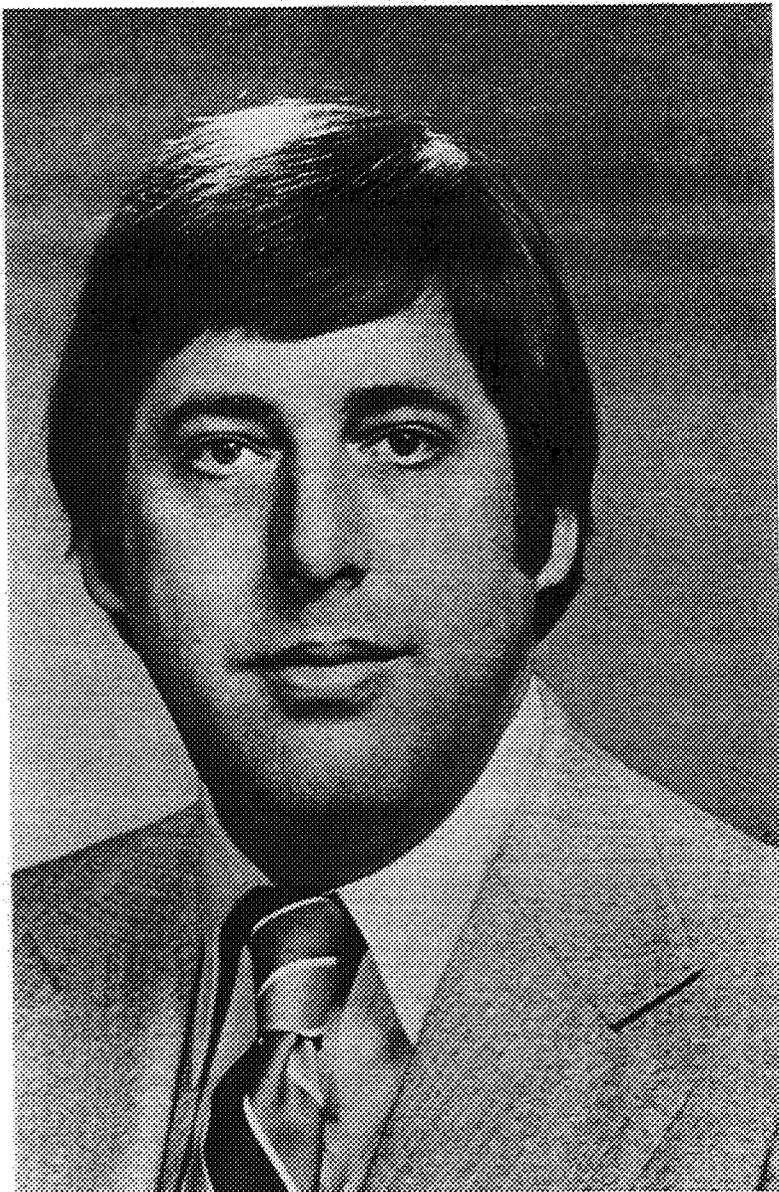
Gary's ability to assess people and to understand their problems and potential was a great gift. One of the unsung virtues of McGeorge which makes it a pleasant place for me is the quality and strength of the people who comprise the non-teaching staff. In great part these people were selected and trained by Gary. They were sometimes "trained" in the sense of being taught how to fry an egg in the kitchen or run a printing press, but the more critical "training" involved introducing these people to the way things are supposed to be done around the

school and what each of us is expected to give and entitled to get from the collective law school community. More than once when the more impetuous among us would suggest some precipitous action to resolve a personnel problem, Gary would simply say: "That's not the way we do things around here."

Contending with death is never an easy task. The death of one so young has the additional impact of forcefully reminding us all of our own mortality. As I have tried to cope with the loss to the institution and the terrible personal loss which I feel, I can only find comfort in the fact that I had the good fortune to be wandering on the same path during the same years. It was a privilege to work with Gary and share our personal and professional peaks and valleys.

We all attempt to develop a handful of friends upon whom we can really count when things go to hell in a hand basket. For me, and I suspect for quite a few others, Gary filled that role. The night before his funeral, a middle-aged black couple stood vigil by his casket—just one of the maintenance crew at school. Their appearance at the funeral the next day did not create quite as much splash as that of the Governor of the State, but they, too, were there to pay their respects and mourn their loss. We all were.

*Claude D. Rohwer*  
*Professor of Law*



GARY VANCE SCHABER  
1938-1981

