range of information available without the often insurmountable problems of using print sources.

Teachers are not legally obligated to make radical alterations in their teaching styles as 'reasonable accommodations', but the growing awareness of the different ways in which people best acquire and process information should counsel the wise teacher to address many learning styles to engage as many students as possible – both disabled and nondisabled.

The single fastest-growing disability group in higher education is students with the 'invisible disability', that is learning disabilities (LD) encompassing a broad range of neurological impairments that can effect various brain processing functions. LDs go far beyond reading problems and plague students with a bewildering variety of information-storing and processing deficits. The typical Legal Research and Writing (LRW) curriculum, which requires mastery of a great variety of processing, communication and motor skills, is likely to be the focus of frustrations during the first year of law school. Some students may discover only after beginning law study that they suffer from neurological deficits that make them unable to process information with efficiency and sophistication. The attentive LRW teacher will provide the kind of personal attention that is key to an LD writer.

Only with great care and sensitivity should a school attempt to organise a support group for the disabled law students. According to the author, individual, informal mentoring among students with disabilities is perhaps the best method of increasing their comfort level. And certainly it can go a long way to easing the marginalisation of students with disabilities in a setting that is particularly threatening.

Law schools should prepare for a rapidly rising incidence of requests from students with disabilities and have a system in place to ensure that students document their requests with great care and that the school provides proper accommodations to deserving students. Federal law has mandated that persons with disabilities be welcomed into our social fabric and made a fully functional part of it. To that end, law schools must be sensitive to special needs and committed to levelling the playing field.

INDIVIDUAL SUBJECTS/ AREAS OF LAW

Theory, gender and corporate law

K Hall

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Explicitly teaching theory is vital to all areas of law. Theory, whether in the general sense of jurisprudential, philosophical or political theories or in the more specific sense of theoretical analysis of particular areas of law, is an integral part of law and learning.

The purpose of this paper is to emphasise the importance of explicitly teaching theory in corporate law. Traditionally, corporate law has been taught without much reflection upon theory. Whatever the reason for this, the fact remains that theorising about corporate law, either generally or specifically, has not only been a neglected area of legal scholarship, but also a neglected area of teaching.

Gender analysis of corporate law is one area of theoretical reflection that has been particularly slow to develop. Including an explicit reflection upon gender, just as including a reflection upon political and economic theory, can enhance the way students learn about and understand corporate law.

Incorporating theory in our teaching (or research) is not optional, for theory influences and defines what corporate law is and what we think it should be. Our only choices are whether to talk about theory explicitly, which in the context of teaching means informing our students about the theoretical underpinnings and assumptions of the law we are teaching, and whether to go beyond the dominant ideas of liberalism and positivism that so strongly influence corporate law.

There is still a preference in Australia for corporate law research that is doctrinal, practical or focused on specific reform. Whilst this is not always the case, it seems there is no ongoing 'mainstream' discussion on the issues of theory that underlie our approaches to corporations or corporate regulation or upon the fundamental assumptions and values upon which corporate law rests.

We often believe that what our students need most are a solid understanding of corporate law principles and concepts and the ability to reason and argue well from the applicable cases and rules. Yet, when we make decisions such as these to limit the discussion of theory in our teaching, we limit other possibilities. For example, we limit our students' intellectual skills and deny them an essential opportunity to understand and contextualise corporate law. Unless we consider the theoretical underpinnings of what we research, teach and learn, we unconsciously commit ourselves to promoting the same corporate structure and system of corporate regulation we currently experience. Once our students understand that there is no way to extricate law from broader issues and values they will better understand how corporate law has developed and how legal arguments are constructed.

We have been encouraged to see corporate law rules and decisions as somewhat inevitable; as valid and justifiable choices between a limited number of available options. We have not readily seen corporations as intertwined with liberalism, economic values and male power. The liberal claim to judicial and legal neutrality is impossible.

As traditionally understood, neutrality has meant that law is applied in a dispassionate or impartial way to all those who come before it. Instead, it has been shown that law often applies particular standards, reflected in legal principles and case law, based on the experiences of white, middle class, liberal men.

The absence of an express reflection upon theory in corporate law perpetuates these illusions of law. Theory opens up intellectual discussion because it reveals the partiality of law – the idea that law is a reflection of the values of those who have had the power to shape reality.

It is clear that there were important political choices involved in deciding whether the corporation was to be treated as separate and distinct from its incorporators. The dominant political attitudes of the time supported the importance of economic liberty, private enterprise and commercial interests in the development of our liberal capitalist society. The separate legal entity doctrine not only has the effect of reallocating directors' responsibilities but it encourages individuals and society as a whole to think that this sort of shifting of risk is desirable.

There is also the possibility of enhancing and expanding our teaching by drawing upon other theoretical insights than those of liberalism. In this context, there is great potential for feminist contributions to teaching. Including a discussion of gender in our teaching is taking a stance on the importance of gender to the social and legal order.

In courts, universities, law firms, business and government it has generally been men who have created, defined and used corporate law. This has resulted in certain questions being asked, certain issues being valued and certain goals being pursued. Most of our teaching reinforces the masculinist values and images that underlie corporate law.

To raise gender issues in corporate law teaching we need to adopt a number of strategies. First, we need to place corporate law in its wider social, political and economic context. This is vital if we are to see both the values embedded in corporate law and the relationship between these values and women's positions in society generally. The author also suggests a need to draw upon empirical research to indicate how and why women are (and are not) coming into contact with corporate law. Furthermore, it is necessary to reconsider the teaching materials, such as texts, cases and other materials, we use in our courses.

Case law is a vital tool in teaching law. By incorporating a detailed discussion of case law we can expand students' understanding of the theoretical underpinnings and values of corporate law. Case law is also vital to locating women in corporate law. Where women have been rendered invisible by the discussion and materials included in a text book, case law can show some of the ways women are involved in and characterise corporate law.

In not discussing the gendered aspect of such cases in our teaching we reinforce the position that questions of gender and power are irrelevant in the context of corporate law. Whether we also *empower* our students depends on what and how we choose to teach on corporate law. From whatever perspective we explicitly discuss theory and gender, we challenge ideas about the underlying (masculinist) nature of law and the traditional role of lawyering. By consciously incorporating feminist analysis into our teaching we can step outside of the traditional approaches to law.

INSTITUTIONS & ORGANISATIONS

Meeting the MacCrate objectives (affordably): Massachusetts School of Law

A T Starkis, P Dickinson & T H Martin
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The Massachusetts School of Law's (MSL) effort to offer a different type of legal education began with a few practical questions. Among them: 'Why doesn't law school teach what students need to know to practise law?' and 'Why doesn't it teach what students need to know to pass their bar examinations?' It seems absurd to the authors that law school does not teach what students need to know to practise law or even to pass the professional examinations that are the gateway to the profession.

MSL admitted its first students in August 1988. From its inception the school was committed to delivering professional education and training at a reasonable cost. As the Cramton and MacCrate reports have attested, most graduates who pass their bar examinations are not ready to begin practising law.

The discussions triggered by those reports have brought into focus a fun-