

## JANET S. LINDGREN

lindgren@buffalo.edu

Law School, SUNY at Buffalo  
Amherst Campus, Buffalo, NY 14260

525 Norwood Avenue  
Buffalo, New York 14222

The open spaces that surrounded me growing up on a cattle ranch in Western Nebraska have stayed with me in writing *A SMALL CLEARING: SPACE FOR WRITERS AND READERS AND CHANGE* and in my teaching, which is now altogether individualized so that students with reading or writing missions can have the working space they need.

Taking what there is and making what is needed is the constant in ranch work, in learning in a one-room country school, in turning runner-up for Nebraska in the Betty Crocker Homemaker competition into an achievement for college applications. I take my reading and make my writing; I teach my students who are writing for change to do the same.

Alignment matters in building ranch fences and no less in my writing and teaching. I line up argument inside law and outside law. I line up what I say – “We must take our writers’ hands from off our reader’s throats” – and my own writing. I check alignment whenever a student is having trouble writing sentences that could come out of a human mouth.

### EDUCATION

Juris Doctor, magna cum laude, School of Law, University of Wisconsin at Madison, June 1971.  
Law Review, Order of the Coif, Portia Prize to Outstanding Woman Student, Benchers Scholarship

Bachelor of Arts, summa cum laude, Macalester College, St. Paul, Minnesota, June 1968.  
Phi Beta Kappa, DeWitt Wallace National Merit Scholar, honors in political science

### ACADEMIC POSTINGS

Professor, State University of New York at Buffalo, School of Law. Professor Emerita since 2009,  
Professor 1980-2009, Associate Professor 1979-80, Assistant Professor, 1973-79.

Guest Lecturer, University of Amsterdam, Masters degree program in American Studies, The Netherlands.  
2007-2008. Assisting faculty members with thesis supervision.

Fulbright Scholar, Laval University, School of Law, Québec City, Canada. 1993 – 1994. Research:  
*Statutory Structures*.

Fulbright Scholar, University of Leiden, Department of Constitutional and Administrative Law, The  
Netherlands. 1986 – 1987. Research: *The Constitutional Voice of Scholars*.

Grantee, National Endowment for the Humanities. Summer 1986. Travel to Collections: *Edward Corwin’s papers at Princeton’s Mudd Library and Florence Kelley’s papers at the New York Public Library*.

Fellow, American Council of Learned Societies. 1979 – 1980. Research: *Law and Working Class Reform*.

Fellow, Legal History Workshop, University of Wisconsin, summer 1981. Research: *Law and Tenement Manufacture*.

Fellow in Legal History, American Bar Foundation. December 1978 – June 1979. Research: *Law in the Relations of Union and Manufacturer in New York City, 1880-1920*

## FOREGROUND

### Teaching writers

The set of writing courses I have developed consists of *Intensive Writing*, *Individualized Writing*, *Sustained Writing*, and *Revising*. I meet individually with students in all of these courses. *Intensive Writing* is a three credit course set in our January bridge term and students take no other courses. *Individualized Writing* is spread over a semester and *Sustained Writing* over a year. *Revising* is a one-credit course.

“Writing for change” is at the heart of my writing courses. It’s what lawyers (and a lot of other writers) do. Law students tend to call it “argument.” Whatever the name, it involves writing to a reader who does not already understand, who does not already agree – and whose agreement the writer needs. I give permission to register on the basis of the mission a student identifies in his or her letter to me. The range is extraordinary – from the student having difficulty with writing mechanics, to the student who cares deeply about a particular cause, to the student who is ready to start writing a book. Because students are determined to accomplish the work they bring to the course, the teaching is both all-consuming and a joy.

The Jacob Hyman Award at the law school is given “in recognition of your significant contribution in promoting excellence among students of color.” The award came my way in 1999 and 2004, primarily in recognition of my work in teaching writing.

### Writing about writing

A SMALL CLEARING: SPACE FOR WRITERS AND READERS AND CHANGE. Completed and being submitted for publication. This glimpse is from the foreword –

This book is about writing for change. Because it is human readers whose positions you would change, your work must be – and mine must be – written for human beings, written in sentences that could come out of a human mouth. Because your readers do not already agree with you, you will have to give them what they need – and I will have to give you what you need – to see what the writer sees. Because you will already be present, making the text the reader needs, you will sometimes find – as I have found – that you can speak more clearly when you remain present on the page.

I wrote this slowly. I made it self-contained so that you could step into it from whence you come. I kept it small so that you could carry it with you. I built it with more than one entrance and more than one path so that you could choose. I left the evidence of my construction for your eye and the pieces I have built with for your use. I left open space in which you might linger. I wrote a place for you to be.

## Teaching readers

The set of reading courses I have developed consists of *Intensive Reading*, *Individualized Reading*, *Sustained Reading*, and *Selected Reading*. I meet individually with students in all of these courses. *Intensive Reading* is a three credit course set in our January bridge term and students take no other courses. *Individualized Reading* is spread over a semester and *Sustained Reading* over a year. *Selected Reading* is a one-credit course that allows students who have finished a course to read further, whether more deeply on some issue, or more broadly.

These courses bring avid readers to my door (always a pleasure). They bring with them the reading mission that will provide the motive force for our work. They know from the course description that “my role will primarily be to get you to be very conscious of how you are going about choosing and doing the reading, to get you to read quite intentionally and to move among the pieces of reading quite intentionally.”

## Working for the reader

I continue to work for and with readers – seeing readers, listening to readers, and speaking up for readers. This was the focus of my 2007-2008 sabbatical in Amsterdam and is the mission for which I am creating a New York non-profit corporation, Working for the Reader, Inc .

## BACKGROUND

### Starting out inside law –

Law Clerk to the Honorable Thomas Fairchild, United States Court of Appeals for the 7<sup>th</sup> Circuit, 1971 through 1972 – where the appeal from Judge Julius Hoffman’s decision in the “Chicago Seven” conspiracy case consumed our waking hours

Bigelow Fellow and Instructor, The University of Chicago Law School, 1972 through 1973 – a year at the intellectual center of “law and economics”

Wall Street practice: Cleary, Gottlieb, Stein and Hamilton, New York City, summer 1970

Civil rights practice: Julian and Wadsack, Madison, Wisconsin, part-time 1969 – 70

Government practice: Office of the Attorney General of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin, summer 1969

### And writing from inside law –

*The Logic of Conspiracy* in LEGAL CONCEPTS IN CONSPIRACY (Arno Press, 1972),  
reprinting 1970 WISCONSIN LAW REVIEW 191 – 201

*Liability without Fault – the Logic and Potential of a Developing Concept*, 1970 WISCONSIN  
LAW REVIEW 1201 – 1216

### Raising doubts –

*Thinking about Statutes: Hurst, Calabresi, Twining and Miers*, 1984 AMERICAN BAR FOUNDATION  
RESEARCH JOURNAL 458 - 468 (with J.H. Schlegel)

*Judges and Statutes: Three Essays on Agent Orange*, 6 LAW AND POLICY 189 – 202 (1984)

*Beyond Cases: Reconsidering Judicial Review*, 1983 WISCONSIN LAW REVIEW 583 - 638 (1983)

*Social Theory and Judicial Choice: Damages and Federal Statutes*, 28 BUFFALO LAW REVIEW 711 – 763 (1979)

“The Relation of Tort Scholarship and Practice,” Loyola Law School's Conference on BUILDING A NEW TORTS SCHOLARSHIP: OBSERVATIONS FROM LAW AND ECONOMICS AND CRITICAL LEGAL STUDIES, Los Angeles, March 30, 1985

“Common Biases – Trial Judges and Those who Study the Courts,” at the June 1982 Meeting of the Law and Society Association in Toronto on TRIAL COURTS IN SOCIETY: PRESSURES OF POLITICS, ECONOMY AND DEMOGRAPHY

### Looking at law from the outside –

Fulbright scholar – Department of Constitutional and Administrative Law, University of Leiden, The Netherlands, 1986 – 1987. Research: *The Constitutional Voice of Scholars*

Grantee, United University Professions. Travel: to the Swiss Institute of Comparative Law and the International Labor Organization, Geneva, Switzerland, May 1991.

Fulbright scholar – Laval University, School of Law, Québec City, Canada, 1993 –1994. Research: *Statutory Structures*. Also supported by a Canadian Embassy Sabbatical Fellowship and a Québec Studies Grant.

### And writing from the outside –

*A Relevant Other: American Constitutional Scholarship*, 1987 STAATKUNDIG JAARBOEK 279 - 291.

*Locating the Constitution*, 15 EUROPEAN CONTRIBUTIONS TO AMERICAN STUDIES 63 - 76 (1988)

“A Constitutional Heritage – Learning It or Living It?” Conferentie van de Netherlands American Studies Association, THE US CONSTITUTION: STILL LIFE AFTER 200 YEARS, Amerika Instituut, Amsterdam May 25-27, 1987

“The Place of Legal Scholarship in Constitutional Thought,” *Vergelijkend Staatsrecht*, Leiden University, April 7, 1987

“The Interaction of Court and Legislature on Constitutional Issues,” *Amerikanistiek Lecture Series*, THE AMERICAN CONSTITUTION, 1787 - 1987, Leiden University, April 1987

“Structure dans le Droit,” GEPTUD (Groupe d'études sur les processus de transformation du droit), January 24, 1994 at Laval University in Québec City

“Of Mixed Minds: The Divergence of Linguistic and Legal Cultures in Québec,” American Council for Québec Studies Bi-annual Meeting, November 18, 1994, Washington DC

“Unusual Parallels in Surprising Places,” Annual Meeting of the Association for Canadian Studies in the United States, November 17, 1995 in Seattle, Washington

### Which led to my current writing and teaching.