

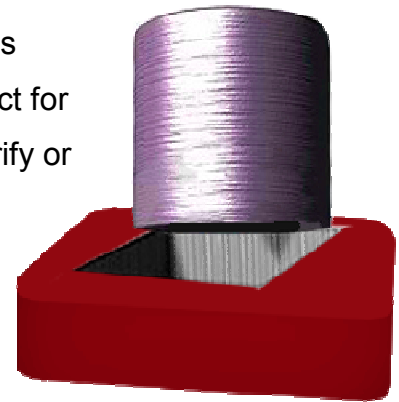
## [A Lawyer Who Changed the World](#)

Posted by [Cordell Parvin](#) on September 6, 2011

I love quotes that inspire me, or cause me to think. Recently I read the blog [Manner of Speaking](#) and saw one of my all time favorite quotes:

Here's to the crazy ones. The misfits. The rebels. The troublemakers. The round pegs in the square holes. The ones who see things differently. They're not fond of rules. And they have no respect for the status quo. You can quote them, disagree with them, glorify or vilify them. About the only thing you can't do is ignore them. Because they change things. They push the human race forward. And while some may see them as the crazy ones, we see genius. Because the people who are crazy enough to think they can change the world, are the ones who do.

— [Steve Jobs](#)



My first thought was there is no way that Steve Jobs would have put up with what law students and young lawyers are expected to do. Round pegs in square holes do not last in many law firms.

My second thought was to reflect on lawyers who changed the world. [Abraham Lincoln](#) came to mind. But, he did not change the world while practicing law.

Then, I remembered the final argument in a trial that did change the world. I wrote about the lawyer in [this 2006 blog post](#). I spoke about the trial in a 2006 presentation to Texas State Bar Leaders: [Defining Moment: Being a Leader Who Makes a Difference](#).

The final argument was seven hours long. [Marcet Haldeman-Julius](#) said that after the defense lawyer concluded and the pro-section got up for rebuttal:

Somehow it reminded one of the clatter of folding chairs after a symphony concert

[Judge Frank Murphy](#) who was later appointed to the Supreme Court, called listening to the defense lawyer's summation: "the greatest experience of my life."

The defense lawyer and his final argument defending a black defendant before an all white male jury, changed the civil rights world forever.

I first read about the trial in the famous defense lawyer's autobiography [The Story Of My Life](#). Several years ago, I came across Professor [Douglas O. Linder's](#) website: [Famous Trials](#). You can find a great deal about the case on that site. If you want to get started reading about a lawyer and final argument that changed the world, read Professor Linder's summary in [Melting Hearts of Stone: Clarence Darrow and the Sweet Trials](#).

I will leave you with one more quote. Take note that I modified it slightly.

My heroes have always been lawyers. - slightly modified from [Willie Nelson](#) song.

# Cordell Parvin Blog

DEVELOPING THE NEXT GENERATION OF LAW FIRM RAINMAKERS

**Cordell M. Parvin** built a national construction practice during his 35 years practicing law. At Jenkins & Gilchrist, Mr. Parvin was the Construction Law Practice Group Leader and was also responsible for the firm's attorney development practice. While there he taught client development and created a coaching program for junior partners. In 2005, Mr. Parvin left the firm and started Cordell Parvin LLC. He now works with lawyers and law firms on career development and planning and client development. He is the co-author of ***Say Ciao to Chow Mein: Conquering Career Burnout*** and other books for lawyers. To learn more visit his Web site, [www.cordellparvin.com](http://www.cordellparvin.com) or contact him at [cparvin@cordellparvin.com](mailto:cparvin@cordellparvin.com).