

On my last day working at Fox News, a coworker asked me why I was going to law school. “It’s simple,” I joked. “So I can come back and take Megyn Kelly’s job!”

It isn’t really Ms. Kelly’s job I’m after, but I do want the knowledge, acuity and influence that she and others possess. My work at Fox and ABC have put me in contact with some very bright, accomplished people. Shannon Bream (Fox’s Supreme Court reporter) and Greta Van Susteren (one of Fox’s anchors) are two of those people I deeply admire. Both have strong legal backgrounds, and my conversations with them gradually confirmed what I have suspected for a long time: I need to get a law degree.

When I was twelve and saw the images from the war in Afghanistan, I decided I wanted to be a war correspondent. Although my parents would have supported me in any pursuit I chose, they weren’t thrilled with the thought of their daughter in the trenches. My father, an attorney, probably could have argued me out of it—he could calmly and logically explain an issue until you had no choice but to agree with him—but he never tried. He simply laid the foundation for my interest in law through his quiet influence. For example, on the anniversary of *Brown v. Board of Education* he showed our family a video about the case, and we spent the evening discussing the overturning of *Plessy* and the ramifications of the “separate but equal” doctrine. I loved those family discussions. I did *not* always love the conversation we had across the desk in his office—me perched on the red leather chair—as he calmly used inescapable logic to help me see why I was wrong. I didn’t realize he was showing me how to apply reason over emotion. He was teaching me how to think.

That’s why I need to go to law school: to learn to think. I want to be *right*. I don’t mean that I just want to win arguments. I mean I want to learn to do what my dad does and what all great attorneys (and journalists) do: choose my arguments carefully, research thoroughly, see all sides of an issue, and use fair, even-handed logic to arrive at a conclusion, and then to help others see the truth.

I have always loved the rough-and-tumble of rigorous debate. One thing I grew to enjoy while working in D.C. is that *everyone* there seems to have an opinion. It didn't matter if I was talking to a Senator or a street vendor, everyone was up on current events and itching for an argument. Once a middle-aged gentleman on the Metro recognized my Fox badge and asked me how I could be part of a corporation that was "single-handedly ruining society." I smiled and explained that news consumers need to recognize the difference between news shows and opinion shows. I cited figures that demonstrated Fox News' relative fairness in reporting. He disagreed vehemently. I argued that all media outlets have biases—how could they not?—but that main stream news media suffered from the fact that they shared the same biases. I concluded with the advice that if individuals want to be well versed in world and political affairs, they will go to a myriad of different newspapers, websites and channels to understand the full picture. I don't know if I succeeded in changing his mind, but as he was stepping off the metro he did hand me his business card and ask me to dinner.

Sometimes free speech and the open exchange of ideas require a pretty thick skin, and I have felt lucky, as the youngest of six kids, to have inherited a very thick skin. There were times when I needed it. I felt at home with the good-natured sparring I found at Fox, and I gave as much as I took. Once when I was escorting Newt Gingrich to the make-up room, I deliberately provoked him by taking advantage of his passion for the Civil War. "Mr. Gingrich," I said, "it is my understanding that the South had all the great generals but the North had God, which is why they won." I almost laughed when I saw the flabbergasted look on his face. "No," he sputtered, "no, that is not true!"

I don't know if law school will lead me into legal practice or back to journalism, but either way, I need the training that only law school provides. I am dissatisfied with much of what passes as social discourse today: rhetorical bullying, sensationalism, etc. I want to be a voice of reason, restraint, fairness, and truth. I want to speak with authority. I'm going to law school to learn to think. I want to make my father proud...and maybe make Megyn Kelly just a little nervous.