



1995

Did Mr. Virgo Have Knowledge of the Possibilities?

M.T.C. Cronin

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.law.yale.edu/yjlf>



Part of the [Law Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Cronin, M.T.C. (1995) "Did Mr. Virgo Have Knowledge of the Possibilities?," *Yale Journal of Law & Feminism*: Vol. 7: Iss. 2, Article 9.
Available at: <http://digitalcommons.law.yale.edu/yjlf/vol7/iss2/9>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by Yale Law School Legal Scholarship Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Yale Journal of Law & Feminism by an authorized administrator of Yale Law School Legal Scholarship Repository. For more information, please contact julian.aiken@yale.edu.

Did Mr. Virgo Have Knowledge of the Possibilities?

M.T.C. Cronin[†]

The seven judges had names
(not so sure about faces)
and it had taken them
quite a bit of time
to get qualified
In skill, in inventiveness,
in the ability (of each) to
take up from the point
indicated by a sign

The first had a fish
feeding on his chest
and a big instinct
His sky was full
of the clouds
from Biblical movies
and his face a temple
hewn from solid rock
He listened to
the defence of provocation
With her swinging hips
and red mouth
And said
A woman could drive
a man to drink

The second was
a little man
who spoke in a long blue hiss
hiss hiss hiss
All other syllables
he had left at home
for his wife
to wash with his socks
He was sympathetic

[†] Ms. Cronin is a qualified solicitor, was co-editor of the *Aboriginal Law Bulletin*, and taught Aboriginal Studies and Cultural Diversity. She is a poet and prose writer who researches feminist legal theory at the University of New South Wales. She has published her poems and short stories in Australia, New Zealand, the United States, and Europe. Her first collection of poetry, *Zoetrope*, was published in June by Five Islands Press.

and vicious
And you don't have to guess
to whom . . .

The third and fourth
were two old men
with a sack of bricks
and broken windows
One no longer
made his own decisions
The other always wavered

The fifth believed
a woman was his leg
—his fucking leg—
to stand on
and couldn't understand
how they'd learned to read
and get jobs
(that paid!)
In his mind he saw
a beauty, waiting
for a bus
with her bursting case
and he thought
This woman should
have kept her mouth
SHUT!

Number six was
a little tricky
analytic and synthetic
and had once "truly"
represented the people
He was always
saying things like
Did you sleep well?
Did they give you a meal?
Have you looked around
the city?
He believed in doing
the best he could

(isn't life wonderful?)
and was always making
attempts at discovery
He was suspicious of the man
Problem was
He believed in one truth
And was so suspicious
of the woman as well
(even though
she was dead)

And the seventh
Well he was head honcho
He stuck his pliers in
To "extract" the truth
After weeks of evidence
After yeast-filled days
of deliberation
rising up to fill the
annals of history
He asked:
"But did Mr. Virgo
have full knowledge
of the possibilities?"

Surely he must have realized
that if he pushed her over
the cliff *she'd hurt herself?*

Surely he must have known
the day of the week?

I don't think so!

He knocked both her front
teeth out
Then sat on the top step
and cried"

'Mummy' he cried
But he didn't know
whose mother she was

