What Lawyers Do

Or, Big Words Sound The Same In Any Language.

Contrary to what you were taught in school, the true religion of most of the population of the United States is litigation. The word "litigation," by the way, is derived from the Latin word *litis*, meaning "ritual," and *agere*, meaning "screwing."

It is said that litigation touches everyone all the time, occasionally in very intimate places. Before you can achieve an understanding of litigation, you must understand lawyers. Although millions of words have been written on the subject, people are genuinely mystified by what happens behind the sacred doors of the Conference Room.

Here are the things that lawyers do, in general:

1. **Produce Paper**. Obviously.
2. **Resolve Conflicts**. Some commentators have pointed out that this is a vital function, necessary to any advanced civilization, such as ours, without any cultural inhibitions against violence. These commentators point out that lawyers are a necessary social lubricant. You should probably visualize lawyers as the K-Y jelly of society, easing the friction between… well, you get the idea.
3. **Serve As Butts of Jokes**. With the rise of political correctness, Polish jokes are no longer acceptable. Lawyer jokes have taken their place, thus providing a safety valve without which much of American humor would back up and blow itself out through Mexico.

Big firm, little firm. Despite the prevalent image of lawyers in large law firms, most American lawyers still practice in

small firms or as sole practitioners. They are small businessmen, no different than the local dry cleaner, shoe store owner, car mechanic, or accountant, except they wear natural fiber suits and are more honest than the car mechanic. Lawyers work long hours, and – outside of the big firms – generally don’t make more than the average Joe, if the average Joe happens to have seven years of post-high school education. Anyway, they certainly make less than a specialist physician.

In fact, most lawyers are solidly middle class, with spouses and families and mortgages and tuition bills and orthodontist bills and staff problems and stop this is getting depressing.

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