



**Joe Epstein**  
 CTLA President, 1989-1990

**A Cowboy's View  
 of CTLA**

Susan and I travelled to Colorado in 1973. Yes, John Denver was singing "Rocky Mountain High." Little did we know then that he was clairvoyant. In any event, my first job here in Colorado was with Kripke, Carrigan & Bragg. Imagine that training ground! Of course, that led to a quick immersion into the world of CTLA.

I can't quite believe I have been connected with CTLA for four decades. What started as a small close group has become a larger close group that operates like a large law firm with many branch offices. List Serve has become a potent tool and an equalizer with the larger defense firms.

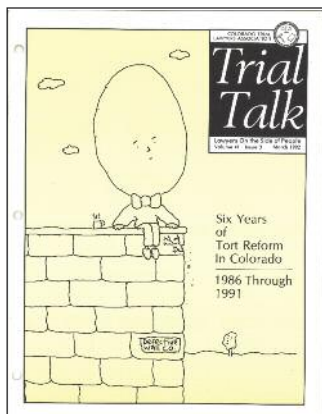
CTLA CLE activities like the Blockbuster Seminar have kept CTLA members at the cutting edge of trial practice. The Annual Convention has remained a staple of learning while spreading the camaraderie of warriors fighting for the underdogs – the scared victims of negligence, indifference, and, in some instances, corporate greed.

When the 1980s came, CTLA was swamped by a sea change that saw the ascendancy of the illegitimately called "Tort Reform." Sadly and ironically, civil rights, basic human right and simple justice was torn from our social fabric. People – the injured – were incredulous when told of ridiculous caps, barriers to recovery against health care professionals, distortion of product liability law, and protectionism of bars, landowners, ski resorts and other special and powerful interests.

I am proud to say that CTLA fought back. Today, it is no longer a weakling in the political arena or a pariah in the legislative chambers. The spirit of Don Quixote lives on as CTLA members ride their white chargers to do battle for an elegant Lady Justice. Their battle is for the soul of our community. Their fight is in the courtrooms, the legislative halls, the political battlefields, and in the public eye.

The men and women of CTLA have every right to be proud of an organization that has more than met the test of time. I am proud and grateful that I had the opportunity to serve as President of CTLA. I am humbled by the magnitude of the extraordinary work CTLA has done and continues to do.

As CTLA looks to the future, I tip my hat to the Young Turks who now carry the CTLA torch and pause to acknowledge my fellow Past-Presidents like Norm Kripke, Dan Patterson and Mike Hodges who have passed on. ▲▲▲



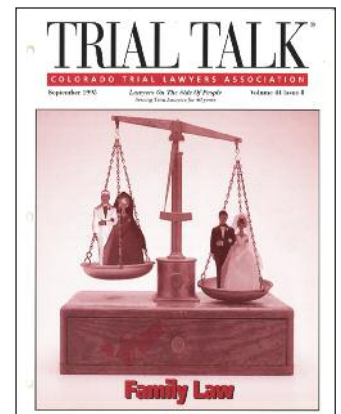
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