

Memorial: Sara Turley Cole (1943–2005)*

¶1 Professor Sara Turley Cole, retired director of the law library and associate professor of law at the University of Memphis, died on November 26, 2005, in Memphis, Tennessee, at the age of sixty-two. Sara was the wife of James P. Cole, and mother of two daughters, Elizabeth C. Goodrich and Mary M. Cole, both of Birmingham, Alabama; and one son, James A. Cole of Denver, Colorado. Sara is also survived by a sister, Margaret Southerland of Houston, Texas; a brother, Gibson Turley, Jr., of Helena, Arkansas; and two grandchildren, Catherine Cole Goodrich and Gibson Bew Goodrich, both of Birmingham, Alabama.

¶2 Sara was a graduate of Helena Central High School in Helena, Arkansas, and Vanderbilt University. She received her MLS degree from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and her JD degree from the University of Memphis.

¶3 Sara was the first director of the law library and the first female faculty member at the University of Memphis, Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law. Hired in 1968 as the law school's librarian right out of library school by then Dean W. Walton Garrett,¹ she directed the law library at the University of Memphis for more than thirty years, until her retirement in 2000 due to health reasons. During her career, Sara also taught legal research and writing and contracts and served on numerous law school and university committees.

¶4 Sara was a member of the Memphis Bar Association and served on its library board for many years. Sara also was a member of the Tennessee Bar Association and the American Bar Association.

¶5 Sara was the only woman on the law faculty when I was hired in 1978. She was a good friend and colleague for the next twenty-eight years. Sara was one of those strong, silent faculty members who quietly went about her work, creating and maintaining a loyal and competent library staff while doing so much with so little for so many years of limited state funding. When funds were cut, the library was always a likely target, yet Sara fought to maintain the quality and services that faculty and students needed and had come to expect. She battled the fungus in the library, followed by the floods. One night, I found her in the library, standing in about six inches of water, directing the rescue efforts, still able to crack one of her wry comments.

¶6 Sara was also a role model and mentor for many law students over the years. She was the epitome of professionalism and civility. I never saw her lose

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1. "The library then consisted of Sara, one part-time clerical employee, an IBM selectric typewriter, and a modest collection of yet to be cataloged books." Posting of Gregory K. Laughlin, Associate Dean for Information Resources and Law Library Director, The University of Memphis Law Library, gloughln@memphis.edu, to Lawlibdir@lists.washlaw.edu (Nov. 28, 2005, 10:47 CST).

her composure or heard her say an unkind thing about another person in all of the twenty-eight years that I knew her.

¶7 She battled her cancer with the same courage and equanimity for which she was known, admired, respected, and loved. She was a rock and she is sorely missed, but fondly remembered.—*Janet Leach Richards*²

2. Cecil C. Humphreys Professor of Law, The University of Memphis, Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law, Memphis, Tennessee.