

COLUMBIA SPECTATOR ARCHIVE

Columbia Daily Spectator, Volume CXII, Number 142, 21 September 1988 — Law students represent eight in AIDS discrimination cases [ARTICLE+ILLUSTRATION]

Law students represent eight in AIDS discrimination cases

By Vivian Lee

In a new course at the Columbia Law School, students will actually represent clients facing discrimination because they are affected with AIDS.

The course, taught by Law Professors Deborah Greenberg and Mark Barnes, is the first of its kind to represent clients in AIDS discrimination cases, Barnes said.

“[AIDS] touches upon many facets, such as medical ethics, employment discrimination and society’s views of those with

AIDS,” Greenberg said. “AIDS is one of the most important social issues of the ’80s.”

The clinic teaches students the substance of law procedures, clinical skills, advocacy and trial-representation, according to Greenberg.

Eight clients have already been referred to the clinic by the Gay Men’s Health Clinic, city and state human rights agencies, and other private organizations, Barnes said.

He added that they do not plan to advertise the clinic in the near future because they fears they will be inundated with cases.

Barnes said the cases involve employment discrimination, housing discrimination and denial of access to health care. Legal personnel will pursue the rehiring of their clients, as well as back pay and payment for damages such as mental anguish and inconvenience, he said.

Barnes said that it is natural to offer this clinic in New York City because of both student interest and the concentration of AIDS patients in the area.

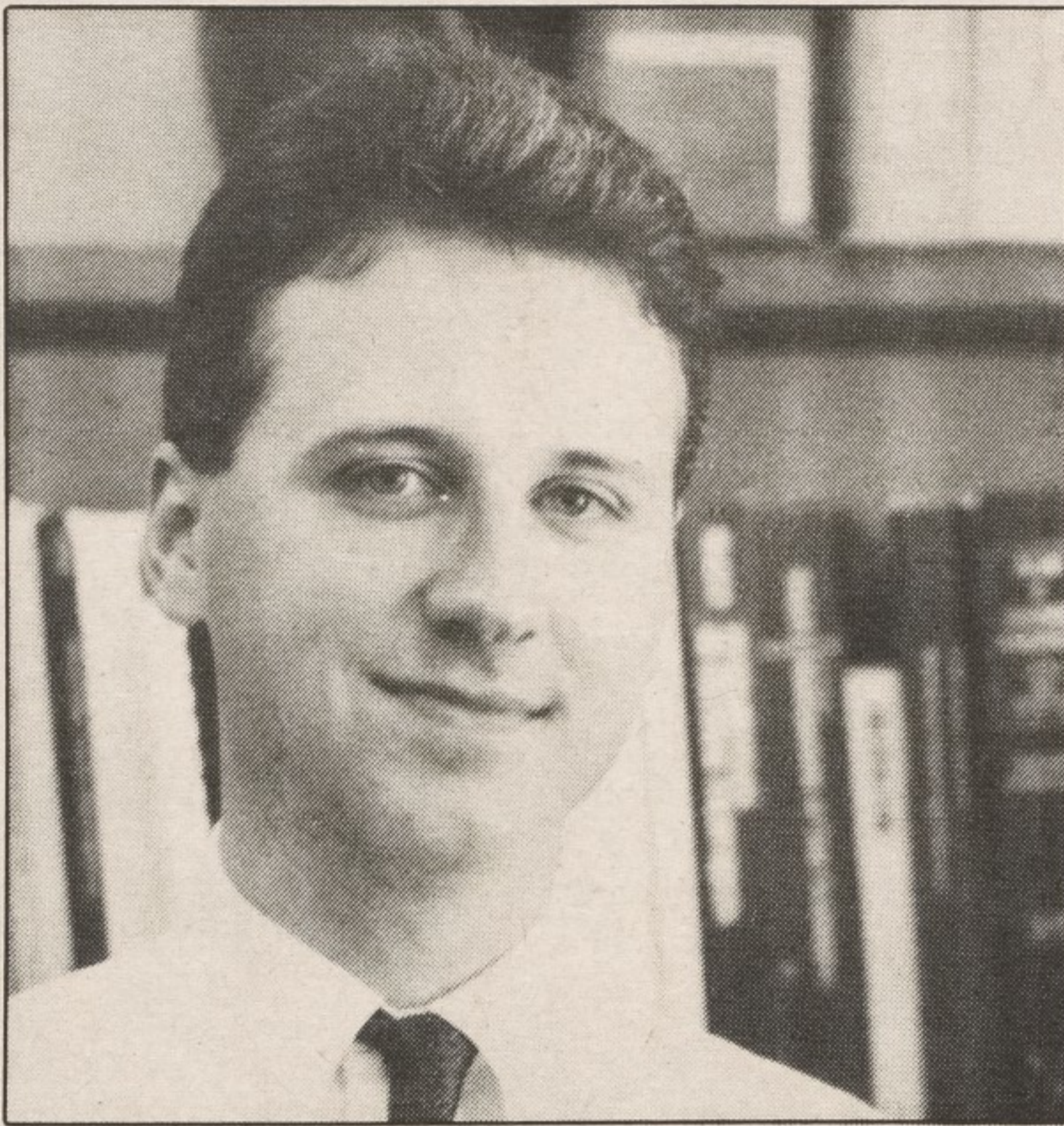
A third-year law student, Marjory Burman, said she is taking the course because it offers hands-on experience in working with clients, making decisions and interview techniques.

“It is the best learning experience I’ll have here. It’s most useful in the long run,” she said.

Mya Wiley, another third-year law student enrolled in the clinic, agreed the class is good training for her planned law career in employment discrimination. She said she is excited about being in the forefront of civil rights for AIDS patients.

Wiley said she chose Columbia Law because of its commitment to human rights.

“The willingness of Columbia to be first to devote its resources to this clinic signifies its commitment to address the legal issues of the AIDS epidemic,” Wiley said.



SPECTATOR/QUINTANA ROO DUNNE

Mark Barnes