

caseload stories

Judge 1 : one of highest caseloads in county, judge is careless with speech some people find offensive. S/he has been admonished by the state ethics committee for public comments that were -ist.

Judge 2 : presided over a traffic bench trial, found defendant not guilty. Police officer was angry and organized a boycott of that town. No traffic citations for three months. Town supervisor had to meet with the sheriff to end the boycott. I was told this by a deputy during my first year, likely as a warning or threat.

Judge 3 : declines to get out of bed for off hour arraignments. Other judges, including Caroline, did arraignments for this town. Two hours of work, does not appear in our caseload.

Judge 4 : was known for routine bail (always sets bail), which causes citizens with perilous finances to spend time in jail and sometime lose needed jobs. Also missing at probation training, drug court training, mental health court training. Sentenced many to jail without consideration of alternatives to incarceration. This judge likely has a higher caseload than Caroline judges.

Judges 5 and 6 : Judge 5 set his/her court time at 8 am and was rude to police officers. Consequently, s/he had almost no traffic tickets or criminal referrals. Co-judge 6 carried 95% of the caseload for the town. (Harold and Paul)

Judge 7 : does not accept partial payment on fines. Defendants with low incomes are expected to save every month until they have the full amount. When emergencies arise, defendants dip into the court jar. They are unable to save the full amount. Eventually this judge issues an arrest warrant.

Judge 8 : in conversations at magistrates' meetings, is quick to term poor defendants lazy and foolish. In one conversation with this judge, I said, "It is human nature to hope things might work themselves out. When a defendant falls behind in payments, . ." Judge 8 cut me off and ended my sentence, "because they spent the money on drugs."

(Attachment #2)

implication

find people guilty

do not refer people to probation

do not consider socio economic issues of bail and jail

do not agree to adjournments

ok to demean people

back off our heads : go fast, guilty guilty guilty

(Attachment #3)

Things judges do that is caseload but not 'sit in court':

- ❖ read files, read probation reports, make notes
- ❖ research law to discover applications to cases
- ❖ plan and conduct hearings for criminal cases
- ❖ consider effects of poverty and immigration status on cases
- ❖ ponder evidence and law; make rulings on trials and hearings; write rulings
- ❖ off hours arraignments and criminal hearings, sometimes for other courts
- ❖ review and finalize mailed traffic pleas
- ❖ review files of small claims and summary hearings (evictions)
- ❖ remain calm in the face of angry outbursts and death threats
- ❖ orders of protection take forever, time consuming

(Attachment #4)

Things judges do that occupy 70% of time and are not 'caseload':

- ❖ attend classes and conferences.
- ❖ 2020 was a roller coaster year, weekly meetings, law changes in summary proceedings, bail, criminal law, traffic.
- ❖ drive to Binghamton, Rochester, Syracuse, and Lake Placid for classes and conferences
- ❖ read law. keep on top of changing law. read obscure laws when they come up
- ❖ attend local and regional training for probation, drug court, mental health court, juvenile offenders, domestic violence
- ❖ stay up to date on current defense councilors and procedures
- ❖ manage law books, insert changes; 2020 manage covid updates binder
- ❖ keep the comptroller happy, manage funds
- ❖ read the weekly ethics reports, learn who was fired for cause
- ❖ read email, reply
- ❖ apply for grants
- ❖ teach classes for immigrants, scouts; construction trades committee
- ❖ budget
- ❖ coordinate with and supervise clerk
- ❖ organize annual visits to MacCormick, attend jail visits
- ❖ participate in magistrates meetings
- ❖ read and sign warrants off hours
- ❖ conduct weddings
- ❖ manage files, manage annual migration of boxes to storage, shredding

(Attachment #5)

In Ferguson, Court Fines And Fees Fuel Anger

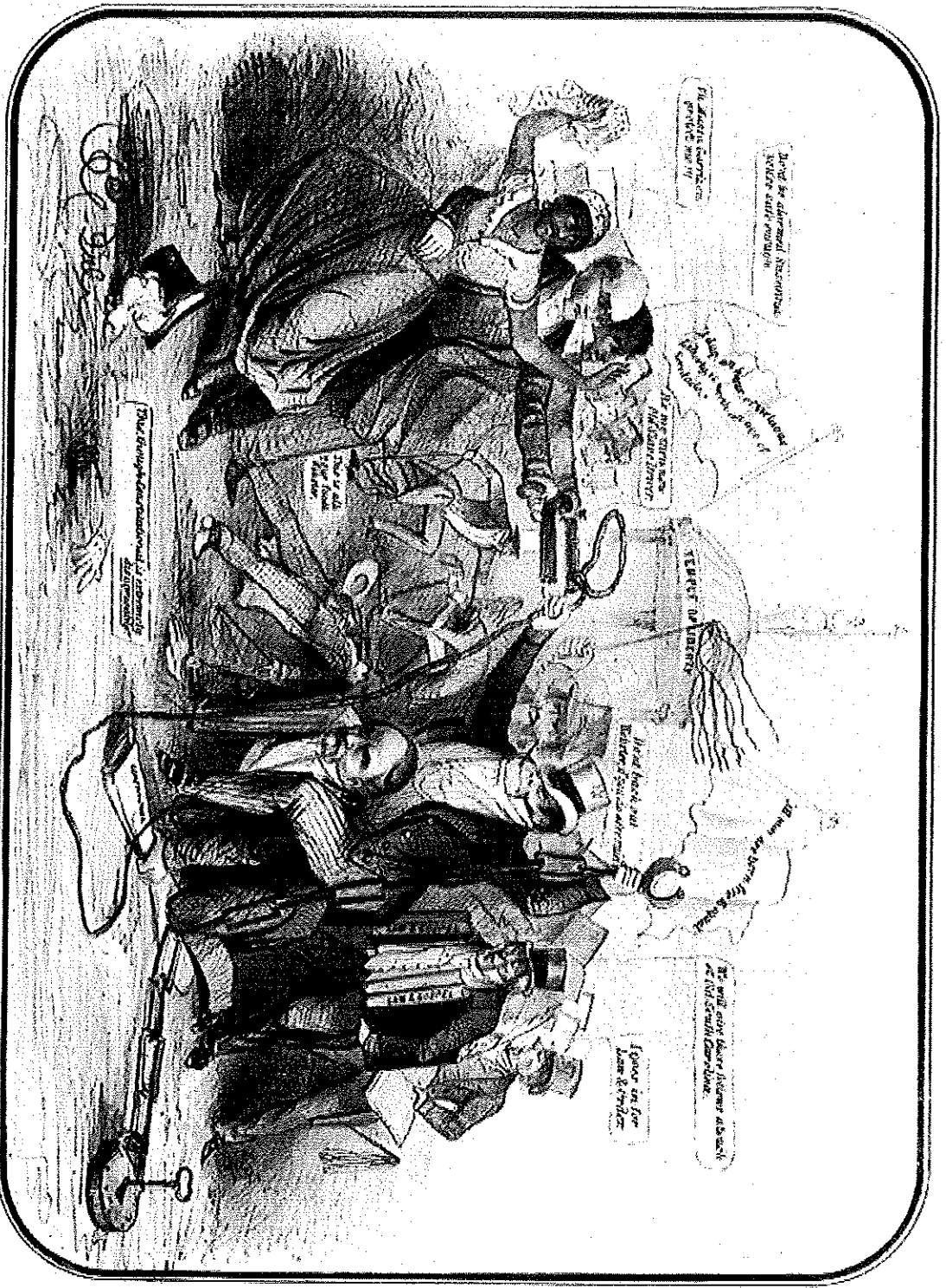
<https://www.npr.org/2014/08/25/343143937/in-ferguson-court-fines-and-fees-fuel-anger>

To understand some of the distrust of police that has fueled protests in Ferguson, Mo., consider this: In 2013, the municipal court in Ferguson — a city of 21,135 people — issued 32,975 arrest warrants for nonviolent offenses, mostly driving violations.

A new report released the week after 18-year old Michael Brown was shot and killed in Ferguson helps explain why. ArchCity Defenders, a St. Louis-area public defender group, says in its report that more than half the courts in St. Louis County engage in the "illegal and harmful practices" of charging high court fines and fees on nonviolent offenses like traffic violations — and then arresting people when they don't pay. The report singles out courts in three communities, including Ferguson.

The ArchCity Defenders report argues that this resentment is justified. Last year, Ferguson collected \$2.6 million in court fines and fees. It was the city's second-biggest source of income of the \$20 million it collected in revenues.

(Attachment #6)



PRACTICAL ILLUSTRATION OF THE FUGITIVE SLAVE LAW.

(Attachment #7)

**Superintendent Witmer
repeated requests**

- ✦ open on demand
- ✦ staff meetings
- ✦ increase window hours
- ✦ harassing our clerk
- ✦ new federal privacy laws and records room
- ✦ more hours yet again
- ✦ caseload

(Attachment #8)

Salaries

	council	supervisor	judge	clerk	bookkeeper
lansing	2.4	30.3	19.5	47.6	
groton	3.9	12.9	18.2	54.7	29.6
ulysses	4.9	26	18.9	57	34
cayuga heights	-	9.4	20	28	19.6
dryden	7.7	27.8	22.6	36.7	(19)
enfield	3.5	24	17	22	58
(Ithaca	15.6	59.6	28.9	89.6)	
newfield	3.1	14.9	10.7	49.3	
danby	2.9	14.5	16	40.6	24
caroline	2.4	19.3	13.8	34.4	31.5
minus Ith	3.8	19.9	17.4	41.1	
ave 10 courts	5.2	23.9	18.6	46	

Mark's salary is 97% of average minus Ith
Clerk is 84%
Justice salaries are 79%
Council salaries are 63%

(Attachment #9)

we ask

1. town board issue statements on ethics and polite behavior as norm
2. town board replace our liaison with someone who is not acrimonious (threats)
3. town board consider just wages, back pay to Jan
remove caseload from table for 2021 and 2022
justices asking for average salary, \$18,000
4. town board address issue of supervisor behavior