

# THE COMMON LAWYER MARK GIMENEZ

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### The Common Lawyer: A Q&A with Mark Gimenez

#### **Q: What inspired you to write "The Common Lawyer"?**

**Mark Gimenez:** The idea came to me after reading an article about a real-life common lawyer, a term for individuals who represent themselves in court without legal training. I was intrigued by the idea of someone taking on the justice system on their own terms and the challenges that come with it.

#### **Q: What is the significance of the title "The Common Lawyer"?**

**Mark Gimenez:** The title refers to the main character, Esteban Suarez, a Cuban immigrant who represents himself in a murder trial. It highlights the idea that ordinary citizens can and should have access to the legal system, even without formal training.

#### **Q: How did you prepare for writing the novel?**

**Mark Gimenez:** I spent countless hours researching common law and the legal system. I also interviewed real-life common lawyers and attended court proceedings to gain first-hand knowledge of the challenges they face. This allowed me to create a realistic and immersive portrayal of Suarez's experience.

#### **Q: What message do you hope readers take away from the book?**

**Mark Gimenez:** I hope readers appreciate the importance of access to justice and the courage of individuals like Suarez who fight for their rights. I also wanted to

highlight the complexities of the legal system and the need for reforms that make it more equitable for all.

**Q: Do you think the legal system is fair to self-represented litigants?**

**Mark Gimenez:** The legal system can be challenging for self-represented litigants, who often lack the legal knowledge and resources available to those represented by attorneys. However, I believe that access to justice requires providing support and tools to help self-represented individuals navigate the system effectively.

**The Figure: The Classic Approach to Drawing and Construction**

The human figure has been a timeless subject for artists throughout history. Capturing the human form accurately and expressively requires a mastery of the classic approach to drawing and construction.

**1. What is the classic approach to drawing the figure?**

The classic approach to drawing the figure involves breaking down the human form into its basic geometric shapes, such as ovals, cylinders, and cones. These shapes are then used to construct a skeletal framework onto which the artist adds muscle and surface details. This method emphasizes the structure and proportions of the body, ensuring accuracy and a sense of volume.

**2. Why is understanding construction important?**

Construction is essential for understanding the three-dimensional nature of the human form and its movement. By breaking down the figure into its simpler components, artists can gain a better grasp of how it functions and interacts with its environment. Construction also allows artists to control the proportions and foreshortening of the body, creating a convincing illusion of depth.

**3. What are the key principles of construction?**

The key principles of construction include:

- **Alignment:** The shapes that make up the body are aligned with the central axis of the figure, creating a sense of balance and symmetry.

- **Proportion:** The different parts of the body are scaled in relation to each other, following specific proportions established by artistic conventions.
- **Foreshortening:** Objects that are closer to the viewer appear larger and elongated, while those that are farther away appear smaller and more compressed.

#### 4. What techniques are used to construct the figure?

Artists use a variety of techniques to construct the figure, including:

- **Linear construction:** Using lines to define the structure and contours of the body.
- **Massing:** Blocking in the main shapes and forms to create a rough sketch of the figure.
- **Contour drawing:** Capturing the contours and surface details of the figure through continuous lines.

#### 5. How can I improve my construction skills?

Improving construction skills requires practice and observation. Artists should study anatomical references, draw from live models, and practice drawing geometric shapes and forms. By developing a strong foundation in construction, artists can create figures that are both accurate and expressive, capturing the beauty and complexity of the human form.

### The English It Cleft

#### What is an it cleft?

An it cleft is a type of sentence in English that emphasizes a particular element of the sentence by placing it after the dummy subject "it" and cleaving it from the rest of the sentence.

#### What is the structure of an it cleft?

An it cleft has the following structure:

It is [emphasized element] that [rest of the sentence]

## **What is the purpose of an it cleft?**

It clefts are used to emphasize a particular element of the sentence and to contrast it with other possible elements. For example, the following sentence emphasizes the subject "John":

It is John that is going to the store.

## **How do you form an it cleft?**

To form an it cleft, you need to:

1. Place "it" as the subject of the sentence.
2. Move the emphasized element to the end of the sentence.
3. Add "that" before the rest of the sentence.

## **Examples of it clefts**

Here are some examples of it clefts:

- It is the book that I am reading.
- It is to John that I am speaking.
- It is raining that is causing the delay.

## **The Power of "No": A Guide to Saying No When Necessary**

The ability to say no is a crucial skill for personal and professional success. When used effectively, it can help us protect our time, energy, and well-being. James Altucher, a renowned entrepreneur and author, has emphasized the importance of "no" in his book "The Power of No."

## **What is the Power of "No"?**

The power of "no" lies in its ability to empower us to make choices that align with our priorities and values. By saying no to distractions, time-wasters, and commitments that don't truly serve us, we create space for the things that matter most.

## **Why is it Hard to Say No?**

Saying no can be challenging for many reasons, including:

- Fear of disappointing others
- Desire to be seen as helpful
- Overcommitment due to a busy schedule

### **5 Questions to Help You Decide When to Say No:**

To determine whether a request or commitment is worth saying no to, Altucher suggests asking yourself these five questions:

1. Does it align with my values and priorities?
2. Do I have the time and resources to do it well?
3. Will it bring me joy or fulfillment?
4. Am I saying yes out of fear or guilt?
5. Would I regret saying yes more than saying no?

### **Benefits of Saying No:**

Saying no when necessary can have numerous benefits, such as:

- Improved time management and productivity
- Reduced stress and overwhelm
- Increased self-worth and confidence
- More space for what truly matters
- Stronger relationships with others, as they will appreciate your honesty

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