

Fly on the Wall

These days in practice many things are practically possible that were less possible before. One can, for example, travel to Bloemfontein bearing access to an ocean of law on nothing more than a little glass tablet. That same little tablet can house the whole record, even if not insignificantly sized.

It should, Fly feels, therefore be possible to combine Important Work with live viewing of The Important Match. The need for this possibility arises when some imbecile contrives to have them coincide. The Viewing must, of course, be live, given the superabundance of cretins who honestly believe there is no greater treat on earth than to be told in advance how things are going to turn out before one gets the opportunity to see them in the process of turning out thus. The real risk, however small, of the eventuation of this harm makes live viewing an absolute essential and anything else simply unthinkable.

There are some serious practical problems. Combining The Viewing with a consultation entails very real drawbacks. One activity tends to demand a certain measure of decorum and reserve from counsel. The other is often impossible without liberal recourse to expletives and violent gestures sometimes accompanied by spitting and stomping or even the breaking of objects. The different roles required of counsel in these differing settings make their combination potentially awkward. Attorneys and clients also appear to expect the occasional glance in their direction during a consultation. Given that one cannot have them sit in such a way as to obscure The Viewing, the likely effect of the combination would be to deprive them of this benefit for too long to be acceptable to them. When people speak, as they insist on doing during consulta-

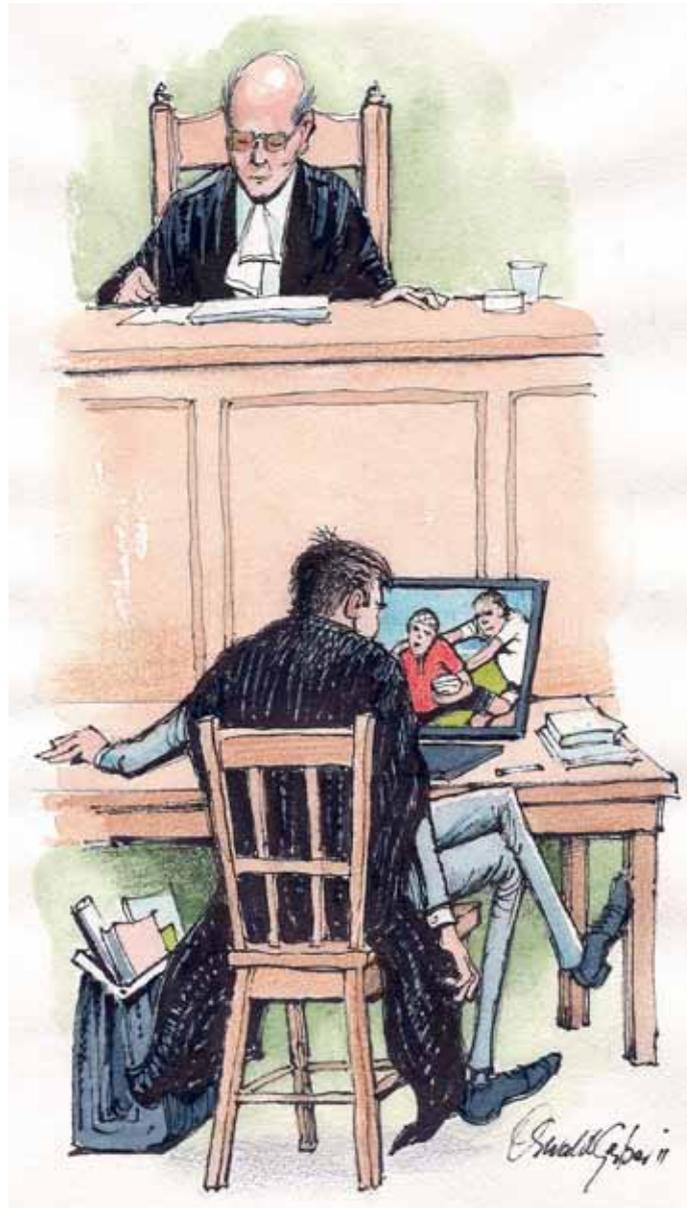
tions, this also tends to have a strongly negative effect on the clarity of the television match commentary. Speaking oneself is even worse, as the voice is closer to the ears

courtrooms have very inferior television facilities, if they have them at all. But even the most sophisticated portable decoder-screening device experiences difficulty with reception in the South Gauteng courts. When one's learned friend or the witness (or the judge) starts talking, as one of them inevitably does during trials, one experiences a problem with respect to the commentary that is uncannily similar to that discussed above when dealing with the consultation combination.

These practical problems are often insurmountable. But there is another thing. There is the matter of Pain Management. Some attorneys and clients seem able (yes, this is true) to shrug off a devastating defeat for the national team and to attend to business at hand as if there had not been a match at all, or even, in some exquisitely wicked way, as if the result had actually come out differently. They appear incredibly unaffected by the sense that there is no longer a point to it all. They feel no qualms about manifesting crass insensitivity, such as engaging in asinine smiling, or even laughing, or simply carrying on with the trivialities of practice without missing a beat.

It is prodigiously difficult to pretend that the world still makes sense, when gasping for air in a cloud of choking grief. It is absolutely critical, Fly has learnt, to approach the Pain Management period professionally, and that means confronting the pain squarely and avoiding the drumbeat of the quotidian until the dull throb has fully abated.

One may easily underestimate the harm that might be done to relationships within the quotidian by, for example, an injudicious punch or kick provoked by a display of brazen oblivion to the pain. One may think these little things go unnoticed, but they often do not. **F**



'... Combining The Viewing with a trial ...'

than in the case of the speaking of others, and therefore even more intrusive on the commentary. Also, one tends to lose concentration when one speaks, which lends an unreal and fuzzy quality to the viewing experience. The consultation combination therefore works much less well than one might have expected.

Combining The Viewing with a trial presents special practical problems. Most