

PEOPLE OF THE PHILIPPINES, PLAINTIFF-APPELLEE, VS. DANTE DABON, ACCUSED-APPELLANT.

G.R. No. 102004. December 16, 1992

Ponente: REGALADO, J.

Read online (full-text search, related cases, audio case brief): <https://batas.org/library/g-r-no-102004/>

REGALADO, J.:

Accused-Appellant Dante Dabon was charged on December 16, 1988 in Criminal Case No. 160 (88) of the Regional Trial Court of Davao del Sur, Branch 19, with the crime of rape, and, on a plea of not guilty,[1] was tried therefor upon an information the accusatory portion of which alleges --

"That on or about the 28th day of August, 1988, in the Municipality of Digos, Davao del Sur, Philippines, and within the jurisdiction of the Honorable Court, said accused, armed with stainless knife, by means of violence and intimidation, did and then and there wilfully, unlawfully and feloniously have carnal knowledge of complainant Teresa Dionaldo against her will, and in her own house."[2]

As is to be expected, especially in cases of this nature, the contending parties invariably submit conflicting versions which are necessarily addressed to judicial evaluation. From a careful review of the records, we find that the decision of the trial court correctly and adequately summarizes the evidence presented by the prosecution and the defense in support of their respective positions, hence the relevant portions of said decision are best reproduced hereunder.

"The version of complainant has been set forth as follows:

"On August 28, 1988 at around 9:00 o'clock in the evening, she was sleeping in their house together with her two children (three years old and one year old respectively). Her husband at that time being a photographer, went to Dawis, for a picture taking engagement. While sleeping, she noticed a weight on top of her body. So, she was awakened. When she opened her eyes, she saw a hunting knife at her bust. A man on top of her, said: 'Do not create any noise or else, I will kill the three (3) of you.' As she looked at his face, she recognized him to be Dante Dabon. Witness further identified the accused in the courtroom. While the accused was pointing his knife to her, he also covered her face with a blanket. She struggled and tried to look at him face to face. She was able to recognize the accused because there was a small kerosene lamp hung on one of the posts of their house, and at the upper portion of the place where they slept.

"When the accused rode on top of her, he was wearing a red polo shirt. On his lower extremities, he was already completely naked. Because of fear that she and her children will be killed, she submitted herself and gave in to his desire. After the accused satisfied his lustful desire, he ran out of the house. She was left, crying and trembling with fear.

"The victim was nineteen (19) years old at the time of the incident, a native (Ilocana tribe) of Tulawa, Allah Vale, South Cotabato.

"The victim's husband, Meliton Dionaldo, corroborated the testimony of his wife as to his whereabouts on the said time and place. When he arrived at about fifteen minutes before 1:00 o'clock in the morning, he was met by his wife, crying, and informed him about the incident. After the revelation from his wife, he went down

from the house and tried to search the surroundings. At the back portion, he was able to retrieve a knife. When he showed it to his wife, his wife affirmed that the same knife was used in threatening her. Witness further found out his own jacket was used by the accused in wiping the private part of his wife after the intercourse.

"On the following day, he made a report to the police that he knows (sic) the accused four (4) months ago prior to the date of the incident. On cross-examination, the witness Mr. Dionaldo further declared that he brought the jacket and the hunting knife to the police station but the hunting knife only was retained by the police. On -re-direct examination, he (the witness) further testified that his house is surrounded by three (3) mercury lamps aside from the lamp which illuminates their house coming from the concrete fence of Mr. Selma.

"Dr. Armie O. Monarca, a resident physician of the Davao del Sur National Hospital testified that on August 29, 1988, she had examined the complainant and found out (sic) to be negative; that she did not find anything from the vagina; that it is very hard to determine whether there was sexual intercourse or not since the examination was made one day after the alleged rape.

"On the other hand, the defense version comprises the testimonies of Ruel de Leon, Felix Maceda, Lagrimas Abalayan and the accused himself.

"Ruel de Leon testified that he is connected with the de Leon Gun Store, the owner of which is his father; that their business has 12 to 15 branches located in Cotabato, Zamboanga, Dipolog, Pagadian, Kidapawan, Butuan, Cagayan de Oro, Malaybalay, Bukidnon, Iligan, Digos and General Santos City.

"On August 28, 1988, he testified that he was in Butuan City together with his wife, Felix Maceda, Perfecto Maat and the accused, Dante Dabon for a business transaction. His wife also conducted an audit in their branch office. On the following day, August 29th, they left for General Santos City; at about 8:00 to 9:00 o'clock in the evening, when they arrived at Digos, and dropped by the office to get some papers in their branch office, they noticed that a group of persons loaded in a jeep together with the father of the accused, arrived and picked up Dante Dabon. They were informed that Dante was facing a case. After getting the papers in the office, they proceeded to the municipal building. He asked the police about the case of Dante but the policemen merely informed him that the accused is facing a case of rape. Right after then, their group proceeded to General Santos City, leaving Dante Dabon in the hands of the policemen. The testimony of Ruel de Leon was corroborated by Felix Maceda, who was one of the group mentioned above. The accused's version, as far as his whereabouts during the said incident (is concerned) was also the same as what the witnesses declared. He denied the alleged offense because he was in Butuan City together with the group when the crime was committed; that the reason why he is being sued in this case was probably to make money out of the family and for some personal grudges. To prove his defense, he presented Mrs. Lagrimas Abalayan Zamora, who testified that sometime in the last week of September, 1988, between 5:00 o'clock to 6:00 o'clock, she visited her half-brother Demetrio Dabon in his house. She noticed the arrival of Mr. Dionaldo; that Mr. Dionaldo was asking for P10,000.00 to 'quits' the case of her nephew. [3]

After trial, the court below rendered judgment on June 26, 1991 finding appellant guilty of rape beyond reasonable doubt, sentencing him to suffer "imprisonment for life or reclusion perpetua" with accessory penalties of the law, and entitling him to a deduction in the service of his sentence by reason of his preventive imprisonment. The stainless knife used in the commission of the rape was forfeited in favor of the State and the civil liability was deemed reserved.[4]

Appellant now seeks the reversal of the aforequoted judgment, faulting the trial court (1) for convicting him of the crime of rape for the reason that the prosecution's evidence failed to establish his guilt beyond reasonable doubt; and (2) for not giving credence to his defense of alibi.[5]

Rape is a crime which is not normally committed in the presence of witnesses, hence courts have perforce to rely on the credibility of the complainant's testimony as weighed against the credibility of the accused.[6] In fact,

conviction or acquittal depends almost entirely on the credibility of the complainant's testimony.[7] Prosaic as it may appear by constant repetition, we reiterate the settled rule that the trial court's finding is generally viewed as correct and entitled to the highest respect because it is more competent to so conclude, having seen closely the way the witnesses testified, their deportment, and the peculiar manner in which they gave their testimonies and other evidence in court.[8]

The court a quo found complainant's testimony to be natural, straightforward and convincing, and with details consistent with human nature and the ordinary normal course of things.[9] We have held that a candid and straightforward narration by the victim of how she had been raped bears the earmarks of credibility.[10] Appellant, however, discredits complainant for having allegedly made inconsistent statements in her affidavit taken on August 29, 1988 at the Digos Police Headquarters vis-a-vis her open court declaration, to wit:

x x x

"q Please tell us what was that unusual incident that transpired?

a While sleeping I noticed a weight that was on top of my body, and so I was awakened. When I opened my eyes I (saw) a hunting knife at my bust, sir." [11]

x x x

"q Now, when you were awakened, what happened to your short(s) and other apparel?

a My short(s) and my blouse were removed by the accused in order to satisfy his desire. It was he who rolled down and removed it from myself (sic)."[12]

The pertinent portion of her aforesaid affidavit, on the other hand, reads:

"6. Q- Please narrate to this investigator as briefly as you can the circumstances surrounding this particular incident.

A- That at about 8:00 o'clock that evening, I sleep (sic) early with my two children. My husband was then at Barangay Dawis, this town taking pictures at the Coronation Program, as my husband is a professional photographer. That after an hour, I was awakened because of weight on top of me and I found out that Dante Dabon, our neighbor, was on top of me and noticed that his penis had penetrated my vagina." [13]

The defense considers this seeming variance "a great whale of inconsistency on a very material point." It goes further by saying that complainant was telling a lie.[14] We disagree.

The most honest witnesses may make mistakes sometimes, but such innocent lapses do not necessarily impair their credibility. The testimony of a witness must be considered and calibrated in its entirety and not by truncated portions thereof or isolated passages therein.[15] It is a matter of judicial experience that an affidavit, being taken ex parte, is almost always incomplete and often inaccurate, sometimes from partial suggestions, sometimes for want of suggestions and inquiries, without the aid of which the witness may be unable to recall the connected collateral circumstances necessary for the correction of the first suggestions of his memory and for his accurate recollection of all that belongs to the subject.[16] Affidavits taken ex parte are generally considered to be inferior to the testimony given in open court.[17] Therefore, discrepancies between statements of the affiant in his affidavit and those made by him on the witness stand do not necessarily discredit him.[18]

Furthermore, a rape victim is not and cannot be expected to keep an accurate account of the traumatic experience she went through.[19] What herein complainant stated in her affidavit and in open court constitute but one chain of events. Thus, chronologically, what happened was that while she was sleeping, she noticed a weight on top of her body and so she was awakened. When she opened her eyes, she saw a hunting knife at her bust. The man on

top of her, the appellant herein, said: "Do not create any noise or else I will kill the three (3) of you." He then covered her face with a blanket, but she struggled and tried to look at him face to face. She was able to look at his face. Afterwards, her shorts and blouse were rolled down and removed by appellant in order to satisfy his desire. His penis then penetrated her vagina. The rape was thus consummated.

Applicable to this case is the jurisprudential dictum that a young and decent Filipina who testifies that she was raped says all that is necessary to show its commission.[20] Considering the inbred modesty and antipathy of a Filipina to airing in public things that affect her honor, it is hard to conceive that the complainant would assume and admit the ignominy she had undergone,[21] and endure the ordeal of testifying to all its shameful details, if she had not in fact been raped.[22] Besides, the natural instinct, of a young, decent Filipina is to protect her honor.[23] It bears notice that the complainant herein is a simple housewife, nineteen years old and an unlettered member of an ethnic tribal community.

It is also indisputable that appellant was positively identified by complainant.[24] Her testimony as to who abused her is credible where, as in this case, she had absolutely no motive to incriminate and testify against appellant.[25] The defense submits that the rape story appears to be "a conjugal concoction to probably extract money from the family of the accused." [26] With respect to this pretension, we give credit to the logical observation of the lower court that such a theory is unbelievable since the accused is only earning P500.00 a month as a house boy. Furthermore, the trial court emphasizes the fact that it found no reason at all on the part of the complainant to impute to appellant the commission of so serious an offense which carries with it the maximum penalty, and to testify falsely against him if it were not true.[27] And as we have likewise observed, as a rule, a victim of rape will not come out in the open if her motive were not to obtain justice.[28]

The defense advances the argument that the rape did not take place because, if it did, the complainant could have shouted for assistance from her neighbors.[29] It demonstrably appears, however, that the complainant did not do so since she thought nobody would come to her rescue considering that there was an ongoing discotheque party at the nearby Cor Jesu College, and she further presumed that her teacher-neighbor was already sleeping. What she did was to sit down at the floor of the house, trembling and crying.[30]

Complainant's aforesaid reaction and actuations at that instance do not in any way impair her credibility. Even among adults, different people react differently to a given situation or type, of situation and there is no standard form of human behavioral response when one is confronted with a strange and startling or frightful experience. It is not uncommon for young girls to conceal for some time the assaults on their virtue because of the rapist's threat on their lives,[31] aside from the fact that Filipinas are naturally bashful. Here, since complainant was expecting her husband to arrive shortly, as he did at around 1:00 A.M., naturally it was for him that she waited and to whom she immediately reported the disgraceful assault on her chastity.

Appellant also takes it against complainant's husband for reporting the alleged rape only on the following day and for supposedly having slept soundly even after he was informed of the alleged rape.[32] This is a deliberate misstatement. Properly understood, what complainant meant was that her husband slept briefly while waiting for the morning to come so he could report the matter to the authorities.[33]

As to why he had to wait for the following day to report the incident is explained by the respective testimonies of complainant and her husband. Complainant explained that after she had narrated to her husband how appellant committed the felony against her, her husband had to conduct an inspection of the premises of their house and, after some time, he was able to recover his jacket and the knife used by appellant,[34] both of which he presented to the police the following morning. Meliton Dionaldo explained that he was able to go to the police early the following day as it was already 1:00 A.M. when he arrived at home and, after he was able to get the details of the

occurrence from his wife, he still had to conduct the aforesaid search resulting in his recovery of the items earlier stated.[35]

The incident was promptly reported to the police at 8:00 o'clock the next day.[36] A lapse of seven (7) hours could not be considered an undue "delay." Assuming arguendo that there was some time gap, it is to be borne in mind that delay in reporting the incident is not an indication of a fabricated charge,[37] nor does it cast doubt on the credibility of the complainant.[38] In *People vs. Santiago*,[39] we held that the lapse of the period of 35 days before the victim finally reported the sexual abuse committed against her by accused cannot be considered unreasonably long to render the victim's testimony doubtful.

Appellant also contends that the best evidence to show that he really wiped his semen with the jacket of the victim's husband was the jacket itself but, as it turned out, complainant's husband did not leave it with the police as evidence.[40] This was satisfactorily explained by witness Meliton Dionaldo as follows:

"q You claimed to have a jacket and you believed that it was used by the accused in wiping himself. Where is the jacket now?

a I brought that jacket to the police station and afterwards the police returned it to me and I brought it home. Only this hunting knife was retained by the police." [41]

It must be noted that complainant's husband is a photographer who did not even finish high school.[42] He is not a lawyer who is expected to know what evidence is material and what is not. Not being aware of the legal technicalities, he cannot be expected to know what evidence to preserve and to present. Being guided merely by the instructions of the police investigator, the failure to present the jacket is not attributable to him. Besides, the testimonial evidence on this particular point is more than adequate to establish that corroborative fact.

Appellant further postulates that it is very improbable that someone would rape the complaining witness in her house where there were bright lights nearby and holes in the house, such that the occupants therein can be seen.[43] The defense has perhaps forgotten that appellant made death threats on the complainant and her children, which cowed the latter into giving in to his bestial desire without creating a commotion.[44] Besides, it is a matter of judicial acceptance that rape can be committed even in places where people congregate, in parks, along the roadside, within school premises, and even inside a house where there are other occupants.[45] Lust is no respecter of time or place.[46]

Veering to another angle, the defense submits that there was no rape because there was no evidence of sexual intercourse thirty hours before the medical examination of the complaining witness, drawing for that purpose upon this part of the testimony of the examining physician, Dr. Armie O. Monarca:

"q You were the one who placed this word 'negative'?

a Yes, sir.

q When we speak of negative, that means there is none?

a There is none.

q You said you have examined the patient's genitalia, is it not?

a Yes, sir.

q And by the looks of things after the examination it could be that she never had sexual intercourse some 30 hours before the examination?

a Yes, sir." [47]

Again, the defense commits another polemic distortion. The physician did not say that there was no sexual intercourse. What she said was "it could be" that complainant did not have sexual intercourse. Obviously, the import of her statement is that it was possible that there had been no sexual intercourse, but neither did she rule out the possibility that there may have been sexual congress thirty hours before the examination. To get a clearer perspective, it is best to have a closer look at the testimony of the physician:

“q Now, what was (sic) your findings Mrs. Wit-ness in connection with that examination?

a As negative and the sperm cell analysis was also negative.

q Why?

a Since the patient, the complainant, is already married and she has borne children.

q You mean there was a sperm cell but because the woman is married you placed there negative?

a It is difficult to compare. I mean, I put there, i.e. - negative findings since that is expected of a married woman?

q You mean to tell us there was a sperm cell?

a Yes, sir.

Prosecutor Quiñones

You said a while ago you placed negative because the complainant was married. Do you want to tell us there were sperm cells?

a What I mean by negative findings of a married person who has delivered children compared to a single or unmarried patient.

q How could you compare a married woman with that of a single (woman)?

a It needs illustration. I mean the genitalia of a married woman is different from that of a single (woman) who ha(d) not experienced sexual intercourse, the la(b)ia is enclosed and the position of the hymen is intact. There is no laceration while (in the case of) a married woman who ha(d) experienced sexual contact the hymen is already lacerated, with old healing laceration and the la(b)ia is not in a position.

q Would you say doctor the person examined experienced sexual intercourse immediately before you conducted the examination?

a I examined the patient the following morning so, I cannot. It is difficult to determine whether it was recent or whether there was sexual intercourse or not."

x x x

Court. Questions from the court.

q From your testimony that your finding is negative, does the court gather from you that you did not find anything from the vagina?

a Yes, your Honor.

q You also stated since you examined the patient one day after the alleged rape, you concluded that it is very hard to determine whether there was sexual intercourse or not?

a Yes, your Honor."

x x x

RE-DIRECT EXAMINATION

"Pros. Quiñones

q Do you want to tell us Mrs. witness that you cannot determine whether the patient experienced sexual intercourse about 20 or 30 hours before the medical examination?

a No, it is very difficult to determine."[48] (Emphasis and words in parentheses supplied.)

Needless to say, the absence of spermatozoa in the vagina or thereabouts does not negate the commission of rape,[49] since it is penetration, however slight, and not ejaculation, that constitutes rape.[50] Besides, complainant herself testified that appellant, in an act of onanism, ejaculated on her legs, thus:

"q In your affidavit, you stated that when this accused was about to ejaculate, he pulled out his penis out of your vagina and ejaculated (o)n your legs and he was trembling?

a Yes, you Honor, he was trembling. Perhaps, he was in a hurry. He was afraid that somebody might arrive and catch him, your Honor.

q When he stood up, did you also stand up?

a I stood up and afterwards sat on the floor, and tried to wipe the sperms scattered on my legs, you Honor."[51]

Appellant relies heavily on his defense of alibi[52] despite the long settled doctrinal rule that alibi cannot prevail over the positive identification by the prosecution witnesses of the author of the crime.[53] Justifiably, courts have always looked upon the defense of alibi with suspicion[54] and always receive it with caution,[55] not only because it is inherently weak and unreliable but also because of its easy fabrication.[56]

Appellant's claim of alibi, being supported only by the testimony of his long-time employer and close friends, and not by credible, impartial or disinterested persons, does not deserve the consideration he vainly hopes for, more so in the light of his positive identification as the culprit.[57] From a painstaking scrutiny of the records and a thorough consideration of the evidence, we have no reason to doubt the veracity and the accuracy of the identification made by complainant.

It is very highly improbable, if not impossible, that appellant was indeed in Butuan City at the time of the rape. Meliton Dionaldo, husband of complainant, established without contradiction that when he left his house at the Estrada Compound in Digos at around 7:30 A.M. of August 28, 1988, he met appellant in his yard. Appellant asked him where he was going and he replied that he was going to take pictures in Dawis.[58] He had known appellant for around four months[59] and appellant confirmed that he was also a resident of a house located in a part of the Estrada compound.[60] We further quote with approval the submission of the Solicitor General on this point:

"Nevertheless, if appellant was indeed in Butuan at the time of the reported rape, why did his alleged companions in Butuan not protest his innocence since they were all present when appellant was arrested? They did not even accompany him to the police station. Worse, his own lawyer waived his right to submit his counter-affidavit in the preliminary investigation of the complaint. It is thus clear that his alibi is an eleventh-hour contrivance to get him off the hook."[61]

In its judgment, the trial court decreed that "(i)t appearing that the filing and docket fees are not paid, there is no declaration of any civil liability which is deemed reserved." However, the pertinent rule on this matter is merely to the effect that when the offended party seeks to enforce civil liability against the accused by way of moral,

nominal, temperate or exemplary damages, the filing fees for such civil action as provided in these Rules shall constitute a first lien on the judgment except in an award for actual damages and, in the present instance, the civil action is deemed impliedly instituted with the criminal action at bar.[62] Under Article 345 of the Revised Penal Code, the offended woman is entitled to be indemnified and such indemnity, pursuant to the present policy of the Court, shall be in an amount of at least P30,000.00.

WHEREFORE, the judgment of the court a quo is hereby AFFIRMED, but with, the modifications that the incorrect phrase "imprisonment for life" is deleted therefrom and the sum of P30,000.00 is hereby awarded, and should be paid by accused-appellant, to the complainant by way of indemnity.

SO ORDERED.

Narvasa, C.J., (Chairman), Feliciano, Nocon, and Campos, Jr., JJ., concur.

[1] Original Record, 18.

[2] Ibid., 1.

[3] Ibid., 97-99.

[4] Ibid., 101.

[5] Accused-Appellant's Brief, 1; Rollo, 28.

[6] People vs. Tereso, 194 SCRA 154 (1991).

[7] People vs. Soliao, 194 SCRA 250 (1991).

[8] People vs. Carson, 204 SCRA 266 (1991).

[9] Rollo, 9.

[10] People vs. Miscala, 202 SCRA 26 (1991).

[11] TSN, February 21, 1989, 14.

[12] Ibid., id., 19.

[13] Exhibit "2", Folder of Exhibits.

[14] Accused-Appellant's Brief, 9; Rollo, 36.

[15] People vs. Natan, 193 SCRA 355 (1991).

[16] People vs. Laredo, etc., et al., 185 SCRA 383 (1990).

[17] People vs. Loveria, 187 SCRA 47 (1990).

[18] People vs. Dumpe, et al., 183 SCRA 547 (1990).

[19] People vs. Feliciano, 195 SCRA 19 (1991).

[20] People vs. Tongson, 194 SCRA 257 (1991).

[21] People vs. Eclarinal, et al., 182 SCRA 106 (1990).

[22] People vs. Estolano, 193 SCRA 383 (1991).

[23] People vs. Pasco, et al., 181 SCRA 233 (1990).

[24] TSN, February 21, 1989, 14.

[25] People vs. Natan, 193 SCRA 355 (1991).

[26] Accused-Appellant's Brief, 9; Rollo, 36.

[27] Original Record, 99.

[28] People vs. Rio, 201 SCRA 702 (1991).

[29] Accused-Appellant's Brief, 9; Rollo, 36.

[30] TSN, February 21, 1989, 19, 29.

[31] People vs. Raptus, 198 SCRA 425 (1991).

[32] Accused-Appellant's Brief, 10; Rollo, 37.

[33] TSN, February 21, 1989, 22-23.

[34] Ibid., id., 20-21.

[35] TSN, February 20, 1989, 9-10.

[36] Exhibit "2", Folder of Exhibits.

[37] People vs. Banayo, 195 SCRA 543 (1991).

[38] People vs. Yambao, 193 SCRA 571 (1991).

[39] 197 SCRA 556 (1991).

[40] Accused-Appellant's Brief, 12-13; Rollo, 39-40.

[41] TSN, February 21, 1989, 8.

[42] Ibid., id., 22-23.

[43] Accused-Appellant's Brief, 13; Rollo, 40.

[44] TSN, February 21, 1989, 14, 15.

[45] People vs. De los Reyes, 203 SCRA 707 (1991).

[46] People vs. Mangalino, 182 SCRA 707 (1991).

[47] TSN, February 20, 1989, 6.

[48] TSN, February 20, 1989, 4-7.

[49] People vs. Yambao, *supra*.

[50] People vs. Banayo, *supra*; People vs. Tongson, *supra*.

[51] TSN, February 21, 1989, 28-29.

[52] Accused-Appellant's Brief, 19; Rollo, 45.

[53] People vs. Obando, et al., 182 SCRA 95 (1990); People vs. Bocatcat Sr., et al., 188 SCRA 175 (1990).

[54] People vs. Bondoc, 85 Phil. 545 (1950).

[55] People vs. Cinco, et al., 67 Phil. 196 (1939).

[56] People vs. Rafallo, et al., 86 Phil. 22 (1950).

[57] People vs. Lucas, 181 SCRA 316 (1990); People vs. Ampoan, et al., 187 SCRA 173 (1990); People vs. Beringuel, et al., 192 SCRA 561 (1990).

[58] TSN, February 21, 1989, 8-9.

[59] Ibid., February 20, 1989, 11.

[60] Ibid., November 26, 1990, 16.

[61] Appellee's Brief, 15; Rollo, 82.

[62] Sec. 1, Rule 111, Rules of Court, as amended by Resolution of the Supreme Court dated July 7, 1988.

ABOUT BATAS.ORG

Study smarter at BATAS.org

The Philippine bar review and law-school companion built around how your brain actually remembers.

The complete Philippine law library - free for everyone.

More than 100,000 Supreme Court decisions, Republic Acts, and executive issuances - full-text searchable, browsable by category and year, and always free. No paywall, no login. This PDF came from it.

Audio case-brief lectures.

Any decision becomes a podcast-style lecture - facts, issues, ruling, and doctrine - with read-along highlighting and a hands-free presentation mode. Study while commuting, working out, or resting your eyes.

Bar review built on the science of memory.

Complete, sequenced courses for all eight bar subjects, narrated like podcasts and reinforced with retrieval practice and spaced review - the study techniques with the strongest evidence behind them.

The full law-school curriculum.

One subscription unlocks the entire J.D. curriculum - every subject, every lesson, with your progress tracked down to the paragraph so you can pick up exactly where you left off, on any device.

Mock exams that tell you where you stand.

Timed multiple-choice exams graded instantly, with per-subject score breakdowns and focus suggestions that point you at your weakest topics first.

A study planner that keeps you on pace.

Set your schedule and BATAS tells you every day whether you are on track for bar day - and exactly which lesson to take next.

Start free at <https://batas.org>

The law library is free forever - and your first lesson is one click away.

The text of this document is an official public record and remains in the public domain. Formatting, presentation, and compilation © 2026 batas.org.

Downloaded free from the batas.org Law Library. Share it freely - the library is free for every law student, bar reviewee, and practitioner.