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REVIEW ESSAY

Law & Society REVIEW

Learning from Laurie Edelman

Faculty members, students, policymakers, practitioners, and laypersons will learn from Laurie Edelman's brilliant scholarship for generations to come. She developed not only a new theory and a conceptual vocabulary for understanding the interplay of law and organizations—think, "legal endogeneity," "managerialization of law," or "symbolic structures" (Edelman, 2016)—but also a more precise account of the mutual influence between law and society. In this essay, we hold her scholarly contributions aside for a moment to explore what the three of us learned from Laurie in two of her most cherished professional roles as mentor and research collaborator. In many ways, she seemed happiest in these roles, whether advising students and early-career faculty (especially those most likely to be marginalized in academic circles, such as persons identifying as women and/or LGBTQ+, persons of color, persons with disabilities, or first-generation scholars) or working with scholars of diverse expertise and statuses on large, empirical projects.

Catherine "KT" Albiston and Osagie Obasogie wrote the first two parts of this essay, respectively, "Learning the Hidden Curriculum from Laurie" and "Walking with Laurie," which explore what they learned from Laurie as a mentor. Laurie advised both as doctoral students at UC Berkeley: KT in the Jurisprudence and Social Policy (JSP) program and Osagie in the Department of Sociology. KT also collaborated with Laurie and multiple colleagues on the award-winning "Judicial Deference Project" (e.g., Edelman et al., 2011). Calvin "Cal" Morrill wrote the third part of this essay, "Learning Research Collaboration from Laurie." In this part of the essay, he explores what he learned from collaborating with Laurie on multiple, long-term empirical projects, especially the award-winning "School Rights Project" (e.g., Edelman et al., 2022; Morrill et al., 2010; Preiss et al., 2016; Thompson et al., 2015) and the "Conversations in Law and Society" project (Morrill et al., 2020).

LEARNING THE HIDDEN CURRICULUM FROM LAURIE (KT ALBISTON)

Young scholars, especially first-generation students, people who identify as women and/or LGBTQ+, and people of color, learn early that there is a "hidden curriculum" to navigating academia (see, e.g., Calarco, 2020; Margolis, 2001). The hidden curriculum can be understood as the "habitus" of academia, the rules and norms that are not formally taught or explicitly conveyed that nevertheless constitute the cultural capital that enables success (Bourdieu, 1977, 1987). This hidden curriculum of unwritten rules, unspoken expectations, and unofficial norms, behaviors, and values defines what it means to be an academic. Scholars who learn these implicit academic, social, and cultural messages, who learn to walk the walk and talk the talk, tend to transition successfully from graduate student to assistant professor, and from assistant professor to tenure. Knowing that the hidden curriculum exists, however, is not the same as knowing how to master its invisible rules and norms. Laurie taught those around her important unwritten norms and rules that govern academia, including how to behave like a scholar, how to recognize and produce good scholarship, and how to do your part for the community.

How to behave like a scholar

Laurie revealed the hidden curriculum to her students, noting along the way how socialized behavior for women and people of color sometimes contradicted the unspoken social norms of academia.

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She explained how to ask a question at a colloquium (never start with "this might be a silly question, but" as women are socialized to do), how to evaluate whether a journal would be receptive to your article (who is on the editorial board right now?), and how to answer hostile questions during a talk (reframe as a reasonable question then answer). She trained interdisciplinary students how to navigate the slightly different habitus of sociology audiences (always acknowledge the limitations of your data) and law school audiences (make the normative argument clear). Laurie also supported her students through largely informal but important networking tasks by nominating them for awards, mentioning their work to editors and potential employers, and suggesting them for authors of reviews or book chapters. She taught her students how to take small but important steps toward building their professional identity: present work in progress at a conference; write a review essay for an early, low-risk publication; submit a grant proposal. As Laurie well knew, each of these activities develops and demonstrates important skills central to being a successful academic, yet they appear nowhere in the formal course curriculum. Laurie also conveyed important values: always credit other people's ideas, even if they aren't yet published; pay it forward by mentoring the next generation of scholars; treat other scholars with respect, especially if they are junior to you; show integrity and fairness in the process of evaluation (for admissions, grants, publication, hiring); and most importantly, speak up against injustice and unfair treatment when you see it.

How to recognize and produce good scholarship

Laurie had an unparalleled ability to separate the quality of scholarship from its performative aspects, a sensitive "B.S." detector if you will. Sitting next to her during a talk was a master class in identifying weak arguments, overclaiming, and just plain puffery. This was an education in habitus as well, in learning the hard-to-define qualities that differentiate excellent scholarship from "mere empiricism" or "normal science" (Kuhn, 2012). Her own work—theoretically rich and paradigm shifting—exemplified these qualities. It transformed both the socio-legal understanding of anti-discrimination law and the neo-institutional understanding of organizational environments. Her sophisticated empirical research offered crucial insights into why civil rights laws often fail to generate meaningful social change, and her novel theoretical concepts of "legal endogeneity" and "managerialization" (Edelman, 2016) have become essential tools for analyzing how organizations institutionalize inequality and shape courtroom and workplace interpretations of legal compliance.

As a colleague, she was generous with her feedback, and always eager to talk about work in progress and new ideas. Here too, she deployed her laser-like critique of half-formed arguments or holes in logic, but in a constructive and enormously helpful way. She also knew how to disagree in a productive manner, listening to the arguments on the other side, asking perceptive questions, and stating her perspective clearly and respectfully. She was always willing to be persuaded, although usually she was right. There are many things I will miss about Laurie, but the opportunity to turn over new ideas, discuss new research, think creatively about how to study pressing social problems, and share the pleasure of intellectual inquiry with her is near the top of the list. Even now, I often think, I cannot wait to tell Laurie about what I just read before I remember that she is gone.

How to do your part

There are not many scholars of Laurie's stature who gave of their time and expertise as she did. Laurie was an extraordinarily generous mentor, colleague, and friend. She took time from her own work to advise other scholars on research design, grant proposals, publishing, and navigating the job market and tenure. She founded mentoring programs in the American Sociological Association and the Law & Society Association. She served in nearly every leadership role imaginable, including President of the Law & Society Association, Co-Founder and Chair of the Sociology of Law Section in

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the American Sociological Association, and Associate Dean of the JSP program and Faculty Director of the Center for the Study of Law and Society at Berkeley. Less visible but just as important are the countless hours she dedicated to reviewing proposals for the National Science Foundation and the American Bar Foundation, and serving on the editorial boards of the *Law & Society Review*, *American Sociological Review*, *American Journal of Sociology*, and *Annual Review of Law and Social Science*. In recent years, she led the undergraduate Legal Studies Honors Program at Berkeley, mentoring young scholars in their undergraduate careers and beyond. Laurie was an outstanding role model for what it means to do your part for an academic community. She took seriously her contributions to the development of the field in institution building, leadership, and mentorship of the next generation of scholars. Thank you, Laurie, for teaching us what it means to be a responsible, innovative, and ethical scholar. We are grateful for our time with you, and we will always remember your generosity, kindness, and brilliance.

WALKING WITH LAURIE (OSAGIE OBASOGIE)

During the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, I started going on long walks. Everything was closed, and social distancing was still the norm. So, I started walking. I would just wander around the Berkeley Hills hours at a time.

Laurie and I have been neighbors for several years. I can see Laurie's house from my kitchen window. Before the pandemic, we would occasionally run into each other, but most of our interactions back then were on campus. She was a dear advisor to me as a graduate student and early career scholar. And I am quite thankful for the two years that I had with her as a colleague at Berkeley Law and the Jurisprudence and Social Policy Program. Laurie was a phenomenal scholar. Her contributions will be treasured for years to come. She has influenced my work tremendously, and her guidance over the years is the foundation of the sociological imagination that I bring to everything that I do. And I'm sure this is also true for many, many others.

As I ventured out into the world on these long walks, I started to see more of Laurie—and in a different context. Laurie has done so much for me over the years. She guided me while I completed my dissertation, protected me when obstacles appeared, and created opportunities that launched my career. But perhaps what I will cherish the most about Laurie are the long conversations that we would have on the sidewalk, sometimes with other neighbors, and always with her dog by her side. We talked about everything—life, politics, and the various comings and goings in the neighborhood. I always left these spontaneous meetings thinking about the world a little differently. Laurie was an incredible mentor. And an even better friend.

Laurie loved dogs. She would often ask me "When are you going to get a dog?" I would always find different ways to dodge the question. I like dogs, but never feel like I have the time it takes to be a good dog owner. I think Laurie was persistent in asking me about this because she understood the importance of having a full life, of doing more than just work, and of giving to, caring for, and nurturing someone or something beyond your own needs. She was most certainly right.

Laurie gave much of her life and attention to dogs, most recently to her little companion Juno. Juno and I did not start off on the best of terms. Juno would see me from afar as I walked toward her and Laurie and would bark up a storm. Laurie would patiently hold her back with a leash. We tried everything to get Juno to like me. I tried bribing her with treats, but she would just take the treat and then continue barking at me. Laurie would tell Juno, "That's my friend Osagie." That did not seem to matter much to Juno. Walk after walk, this routine persisted. It seemed like my relationship with Juno would never blossom.

One day, during one of the last times that I saw Laurie while out on a walk, we struck up our normal conversation. After about 15 min or so, I turned to Laurie and said, "Hey, have you noticed that Juno hasn't barked at me?" Laurie looked down at Juno and then to me and said, "Wow, you're right! Maybe now she's your friend!" Laurie's tedious and careful efforts at doggie dispute resolution

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had paid off, and Juno finally accepted me. And as I looked down at the fluffy little pup that had spent most of the pandemic growling at me, I think she may have even looked up and smiled. Well, as much as a dog can do that.

I still go on long walks. Each time, a big part of me hopes that I might run into Laurie and Juno. And, I still look out of my kitchen window, hoping to catch a glimpse of them. It is hard to accept, but I understand that Laurie is no longer with us, and that Juno is living her best life in Wisconsin with Laurie's sister. But I am comforted by the love, joy, and wisdom that Laurie brought to my life. She will always be with me, by my side, as I walk through the Berkeley Hills, and for the rest of my life. Laurie, you are loved, and you are missed. Thank you for all that you have done.

LEARNING RESEARCH COLLABORATION FROM LAURIE (CAL MORRILL)

Much of Laurie's pathbreaking scholarship emerged from collaborative efforts with teams of researchers she led or co-led on ambitious empirical projects. I once heard her tell a graduate student that to succeed in academia they needed to establish a singular scholarly identity early in their career, but to sustain that identity they would need to collaborate with scholars they cared about and respected. "Why collaboration?" the student asked. Laurie responded that collaboration can open your mind to new ideas and expertise, and besides, she said with her wonderful smile, it is more fun to work on research with people you care about and respect. True enough. As with all things Laurie, however, there was deeper reflection and method in her team-based research collaborations than only expanding one's expertise or having fun (although there was always plenty of fun). What did I learn from Laurie about how to succeed at team-based research collaborations? How did the practices she instilled in her team-based research collaborations underscore her core values?

Laurie typically approached research collaborations with theoretically-informed, working research questions and a capacious sense of the object of inquiry (e.g., "judicial deference" or "rights mobilization"). In some projects, such as Conversations in Law and Society, the object of inquiry only emerged gradually as we began coding the public oral histories in the project and realized we were studying the transformation of law and society from an intellectual movement to a field that never quite became institutionalized. However well-defined the object of inquiry was, Laurie always raised important reflexive questions all the way through a collaborative project from initial team meetings to analyses to write-ups: "What do we mean by rights mobilization?" or "How can we measure rights mobilization in a way that closely aligns with how we conceptualized it?" or "What are we trying to learn from founding scholars in law and society?" She believed that answering such questions involved a lot of thought and discussion, but even more so getting into the thick of conducting the research itself through collecting and analyzing data, and writing up findings. Laurie never signaled she had all the answers to the questions she or others raised, while listening—Laurie was an excellent listener—and welcoming ideas from anyone on or outside the team if their expertise might shed light on a knotty issue. In this sense, collaborating with Laurie constituted learning-by-doing, a hands-on, iterative approach for solving conceptual puzzles, meeting methodological challenges, and making sense of research findings. Learning-by-doing could be a bit messy, yet its value-added character far outweighed its potential pitfalls by creating opportunities for innovation, alternative expertise, and relational connection while reducing hierarchy among team members (especially important when working with persons of very different statuses, such as students or entry-level faculty). Although Laurie always exercised wise leadership on her projects, learning-by-doing meant that project leadership could emerge from multiple places on a research team depending upon what was needed. Team members felt empowered to intervene with their insights without fear of looking stupid. In this sense, learning-by-doing realized multiple values Laurie held dear, especially equality, humility, solidarity, curiosity, and fun.

The fluid style of learning-by-doing could not have succeeded without two other practices: analytic tenacity and substantive governance. Analytic tenacity involved the persistent, systematic

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pursuit of meaningful analyses and interpretations of empirical data. Many research collaborators' memories of working with Laurie may resonate with this practice. On any project, Laurie relentlessly pushed for precision and what the research findings meant for broader theoretical and legal discourse. If conducting quantitative research, there was always one more model to run, one more technique to try to ensure that a statistically significant finding was actually, as Laurie put it, "real." If conducting qualitative work, she tirelessly pushed collaborators and herself to clearly articulate the basis for interpretive claims in interview transcripts and fieldnotes while not "cherry picking" examples simply because they aligned with one's theory. Analytic tenacity realized multiple values by which Laurie lived her professional life, including authenticity, clarity, elegance, and a fierce commitment to theoretical significance and methodological rigor.

Substantive governance proved especially salient in the School Rights Project (SRP) as it became a sprawling research team comprising multiple faculty and more than two dozen graduate and undergraduate students spread across four different universities. This practice involved structuring researcher authority inside the project via formal, transparent policies that curbed arbitrariness while achieving fairness. At Laurie's insistence, the principal investigators on the SRP—Richard Arum (then Professor of Sociology and Education at New York University and now Professor of Education and Sociology at UC Irvine), Karolyn Tyson (then Professor of Sociology at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill and now Professor and Chair of Sociology at Georgetown University), and Cal (then Professor of Sociology, Business, and Criminology, Law and Society at UC Irvine and now Stefan A. Riesenfeld Professor of Law and Professor of Sociology at UC Berkeley)—agreed to a series of written procedures for credit claiming (e.g., author orderings) and sharing data and data instruments among team members and beyond. Substantive governance helped manage power relations within the project while providing a normative structure to undergird learning-by-doing and analytic tenacity, prevent misunderstandings, and offer a mechanism for resolving disputes. In this sense, substantive governance realized and symbolized several other values Laurie cherished, including fairness, trust, and accountability.

I once asked Laurie if she drew some of her inspiration for how to approach team-based research collaboration from her experiences while a teenager playing in the State of Wisconsin Youth Symphony Orchestra (WYSO). As first-chair violin, she also filled the role of the WSYO's "concert mistress" to tune the orchestra before concerts and work closely with the conductor. She said that working on research teams reminded her a little of playing in a symphony orchestra, except that in the latter "the music is always there" to "script" performances while the conductor keeps everyone on point. Research projects, she observed, often prove more "open-ended" by taking unanticipated turns, which require improvisation. Learning-by-doing, analytic tenacity, and substantive governance helped Laurie tune, improvise, and metaphorically write the music in her many collaborative projects that yielded beautiful, impactful scholarship. Although she did not use the terms suggested in this essay to describe her approach to collaboration, she would recognize the practices (and, knowing her, would have had a useful suggestion or two for alternative concepts and arguments). Of course, these practices did not guarantee the considerable payoffs her collaborative projects produced. But they helped extend the magic Laurie always brought to research in the form of insight and creativity, and that those of us fortunate enough to collaborate with her witnessed firsthand.

CONCLUSION

Learning from Laurie Edelman was always multifaceted and impactful whether in her roles as mentor or research collaborator. The lessons she taught explicitly unfolded in her countless meetings and emails with students and faculty colleagues. Yet, learning from Laurie perhaps most powerfully occurred by watching her in action, such as how she asked a scholarly question, how she supported students or, perhaps most subtly of all, how she demonstrated human connection and kindness through the way she introduced the dogs who lived with her to friends she encountered on daily

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walks in her neighborhood. In this sense, what we learned from Laurie as a mentee or research collaborator taught each of us how to conduct our lives with the highest integrity and honor; to approach what Laurie achieved as that rarest of human beings, a true *mensche*.

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