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## DAVID BEDERMAN AS MENTOR AND MODEL

*George Shepherd\**

Others in this Issue have noted David Bederman's unsurpassed intellect as a scholar in admiralty and international law. Still others have focused on David's skill as an advocate before the Supreme Court.

I instead will focus on David's central role as a mentor and model for other faculty. In the most successful university departments and schools, there is often a central faculty member who, through energy and intellectual vigor, coaxes the best out of his colleagues. For example, the law school and economics departments at the University of Chicago in the 1950s and 1960s crackled with scholarly spark as faculty and students there developed many important economic ideas. There at the same time were five future Nobel winners. The person who inspired the energy was Aaron Director. Although he published little himself, he was famous for bringing out the best in others.

David Bederman was Emory Law School's Aaron Director, except that, unlike Director, he was also one of the country's most productive scholars. David brought out the best in his colleagues in four ways.

First was his energetic love of scholarship. Some in academia are cynical, taking tenure and their wonderful jobs for granted. Not David. I arrived here in 1995 along with four other new junior faculty members. We all immediately met David, who was a few years senior to us. His exuberant love of research and scholarship infected us all quickly, setting the tone for how we in our cohort understood our place in the law school. David viewed his position as a professor as a profound privilege. He told us how uniquely fortunate we were to have jobs where a main part of our task was to choose something that interested us most and learn everything about it. Tenure made it so that nobody could question our choices.

With these great jobs came the responsibility of working hard at them. David showed us by example that exerting full energy on scholarship was not a burden, but a joy. I have never known anyone who enjoyed research and writing more than David. David must have woken up each morning with a

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smile, knowing that spread before him was a feast of things to learn, to ponder, and to explain to others in writing.

His joy in scholarship is shown by what he chose to do during the past few years when he wrestled with illness. Others might have chosen to slow in their professional work and instead would have done other things that they had always longed to do. But David's job already allowed him to do what he had always wanted to do. So he kept on doing it, energizing himself by maintaining a stunning pace of productivity. An ill David Bederman produced more scholarship than three normal, healthy academics.

Second, David demonstrated to us that teaching was both crucially important and fun. Gaining knowledge was not satisfying by itself. You had to pass it on to others. And you did this not only in articles and books but also in the classroom. Teaching is not a chore. Instead, it is a wonderful opportunity to help students: to help them discover new facts, to understand new patterns, to learn in new ways, and to love the law in its flawed glory. I have watched David teach. His teaching skill, borne partly of talent but also of careful preparation, grabbed students' attention. It also inspired me to become a better teacher and to enjoy teaching for the privilege that it is.

As with scholarship, David demonstrated his love for teaching by continuing in the classroom during his illness, long after others would have retreated. The energy that he shared with students also energized him.

Third, David taught us all the importance of being an engaged colleague. For example, some may be tempted to view attending faculty seminars as a chore. After all, isn't hearing a colleague or visitor discuss a paper outside one's field a waste of time? David's emphatic answer was no. Again, he showed us our important responsibility to read others' scholarship and to help them with it both at seminars and elsewhere. And this responsibility is no unpleasant chore. It is a pleasure to learn about new areas and to help others.

Fourth, David showed us how to combine his love for his work with his love for his family. His wife, Lorre, and their daughter, Annelise, have been a frequent presence at law school events, and he was completely devoted to them. Just as he cherished his work, he cherished his family. David showed us that one can be both a great scholar and colleague and a terrific husband and father.

As David became ill, he said that one of the things that kept him striving to live was to be there for his wife and daughter. I see too that he was striving to

be there for his colleagues and students. We are so grateful that he was there for us for decades, setting the right tone and expectations by shining example. We and the law school are so much better because of David.