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BRINGING LAW TO LIFE

CARDOZO LAW

BENJAMIN N. CARDOZO SCHOOL OF LAW • YESHIVA UNIVERSITY

SHOE BRAND EXTRAORDINAIRE STUART WEITZMAN INSPIRES CARDOZO STUDENTS



November 29, 2018

On November 19, Stuart Weitzman entertained and inspired law students, anecdote after anecdote. He shared his life lessons in business: learn and grow from challenges; think outside the box; and collaborate through “advantageous partnerships.” The event was organized by Rachel Zilberfarb '19, Clara Chasles '19, Simone Dvoskin '20 and Hallie Cohen '20, through the Cardozo Fashion Law Society and FAME Center.

Mr. Weitzman opened his discussion by sharing an anecdote about entering the shoe business. When he was in school in the early 1960s, he sketched 20 shoes and brought them to his friend's father, a shoemaker, to sell the designs. The man looked at the first sketch, tore it up, and called it a copy. He grabbed a second sketch, turned it over, and told Mr. Weitzman to redraw the tore-up sketch. Recreating it from memory, he proved it was an original design. The man paid him less than \$400, and Mr. Weitzman decided that if he could sell those sketches so easily, he might as well do it for a living.

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July 24, 2019

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Professor Alexander Reinert has been named the Max Freund Professor of Litigation & Advocacy, the chair formerly held by founding faculty member Arthur Jacobson.

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Cardozo School of Law

Mr. Weitzman explained that when he saw a problem in the shoe world, he sought solutions. For example, he noticed that picking out shoes to match each red carpet gown was wasteful. “We needed a shoe that was simple, as naked as possible so it could go with everything, and change the way it goes with accessories.” Thus, he created, “The Nudist,” an outside-of-the-box creation that, to his surprise, became a hit for consumers and celebrities alike, which spawned look-alikes from every other shoe designer.

Likewise, he was creative in his marketing. Before the season’s shoes were released to stores, he would send “preview” gifts to media editors, sending a random pair to each editor. Most often, the previews were not worn. To ensure the shoes were being used, he asked them to pick the shoe of the season they wanted, and discovered that nearly all of the editors wanted the same shoe, season after season. This became his market research. He explained, “That’s the focus group. And they don’t even know they’re the focus group. That’s the best kind!” By this outside-of-the-box thinking, he could pinpoint which new shoes would be the bestsellers, and adapt his focus accordingly.

He was also innovative in streamlining the business through analyzing data from online shoe sales. Before shoes were sold online in the mainstream, he partnered with a small online retailer. The experimenting venture was inventive, successful, and served as a good indicator for which shoes were popular. By experimenting with the right partners, he was able to grow the business.

Mr. Weitzman asserted that thinking creatively leads to advantageous partnerships. He highlighted strategic collaborations that helped the business grow in scale, eyeing partners who could help the brand long-term, such as Kate Moss and James Franco for advertising campaigns, Zaha Hadid for brick-and-mortar innovation, and numerous celebrities for charitable contributions, including Gigi Hadid for Pencils of Promise. Partnerships, he claimed, are what make a good business great.

An Evening with Design Legend Stuart Weitzman was sponsored by the FAME Center, the Intellectual Property + Information Law Program, and the Cardozo Fashion Law Society.

is proud to recognize 27 members of the Class of 2019 who have been elected to membership in the Order of the Coif.

June 11, 2019

[Cardozo Issues Statement on the Military Ban on Transgender Individuals \(/news/cardozo-issues-statement-military-ban-transgender-individuals\)](#)

Inclusion is at the heart of Cardozo Law School’s community. The recently imposed government ban on transgender individuals serving in the military poses a problem for all institutions of higher learning committed to non-discriminatory practices.

June 6, 2019

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Cardozo’s yearlong “Women’s Votes, Women’s Voices: The 19th Amendment at 100” event series kicked off on June 4, 2019 – exactly 100 years since the United States Congress granted women the right to vote by passing the 19th amendment on June 4, 1919.

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