

Interviewee: David King

Interviewer: Hayley Landman

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Re: Law Review Alumni Feature

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**Q: What is your favorite *CLR* memory?**

A: That's an easy one! I met my wife, Sarah Wilson, on *CLR*. She was one year ahead of me, and she was the leader of my Notes and Comments seminar. A friend from my *CLR* class, Jennifer Rodgers (who is now a CNN commentator), set up our first date, so my whole marriage is due to *CLR*. After we became a couple, I went back and found my writing competition scores, and it turned out that my wife had graded me (anonymously) before she knew me. She gave me a pretty good grade, but not great.

**Q: How did your time on law review inform your legal career?**

A: It made me realize that I did not want to be a litigator, with its emphasis on brief writing, because I was not a fan of cite-checking. More importantly, many of my best friends and connections who have played a big part in my career were from law review. A *CLR* friend helped me get my first law firm job at Wilson Sonsini. More recently, just last month I saw the Editor-in-Chief from the class behind me at a work event. At my wife's 25<sup>th</sup> reunion this fall, we met up with some of our best friends from law school who we met on *CLR*, many of whom we keep up with to this day.

**Q: What skills or other assets did you take away from *CLR*?**

A: Even though *CLR* is more litigation-focused, the writing skills I developed on *CLR* definitely improved my writing as a corporate lawyer.

**Q: What is the most valuable relationship you developed on *CLR*?**

A: In addition to my wife, there is not one relationship but rather a group of friendships. When I think back to law school, my best friends are from *CLR* as a result of spending so many hours together in those offices. I really enjoyed the time spent with my fellow Notes and Comments editors—Jennifer, Stephanie Skaff, and Tung Yin—and appreciated the leadership of our Editor-in-Chief, Jessica Karner.

**Q: Did you know going into practicing law that you wanted to end up in-house?**

A: I did, and that is one of the reasons I went into corporate law, because it's easier to move in-house with a corporate background. It's also one of the reasons I started at Wilson Sonsini, because they have a culture of corporate attorneys going in-house, many times to firm clients.

**Q: How did you break into that world?**

A: A lot of firm lawyers end up going in house for a client. Williams-Sonoma was a Wilson Sonsini client, but I did not work on the account. However, through the law firm I became aware that the company was looking for somebody, and I applied. I started as the head corporate lawyer in 2004 and worked my way up to the position of General Counsel in 2011 when my boss departed for another opportunity.

**Q: What advice do you have for recent graduates? What advice would you have given yourself?**

A: First, it's a cliché, but follow your passion, because you will do better work if you love what you're doing. Second, focus on the people and relationships. In law school you can be more focused on grades, but now that I am out of law school, I realize it is really the relationships that matter. Doing quality work is half the job, but the other half is communicating that to your clients.

I would say that even if you start at a law firm, it is helpful to see things from the perspective of an in-house attorney. I wish I would have found a way to spend at least some period of time in-house when I was at a firm.

**Q: Is there anything else you would like to share?**

A: It was torture doing that CLR writing competition after exams were over at the start of the summer, when you could just decide not to do it and be on vacation, but I am so glad I spent the time. It was such a valuable experience to be on *CLR*, to meet my wife, and to make so many other connections. I look back on it as my favorite part of law school, much more than a specific class or other student organization. And a final p.s.—my wife edited this interview transcript!