

Social Justice & Transformative Change

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Motivations for Attending Law School

According to a [2024-2025 LSAC survey](#), 49% of LSAT takers indicated that they wanted to attend law school to help others and 37% said they wanted to advocate for social justice.

Ethical Vision of Justice

Discernment:

- What does social justice mean?
- How do we engage in collective care?
- Which actions best effectuate change?
- Who should be involved?
- To whom are we accountable?

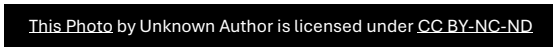
Background: Law & Divinity



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The background is a solid dark blue. In the top left corner, there is a branch with several green leaves. In the top right corner, there is a small green asterisk. On the right side, there are two large, detailed red flowers with many petals, and a smaller cluster of white flowers below them. At the bottom right, there are large, green, heart-shaped leaves.

Law, Religion, and Social Justice Course: A Case Study



Religious Roots of Civil Rights Movement (~ 1930-1970)



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Key Features of Leadership



Engaged in moral and ethical reflection.



Self-transformation and systemic transformation.



Imaginatively reframed religious narratives to create a moral and ethical vision of justice.



Persisted even though change was slow, spanning decades.



Collaborated with leaders whose religious commitments differed.

Cultivating Reflective Practices Needed to Discern Ethical Change

Engaging in moral reflection and action

Challenging assumptions and blind spots, and uncovering values and moral underpinnings

Engaging in relationship-building, including with those affected by specific legal issues and engaging with others who have different perspectives.

Sparking the imagination

Consideration of individual *and* collective care

Specific Reflective Practices – with others

“[L]egal education should build systematic reflection into its culture and practice...reflection equips lawyers to figure out how to link the ‘is,’ the ‘ought’ and the ‘what might be.’” Susan Sturm, 127 Harv. L. Rev. F. 49, v. 1, Nov. 2013.

<https://harvardlawreview.org/forum/vol-127/law-schools-leadership-and-change/>



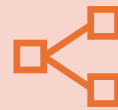
Imagination

Poems, Movement



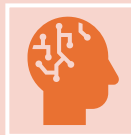
Self-awareness

Verbatims, Value Sort



Resilience

Mindfulness Practices



Critical Thinking

Additional Resources:

Sarah Azaransky, *This Worldwide Struggle: Religion and the International Roots of the Civil Rights Movement* (Oxford University Press, June 2017).

David Louis Wyche, *Care of the Self and the Care of the Other: From Spiritual Exercises to Political Transformation* (Columbia University Press, May 2025).

