

Professor Edward H. Levi

John Paul Stevens†

How do I begin to express my admiration for Edward Levi? The different capacities in which his character and intellect have inspired and benefited lesser men seem virtually endless: teacher, dean, scholar, philosopher, public servant, author, student, lawyer, wit, craftsman, benefactor, leader, citizen, friend.

When the Ford administration—unique in basing the decision on merit alone—selected him to be Attorney General of the United States, the choice must have been compelled by the same qualities of character, intellect, and grace that have led to his preeminence in one discipline after another. He presumably invited Aaron Director to share the responsibility for teaching his course in competition and monopoly because he knew that he would learn from Aaron and, a fortiori, that his students and the profession would benefit from Aaron's insights into what is really at work in the law of antitrust and patent. He has confessed pride in his part in the naming of Soia Mentschikoff as the first woman law professor ever to be appointed a full professor in a major law school, though it is clear that it was the quality of the appointment rather than the sex of the appointee that generated that pride. Aaron and Soia reflect the kind of talent that Edward sought and succeeded in bringing to the University of Chicago Law School.

Those of us who have observed his work over the years—who have been taught by his example, by his socratic dialogue, or by what he has written—have been inspired to strive for the standard of excellence that he has constantly maintained for himself. A reach that falls short of Edward's grasp is nevertheless extended and gratified by the quality of that inspiration.

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