



MEMBER PROFILE QUESTIONS

INTRO : Associate at David Anber's Law Office.

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Year of Call : 2016

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QUESTIONS :

1- How did you get into criminal law?

I studied criminal justice for my undergraduate and graduate degrees. From there, I did some work doing statistical analyses for the Ontario Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services (as it then was). During that time, I learned that if it bleeds, it leads. With that background, I figured that interpersonal conflict would be a far more

interesting legal area than taxes and real estate. Law school confirmed that for me and working in criminal law has been exhilarating.

2- What type of cases do you enjoy defending the most and why?

Sexual assault cases. The stakes are high, and the cross-examinations are almost always dynamic and seldom predictable. Plus, the law is always changing in that domain, so there are some interesting s. 276 and 278-related obstacles for defence counsel. The runner-up would have to be drink-drives. I always figure that there has to be some needle-in-a-haystack *Charter* breach that can get breath samples excluded.

3- How did the practice of criminal law change you?

It's some of the most rewarding work I've ever done. Before being a criminal lawyer, I can't recall people thanking me by crying and hugging me. Only a lucky few get to have that happen every now and then. In a very real way, it's lifesaving work. For me, it has given me a strong sense of purpose. Perhaps I've internalized some vicarious trauma and I just haven't realized it yet.

4- If there is one thing only you would like to see change in criminal law, what would it be?

I would like to see the ameliorative aims of s. 718.2(e) of the *Criminal Code* and *R. v. Gladue* take effect. We have a long way to go when it comes to addressing the historical injustices against Aboriginal communities. Fixing systemic issues takes time, but their overrepresentation in the criminal justice system needs to remain a top priority for all criminal justice actors.

5- What advice would you give to your younger self when you first started practising

criminal law?

Get a Twitter account and promote yourself better. That and be less neurotic about screwing up at trial. You should never be afraid to do your job.

6- How do you deal with bad work days?

My fiancé, Jasmine, and my dog Doug can brighten any dark day. They're my heroes.

7- What do you think of Zoom court?

I miss the ability to see people at court. It's not great for connecting with other lawyers. On the other hand, it allows me to get other work done while waiting for my matter to be called, and I love being able to do trials from my office without papers anywhere. I'm hoping for a happy medium when the zombie apocalypse is over.

8- Any embarrassing court story you're willing to share?

Not that I can remember (except the stuff that I will guard with more caution than even solicitor-client privilege).

9- Who is your role model/inspiration in criminal law?

Throughout law school, I absolutely loved reading Chief Justice McLachlin's decisions. To me, her decisions encapsulated the nobility of the law. *R. v. Bedford* was decided in 2013. I was in my early phase of law school. For all the stress I had at the time, reading decisions like that reminded me that I had chosen the right career. She's a hero in Canadian legal history.

10- What's your favourite song?

Hummer by the Smashing Pumpkins.

11- How do you maintain work life balance and how do you deal with the stress of the job?

As far as work-life balance goes, living close to the office helps. Cutting down on travel time has given me some more time to get more work done and it lets me see my dog and fiancé more at lunch. Working at night also helps. It gives me some time to engage with the living. Though I must admit that I'm finding that I have less energy for that these days. As far as stress goes... I'm not sure. Onychophagy? Hot tubs and saunas also do wonders.

12- What is your biggest legal inspiration?

At the end of the movie *The People Versus Larry Flynt*, Edward Norton did a great scene making submissions the U.S. Supreme Court as the lawyer Alan Isaacman. I've seen better mootings since then, but it felt very inspiring at the time and it's what inspired me to do mootings in law school.

13- What do you do outside of the law?

I play guitar and drums. Recently, I've been teaching myself Korean. I've finished all the lessons on Duolingo, but it's tough getting all the words to stick. I also enjoy shucking oysters every now and then.

14- What would your defence bar colleagues be surprised to learn about you?

I have an American law degree as well as a Canadian one.