

Maurer School of Law: Indiana University
Digital Repository @ Maurer Law

Alfred Aman Jr. (1991-2002)


Law School Deans

Spring 2021

Lifetimes: Fred Aman '67, Merging the Worlds of Law and Music

University of Rochester

Follow this and additional works at: <https://www.repository.law.indiana.edu/aman>

 Part of the [Educational Leadership Commons](#), [Legal Biography Commons](#), [Legal Education Commons](#), [Legal Profession Commons](#), [Music Education Commons](#), and the [Music Performance Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

University of Rochester, "Lifetimes: Fred Aman '67, Merging the Worlds of Law and Music" (2021). *Alfred Aman Jr. (1991-2002)*. 39.

<https://www.repository.law.indiana.edu/aman/39>

This Writing about Dean Alfred Aman Jr. is brought to you for free and open access by the Law School Deans at Digital Repository @ Maurer Law. It has been accepted for inclusion in Alfred Aman Jr. (1991-2002) by an authorized administrator of Digital Repository @ Maurer Law. For more information, please contact rvaughan@indiana.edu.

LIFETIMES: FRED AMAN '67

'Merging the Worlds of Law and Music'

Now the holder of a named professorship at the Maurer School of Law at Indiana University Bloomington, University Life Trustee **Fred Aman** '67 retired last year after a decorated career as an attorney, legal scholar, and academic administrator. Along the way, he's been an accomplished jazz drummer.

My childhood

My parents and I lived in an apartment on the top floor of my grandparents' house, which was just off Hudson Avenue in Rochester. Our neighborhood was full of people from Eastern Europe who spoke Polish along with some Russian and Lithuanian. My grandparents emigrated from Poland and taught themselves how to read and write English when they arrived. My grandfather also taught himself to play the piano, accordion, and the violin. It is entirely possible that my later interests in global issues, particularly transnational and comparative law, may very well have started back then.

My drumming lessons with jazz great Cozy Cole

There was a generous man in our neighborhood who annually took small groups of youngsters to New York City. We flew on a plane, stayed in a hotel, went to a Yankees game, and our eyes opened up to the world. Our host knew Cozy Cole, a great jazz drummer who played with legends like Louis Armstrong and Cab Calloway. He arranged for me to meet Cozy at the Metropole Café, a popular club where Cozy often played. I learned he had a drum school in the city and I really wanted to take lessons with him.

I was the first in my family to go to college, and I soaked in all the lectures and new ideas with enthusiasm. I learned from some of the best faculty members, like legendary political scientists Richard Fenno and William Riker.

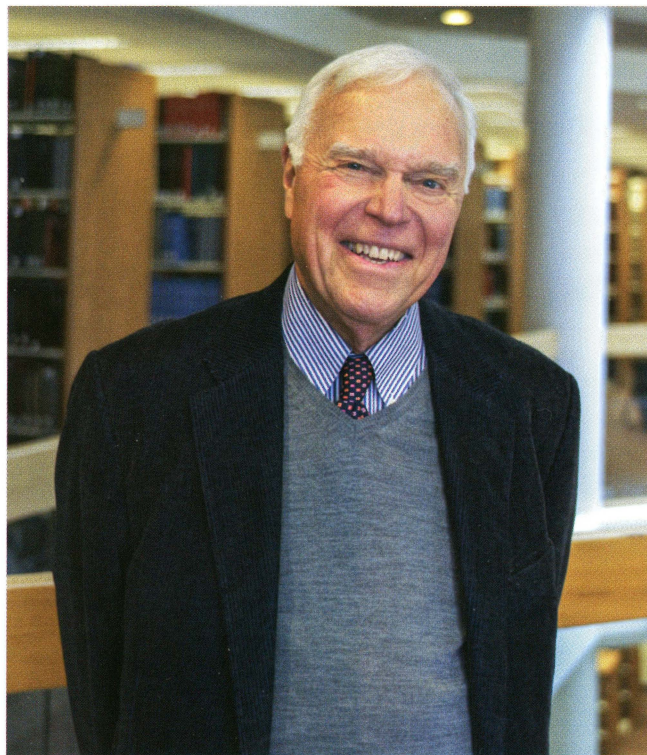
My Aunt Helen made this possible, promising that if Cozy agreed to the lessons, which he did, she'd get me to the lessons. So, several times a year, we'd take the Friday midnight train from Rochester to Manhattan. I'd have a three-hour lesson with Cozy, go to the Metropole to hear him play a set, and then we'd take the midnight train back. It was a wonderful experience, in every way.

My time at Rochester

I was the first in my family to go to college, and I soaked in all the lectures and new ideas with enthusiasm. I learned from some of the best faculty members, like legendary political scientists Richard Fenno and William Riker. I also played a lot of gigs, too. The fraternities would call on me and my quintet when they wanted a "smooth" sound at their parties.

My summer as an arranger at Eastman

Ray Wright '43E, head arranger at Radio City Music Hall, taught a very challenging and rewarding summer class called



STRUCTURE AND FEELING: Law and music embody both, Aman says.

the Arrangers' Workshop. While taking the class, I wrote an arrangement that played at the Arranger's Holiday concert that year. Carmen McRae, a famous jazz singer, was the featured artist and performed at a nearly sold out concert at Eastman Theatre. That was a huge thrill for me.

My civil rights experience

In 1970, when I graduated from law school, I was offered a clerkship with Judge Elbert P. Tuttle in Atlanta. He was a truly great judge and was instrumental in deciding and writing many landmark cases involving racial discrimination. His approach and dedication to equity, fairness, and justice in the law inspired me and helped me see the positive impact that a legal career could make.

I met Carol during that time, too. Later, I asked Judge Tuttle if he'd marry us. In response, he said, "You know, there aren't many things you can ask an 80-year-old to do for the first time, but this is one of them." He married us and we've been together for almost 45 years.

My approach to both law and music.

The two aren't nearly as different as many might think. I enjoy merging the worlds of theory and practice, in both law and music. Often, people think that music is all feeling, but there is more structure in it than they realize. You have to learn the technique to excel. Similarly, there's a lot more feeling in the law than people think. You have to consider the human dimension, the world of justice, what the law means in a particular context, and how it applies to an intricate set of facts and situations. **®**

To read more and hear some of Aman's music, visit uofr.us/fred-aman.