



# THE RESPECT PODCAST with host Mike Domitrz

And Guest Laura Dunn

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Mike: Welcome to the Respect Podcast. I'm your host, Mike Domitrz, from mikespeaks.com, where we help organizations of all sizes, educational institutions, and the U.S. military create a culture of respect. Respect is exactly what we discuss on this show, so let's get started.

Mike: This week's guest is Laura Dunn, and her track record is amazing. I want to give you a little bit of background on Laura. She advances victims rights through legislative and policy efforts, as well as direct representation of survivors in campus, criminal, and civil systems.

Mike: As a nationally recognized victim turned victim rights attorney and social entrepreneur, her work's been featured on NPR, National Public Radio, People Magazine, Forbes, The National Blog Journal, The New York Times, and many more.

Mike: Some of this I'm going to save for our discussion because she's done so much, and the bio here, it's incredible, but as a highlight, for example, she's obviously an attorney now, representing cases with SURVJUSTICE, S-U-R-V-J-U-S-T-I-C-E. They are the only national non-profit representing victims of campus sexual violence in hearings across country, and currently the lead plaintiff in a pending federal lawsuit against the current administration over Title IX.

Mike: Her work has received awards and recognitions, including the 2015 Echoing Green Global Fellowship, the 2016 Benjamin Cardin Public Service Award, the 2017 Special Courage Award for the U.S. Department of Justice's Office for Victims of Crime, and the 2018 TED Fellowship, so thank you so much for joining us, Laura.

Laura: Thanks for having me on.

Mike: Absolutely, and to get right into it here, you know, the show's all about respect. How did you come to the place where you are today, doing the work you're doing?

Laura: That's a great question. Unfortunately, like too many people, I had a negative experience in college. I had two men that I knew and trusted from being on the same sports team with me, and they made a decision to sexually harm me when I had been drinking and was unable to either consent or defend myself, so because of this unfortunate experience with sexual violence, I became an advocate first in trying to fight for myself, but I realized that I was fighting for many more. It is now my career.

Laura: I did found SURVJUSTICE. I'm no longer there, I've moved on and transitioned. I'm at the Fierberg National Law Group, where I continue to do litigation, not just for sexual assault survivors, but all survivors of campus crime, including gun violence and hazing.



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- Mike: Oh, okay, and so there, when you say representing survivors, for those who aren't aware, so survivor on campus comes forward, they file a complaint, at what point is there a need for someone to reach out to an attorney such as yourself to be represented?
- Laura: It's a wonderful question. I think there's a very big norm in our society that if you're accused of something, you right away get an attorney, get advice, and you're very cautious and careful. There is this belief that if you're a victim, that you can just access the process, and it'll work perfectly, and you'll be fine. Unfortunately, so many survivors find out that systems that are meant to protect them don't always do that, so campuses aren't always acting in the best interest of students who are victimized. Law enforcement, campus security, other organizations sometimes try to push away survivors and their voices, so it's fully fine to make that initial report and to go and right away try to get organizations and institutions to support you if that's their role, but if you're skeptical that that will occur, if you're already getting signs that there isn't support, I would actually contact an attorney or an advocate immediately because the moment you start making a complaint, things can either go really well, or unfortunately, sometimes in the cases I see, they go really poorly from square one.
- Mike: Yeah, and when we're traveling the world talking about this, we always tell [inaudible 00:03:53], in reaching out to a local advocate, a local crisis center, who has been down this road with other survivors, who knows the possibilities of support that are available to you, and when somebody's showing red flags in that system, the troubles there, is helpful to at least help you understand that, no, that's not okay, what they just said to you, or what they just asked you, and you do deserve to be represented and supported. I think it's wonderful. I think a lot of times people think, 'Oh, a student goes forward, the system failed them, nothing they can do.' For them to hear from you, no, there's people like you out there, who are saying, "We can represent you, we can fight for you because you deserve that."
- Laura: Absolutely, and we see so many cases where if we had gotten involved a little earlier ... I would say this all the time at SURVJUSTICE, if someone had just called us first, it would be a different game. If you're in a situation where you're not getting academic support, there's no safety measured, they're encouraging you to take a medical leave, get off campus, you definitely need to be making a call.
- Laura: Advocates can be very helpful, but sometimes real action is needed. Attorneys and advocates alike can offer confidentiality and privilege, which is very important to protect your privacy, and getting information about your rights, and then starting to advance them.
- Mike: Yeah, and you and I know that due to the media coverage of Title IX, a lot of people go, "Well, why is this necessary? I mean, Title IX is tilted to survivors, and if they come forward, everybody's going to believe them, and the system's going to protect them. I mean, this whole Title IX thing, that's all it does. In fact, it's slanted against people who are accused." These are the comments we hear in the media all the time.



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- Mike: Can you explain the reality of actually how this works on many campuses? There are campuses where it's wonderful, and it's supportive, but this is not always the case.
- Laura: Yeah, I definitely think it's important to recognize that in the last decade there's been a shift, right. Back in 2010, the Center for Public Integrity, National Public Radio, really exposed campus sexual assault for the first time through an investigative series, and showed the opposite of all the comments you were just saying, that actually victims weren't being supported, weren't being believed, and even if the rare case, where someone was like, "Yes, you were in fact harmed. We're going to give the consequence to the person who harmed you," it was meaningless. It was writing essays about how not to rape someone, and that was the only consequence. It was watching videos, again, from student orientation, for a second time, or having a summer suspension.
- Laura: Really, the media dialogue, at first, was exposing how survivors are mistreated. There's obviously been a backlash, people who represent those who are accused saying, "This is unfair," and in my opinion, I'm obviously a victim's rights attorney, so you can obviously say that I'm biased towards my side, I think people just aren't used to what accountability looks like. Accountability does mean someone is found responsible through an appropriate process for sexual violence, and they're not being favored and catered to, and allowed to continue threatening, or otherwise harassing someone in the interim.
- Laura: You know, there's a lot of accusations on both sides, and really, it's important to remember what Title IX is. It is a federal civil right that protects any person, not just men, not just women, any person from discrimination on the basis of sex, and that includes in the form of sexual harassment and sexual violence. This is on the campus level, and at the civil level, you can also go to court and force it.
- Laura: That's very different than the criminal level, which has a whole different process enshrined in the constitution. The campus and civil level are lower level means of legal advocacy, and of course, can give meaningful results to survivors, such as academic accommodations and support, but at the end of the day, are trying to make sure someone who is harmed by sexual violence can continue to access their education on campus free from any hostility created by someone who's accused of perpetrating against them until there has been an ultimate finding whether or not that did occur.
- Laura: I hope that answered your question.
- Mike: Absolutely.
- Mike: Often people are saying, "Hey, why isn't this" ... There's been a few states that have tried to, and one that did put it through, that have tried to say, "This should all be criminal, this should not be dealt with by schools. This should only be dealt with by the court systems and the judicial system." Many of us who know this work knows that that could highly deter survivors from coming forward in the first place. Can you explain



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what the problem is with that, with this idea that the moment a campus knows about a case, it should all be handed over to the police, to the judicial system of the authorities outside of the campus environment?

Laura: Yeah. What I always do, even in going into legal settings such as the American Bar Association Taskforce I've been on, or the American Law Institute, when we were debating different polices and procedures to put forward on a national level, even with attorneys, they say, "Okay, we need to back up. Let's not even think about sexual assault, let's just think of a physical assault."

Laura: You're a student, you're physically assaulted by another student. Let's say you're drunk at a bar, so you get punched. You, of course, can go to the police, but that's not your only option. You can also sue the person in civil court that just punched you. You can also just go to the campus level and say, "I want them removed because they're an unsafe student, and they're going to impede my access to education," or you could do all three. That's true of many scenarios.

Laura: Any type of crime, not just sexual crimes, allow you to go campus, criminal, or civil. You can pick, you can choose, you can do one after another, you can do them all at the same time. We have more than one legal remedy for harm in our society, and that's on purpose because there are many different ways that people can advance their rights and interests. They don't only have to rely on police, and of course, we know that the criminal standard is beyond a reasonable doubt, which is very different than the civil and campus standard of preponderance of the evidence. It is a different burden, it is a different ballgame, and that's because criminal is removing someone from society, imprisoning them often, fines in some places depending on the type of violence, potentially even death, so very serious consequences call for very serious due process and highly protective measures.

Laura: On the campus, you don't have a right to be in college. You don't. It's privilege. A college can choose you, or not choose you. You have no rights to get in. Once you are in, your rights are limited to stay there, especially if you have, in fact, violated any of their policies and procedures on students.

Laura: So, we're at a very different level with the lower standard of proof, and again, it's very important that survivors have different options; campus, criminal, and civil, because they might need different things. One survivor may need all those damages from a civil case to get medical treatment in the future. Another one may want to keep the campus safe, and have that person removed for a criminal process from society. Another person may say, "You know what, I just need to continue my access to education," so they need to go elsewhere.

Laura: Lots of different options, lots of different remedies. There is no one size fits all, and there is not just one option for survivors.



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Mike: I'm so glad you brought up the different standards because this is so important. I think a lot of people forget that the campus has the right of who they want to have on their campus, and so often people go, "You can't convict them." It's not whether they can convict them, it's whether they have the right to say, "I don't want that student as part of our community. We have that right, and whether we're a public or private institution, we actually have that right because we accepted them in. They had to apply to get in, they were not forced to us. We get to choose."

Laura: You can be removed for underage drinking on college campus, right.

Mike: Right. That's right.

Laura: [inaudible 00:10:57] over something that I would consider a less serious than committing sexual harassment or assault against someone.

Mike: Do you think-

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Laura: ... serious in committing sexual harassment or assaulting someone.

Mike: Do you think the push back that's happening, that people try to argue this is going to too far of an extreme now, do you think this is out of a fear that adults look back and go, "Well I could have been kicked out for this," or, "I could have been in this?" So there's a subconscious level of I'm gonna push back because this goes against what I did back in the day. This would force me to look in the mirror and go, "I didn't always do everything right according to these standards." And are you saying that I'm this person, this perpetrator or whatever? Well I'm not, so this is crazy. This is going extreme. Is that what's happening?

Laura: I think there are three main drivers of this idea that there's a frenzy on campus and it's unfair to accuse. I think one driver is very much political, president Obama of course advanced title nine, listened to a bunch of student activism that was going on all across the country. There's tons of rallies, tons of protests, and tons of timeline complaints. We went from 30 to 300. So there was a big demand. The president, at that time, listened. And of course in certain circles he's not very popular and there has been a backlash within America with the new president. And so some of it is destroying that legacy, undoing everything that he has done. A different driver-

Mike: Can we pause? I wanna pause on that one, because I think it's so important. You remember when the first 30 were listed? When it came out in the news that here were the first, I don't even know if it was 30. It might have been like 19, but here ... I think it might actually be higher like 50 or 60, I just remember the first list of universities that were listed and people were like, "Oh my gosh, you are one of the 60," and those of us in the field were like, "Give this another six months to a year, because you're gonna see



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a lot of schools pop up on there." Because people don't realize what a problem this was. What they saw was the first list of people of offenses and the universities that were named, and what those ... Can you believe them? And I was sitting there going, "Yeah, but we're way too small list right now. This list should be way more comprehensive," because what it means is that somebody on that campus had support to come forward and file this in some way or form.

Laura: Yes.

Mike: I don't think schools should go, "Oh, no. We've been named." It should be, "What do we need to do to improve."

Laura: Yeah, possibly. It was definitely a way to shame schools into having to deal with it, and the positive is that many schools embraced when there were complaints and said, "We need to do better. We need to do more." Amherst is one of those schools. There's several others. SUNY, that school system. A lot of them were proactive as a result and said, "Well, it's coming out. We might as well take ownership and try to change that narrative by accountability for ourselves, and pushing the envelope for how to be the most progressive school with the best policies and procedures and prevention effort."

Laura: So definitely, I think, a good thing. We talked about the list. It's all colleges. There were K through 12 and over 80 school districts were on the list last I knew. So it's not just campuses. Unfortunately this is a K through 12 issue.

Laura: But I wanna finish talking about two of the drivers [inaudible 00:13:59].

Mike: Absolutely, yes.

Laura: One of them is absolutely what you mentioned. I wouldn't frame it as I'm worried that sounds like me, as much as I don't really believe what sexual assault is. A lot of people want sexual assault to be the most violent of, and most egregious of the actions in a sexual setting. So physically abusing and raping someone, and they don't wanna think of it as, "I ignored the no," or they were too drunk to consent. They don't want it to be anything lower than the most egregious standard. Because yeah, it may be conduct that they themselves have engaged in because we, unfortunately, live in a rape culture where there are narratives that sexual aggression is okay, that pushing someone into certain sexual activity, whether they're sober, whether they're aware or not, whether they're comfortable or not doesn't matter. And all that rape culture really does allow people to perpetrate a variety of offenses, whether they be criminal all the through or just misconduct at a campus level does really matter, I think, at the end of the day because someone's harmed.

Laura: So there is a little bit of that. I think it's rooted in the lack of understanding of what sexual violence really is, and when acknowledge that it's not just no means no, it's only



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yes means yes. That's really how we start protecting society, and that's why so many campuses have affirmative consent standards.

Laura: The other, which is somewhat related, is a lot of people think women lie. And that is the narrative I see most prominently pushed. I have no problem with people who are due process advocates. You want a fair process? So do I. I'm a lawyer. I care about it being done right. We don't, of course, want anyone falsely accused. I just think that's very rare, and unfortunately a lot of those advocates think it's very, very common because they don't believe that women tell the truth about their experiences.

Laura: And a lot of that is grounded in really old narratives that, quite frankly, I don't understand how they haven't gone out of fashion. A lot of them are regret sex. Well, we've had the sexual revolution. We're pretty comfortable with consent. We understand that most people are having sex before marriage. It's not really this shame factor. Slut shaming is not as much of a factor to deter people from being truthful, and there's a lot of other related narratives that contribute to rape culture in society that these people have bought and sold, and are selling now publicly saying, "These are lies. These are untruths," and as a result we can't take any victim seriously and they want us just going back to the day where no one believes the survivor when they speak forward.

Laura: I don't think that's gonna happen, but definitely there's a cultural war happening, and thankfully the MeToo movement is pushing for others to keep believing survivors and realize this is a relevant problem. The norm is survivors not getting justice. It's not false accusations.

Mike: Yeah, when I'm in front of audience, when people bring up false, one this that I'll do is I say, "Okay. Could everybody in the room raise their hand, not to identify themselves, but if you know a survivor of sexual assault. If you just know a survivor, raise your hands," and the far majority of the room raises their hands. "Keep your hands up if you know multiple." The far majority know multiple. Okay, great.

Mike: I mean, typically we're talking 80%, 75, 80%. Okay, "How many of you know someone actually accused and you guarantee know it was a false report?" Now I'm not gonna get into whether the ... because that might not even be right, what you think is a false report. And they actually went to prosecution, all the worst nightmare you think happens, happened, and they're in jail. The worst case. What you think happens in false report, maybe one out of hundreds of people in the room will raise their hand and say, "I think that's a case I know of," but you want us to talk about that one injustice more than the hundreds of injustices of everybody having their hands in the room.

Mike: And so we try to show them why. If we only have an hour to talk about reducing sexual violence, or two hours, or three hours, the students, we're gonna focus on survivors and we're not gonna focus that time on the one. That doesn't mean that false reports aren't horrible. As you said they are, but we have limited time for education. So in my work, what I focus on, that's what I'm focus on. I'll say to somebody, "If you're worried about



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the false reports maybe you could do that work," but I'm not gonna take the time of education for reducing sexual violence for that time.

Mike: And it's because it's so important people realize that pushback is so unfair. Well this one false report, therefore we can't talk about the 999 cases that take place. So I'm so glad you brought that up.

Mike: You also brought up rape culture, and this is one that people get very defensive about, angry about at times. An argument that I'll hear is, "I was never raised to think rape was okay. How dare you tell me I've been raised in a rape culture. When a rape case happens everyone's appalled. Everyone would want to kill the person if it was someone they love, therefore we do not live in a rape culture. How can you say we live in a rape culture?" What's your response to that?

Laura: I actually normally do a very brief activity, that maybe takes a most three minutes with people, I say, "Okay. Just give me all the words that you know for women who are sexually active." You hear slut, whore, skank, all these negative terms. "Give me all the words you know for men who are sexually active," player, positive, he's the man. Anything that's a thumbs up. They're doing well, so it's positive. Women are negative, men are positive. And I said, "Okay. Give me some slang for sex." Screw, nail, bang, hitting it, beating it, all terms of violence. And these are words that the audience provides me. I just give them the prompt, and I say, "You have just, with your own words and choices with these prompts, shown me rape culture." Men can be sexually active.

Laura: Sex is often described as violent, and women are the ones who pay the price for that and are demeaned as a result. That is rape culture. So I, personally, wasn't raised doing room-sized classes and things like that, but when I saw that activity when I was an undergrad student I was like, "Yeah, rape culture is real because I just gave those words without any other connotation," and I realized it is within our language. It's within our norms.

Mike: Yes, definitely. And you brought me to movement, and you've been very active from the start of the MeToo movement, and yet there's controversy around the MeToo movement. It wasn't at first. It was interesting, and I've talked about this in my work, that at first some of the cases were so blatantly extreme that the whole world was, "Yes." We were united. This was a movement that needed to speak out until a couple cases came forward of celebrities that didn't seem as blatantly obvious sexual violence. Seem like more the norm of people going out and having a good time, and then the regret defense is used in that and suddenly we saw backlash.

Mike: The most common one was the comedian ... Oh, my gosh. I'm having a brain freeze right now, Aziz Ansari, there we go. And that was one where he didn't defend, but other people defended the situation. So let's talk about one the co-oping of the MeToo movement early on, because that's an important discussion that often gets forgotten,



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and then the strength though of the current MeToo movement and then the backlash. So let's start with ... I don't think a lot of people realize there was a co-op that began this, and so you, Ana, speak to that?

Laura: Yeah, and correct me if I'm misunderstanding you in any way. A lot of people timed the MeToo movement to The New York Times breaking the story about Harvey Weinstein-

Mike: Exactly.

Laura: ... very differently because there was a whole campus movement. There was a whole military movement, and then there was a workplace movement. So I see a continuation. MeToo was the hashtag for the worker division, but this has been a movement that's been going on for a while if you'd been paying attention. And in all of these movements have had their day in the sun and everyone's like, "Yes. We agree. It's wrong on campus. It's wrong in the military. It's wrong in the workplace," and all of them have seen the inevitable backlash. I don't wanna sound like a conspiracy theorist, but I do live in DC. There are conservative ...

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Laura: I don't want to sound like a conspiracy theorist, but I do live in D.C. There are conservative think tanks. This is a topic that national attention is being given to, to change the narrative, to push certain policies throughout our country. I do think tactically there has been attacks by conservative groups, saying, "This is not a good narrative for a lot of our political positions and views. We really need to co-opt it, and push it, and so-

Mike: Can we pause there, 'cause I can hear some people thinking, "Hey, I'm outside of the D.C. world. I don't understand what you're referring to there. What do you mean think tanks are conspiring?"

Laura: Yeah, just different think tanks. People are literally paid to sit around and create campaigns and efforts to change public opinion and therefore ultimately be able to push certain policies. Heritage Group is one of them. There are several others. If you're not familiar, you can just Google it and look up conservative and/or liberal think tanks. They exist out there.

Mike: What we're saying here, just so I understand correctly, is a think tank is thinking, "If I make this an issue, if we make the need to movement a bad movement, that will gain our followers into political. They're more likely to come out and vote. They're more likely to be active ... that group's followers, so let's use this issue. Let's fight against it, 'cause it will draw people into our way of voting." Is that the overall idea there?

Laura: Yeah, that's definitely of the idea and you can kind of see it with the Safe Campus Acts that was put forward not all that long ago into Congress. That act was backed by Greek



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organizations, fraternities and sororities. It literally ... more so fraternities than sororities, to be honest ... so it was a PAC. It was a group, a group that was influencing Congress and politicians to advance their own interest, which was not to have schools take any action against them, to allow them to be able to stay on campus, keep having parties no matter what crimes were reported there or being investigated. There are groups that do have incentives. Fraternities often do have a lot of connections to political offices and place a lot of their members there, so there is, unfortunately a relationship.

Laura: It's very sad to say, but right now Stephen Miller, who's in the White House advising President Trump, has been outspoken in his backlash against Title IX, against efforts on campus sexual assaults. A lot of that narrative is pro-men and women are liars and that kind of narrative which appeals, unfortunately, to some conservative groups.

Mike: Understand. So MeToo today ... Where do you feel it's at? Where do you see it going?

Laura: Yeah, I think MeToo has been very powerful in having survivors kind of come out in the numbers. We always knew, right? People have debated and been skeptical of statistics. You can't be skeptical when almost everyone on your Facebook page is saying, "Me, too. Here's my experience." I always knew this was a big issue. I always knew the statistics. Even I was shocked one day going on Facebook when the MeToo hashtag was really popular how many friends I still hadn't known had had these experiences, and from any level, from being harassed on the street all the way through being assaulted or having childhood experiences with this issue. It's been great in showing this is a real problem. It affects way more people than you think it does.

Laura: Injustice is the norm, often because powerful individuals go out of their way to create scenarios where they can perpetrate with impunity, such as looking at the Weinstein cases. He was so powerful in Hollywood. He held the keys to the kingdom if you wanted to be famous. A lot of people knew. It was an open secret. Same with Bill Cosby ... That had been going on with decades.

Laura: We see a lot of power and privilege being associated. MeToo is on tenuous footing because it has to move into action, in my opinion. It's fine to have awareness. That's step one. A lot of people have been using MeToo to out people publicly. I think that's been important for some of these cases, but really we do have legal systems for a reason. It's not just about publicly shaming people, because sometimes you can be sued for defamation. You really have to be thoughtful and careful and know what the legal risks are.

Laura: Ideally, it's to change our systems, to make them more effective. We shouldn't have open secrets and perpetrators allowed to continue with impunity and that requires tactical, political, legal change at every level ... campus, in our courthouses, criminal and civil alike.



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- Mike: You created SurvJustice to help have a source, a place people could go and get that support. We were talking earlier the campus example of reaching out. How does somebody do that? What's the best way to contact SurvJustice? If you're listening right now and you're a survivor and you're thinking, "Hey, I wanna talk with someone. I wanna know my options," what's the best way to do that?
- Laura: Absolutely. SurvJustice is spelled a little uniquely. It is S as in Sam, U as in umbrella, R as in Reagan, V as in vase, Justice, and that's one word ... SurvJustice. You can go to the websites ... just SurvJustice.org, or obviously also on Twitter and Facebook and Instagram. There's many ways to reach out. Again, SurvJustice is the only national non-profit representing victims in campus hearings across the country, having transitioned on and now with the Fierberg Law Group, I am exclusively working on civil cases. When it has gone to the next level, when damages and recovery are really the only options for survivors, that action is being taken on by myself and my team.
- Laura: There are, of course, other lawyers all across the country that specialize in Title IX, in sexual harassment, sexual discrimination and sexual assault cases. There are many resources out there. I am proud to have founded SurvJustice. I think it's a good first stop if you're not really sure where to go and what kind of sources you need. They'll route you there if they can't assist you.
- Mike: We'll have that website on the show notes absolutely. We'll also have your website, which is lauraldunnesq.com, so people can find you, reach out to you, which is so important. You also are a proponent of teaching sexual respect. How do you do that through your work?
- Laura: It's built right into the vision of SurvJustice. A lot of people think of mission where you're trying to accomplish. Envision is where are you trying to go? If the world is perfect, what does it look like?
- Laura: Sexual respect is the norm in my vision, because really if we just make sexual respect a norm in interactions, I think a lot of these issues melt away. There may always be sexual violence, but I don't believe acquaintance rape has to be such a norm if we treat one another with sexual respect. It's about making sure your partner's comfortable. It's making sure that you are not being aggressive in pursuing sex at any means to any ends and you're really rejecting that in our culture and calling other people out to say, "It's really important that you treat everyone dignity and respect." It's not about romance. You can just be having fun, but at the end of the day, consent is important and not just in the way you interact with others, but the way, of course, people interact with you. You wanna feel respected and cared for in those interactions and safe.
- Laura: I often do trainings. I don't just talk about response, which is, of course, my specialty as a lawyer, but how response has to be full circle with prevention. We have to give these right messages of, "This is how we should behave. This is what we should be doing," and we've got to back that up with serious responses. When someone breaks that norm that



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we're creating, there has to be a consequence. We can't allow there to be impunity. We have to make sure sexual respect is accorded by all our institutions.

- Mike: That's awesome. Laura, what was a book that you think can benefit people? If they're listening, going, "Hey, I would love to dive into a book on this," what would be a book you recommend?
- Laura: Oh, there's so many. I have a really big library on this topic. I'll just say what I'm reading right now, which is "I Have the Right To," which is by Chessy Prout. I will have full disclosure here. She is a former client of mine. She had a very high-profile high school prep case in what which she as a freshman was targeted by an 18-year-old senior boy for a senior salute, which meant taking her to an isolated place on campus and trying to get as much from her sexually as possible, and he ended up raping her.
- Laura: There was a criminal trial with a partial conviction. He wasn't convicted on every offense, but on some of them. She really was attacked and defamed in the media as a minor, as a minor survivor, and so SurvJustice came in. We protected her privacy. We spoke to the media to keep her privacy moving forward.
- Laura: As a result of having that conviction at the end, she went forward, sued the school, and this story really talks about her experience through this struggle and against such a powerful institution, but of course also gives messages of, "How can this not be the case? What could we have done and what can we create moving forward where sexual respect is the norm, where we actually have institutions that know how to respond and don't support perpetrators?" Really, in her case, her school is fundraising for the person accused to support his defense, so really, again, shedding light on what survivors go through and also calling out how we can change moving forward. I hope people check out that book, "I Have the Right To." It's also a hash tag and on Twitter and social media.
- Mike: She's been all over national media. She is an example like millions of survivors out there with their strength and their courage in sharing thing with the world. You just shared so much brilliance with us and expertise. Thank you so much, Laura, for joining us.
- Laura: Absolutely. Thank you for having me on and thanks for all the work you do.
- Mike: Oh, our pleasure.
- Mike: Thank you for joining us for this episode of The Respect podcast, which was sponsored by the Date Safe Project at [datesafeproject.org](http://datesafeproject.org). Remember, you can always find me at [Mikespeaks.com](http://Mikespeaks.com).

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