

WILLIAM LUCY

that LAJ can take normative sustenance from two plausible and significant conceptions of equality does not show that LAJ is of pre-eminent moral or political value. It does, however, serve to impede the thought that it is of no moral or political value at all.

Chapter six explores possibly the most contested and troublesome notion to have recently preoccupied jurists and political philosophers, namely, community. The argument I make is that LAJ can be understood as a means of realising a particular conception (or, more accurately, family of conceptions) of community. This is certainly not to say that LAJ is the only means of realising this conception of community; rather, my point is that it is one not insignificant means of realising and maintaining this form of community. It will probably come as no surprise that this form of community is in significant ways egalitarian and thus overlaps with two of the conceptions of equality explored and recommended in chapter five. I try to show the value of this notion of community, but the argument is not one from first principles. I argue instead that this notion of community provides an amenable habitat for the realisation of many ostensibly competing values. The point is that this conception of community is compatible with, and may even be required by, numerous different arguments from first principles.

In the final instalment of the book —chapter seven— I offer this conclusion: that LAJ is nowhere near as morally and politically problematic as critics lead us to believe. That a more measured and circumspect assessment of the various arguments supporting LAJ yields insight is, for sure, a poor slogan and a pitiful rallying cry. But, while it falls short of banner-worthy inspiration, the claim is nevertheless true and important. It allows us to better judge a still crucial feature of our law and that, given law's capacity for realising both unparalleled harm and good, is significant. Robert Cover was right to maintain that legal interpretation takes place in a field of pain and death; law occupies and constructs that field and it is important we judge it scrupulously and critically.⁶ My hope is that the argument of Law's Judgement serves to clear the ground for a scrupulous and critical assessment of one important feature of modern law's edifice: law's abstract judgement.

⁶ Cover R, 'Violence and the Word' (1986) 95 *Yale Law Journal* 1601–30.