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As I saw it, a bit of a latecomer, CLS was never that coherent, didn't last very long and most of the ideas remained "under development" or hypotheses when it was defeated. Yet it has remained a touchstone both as a "brand" signaling opposition to mainstream legal analytics and political orientations, and as a literature where you can find particular strands of intellectual criticism being worked out or developed. In US legal academy, the brand often seems to have overtaken the intellectual contributions. Outside the US, CLS is often understood as a "movement" or "school" within US legal science, a framework which sometimes makes it easier to engage with the scholarly material.

Organizationally, an engagement with CLS was formative for people who went on to develop or join a variety of what might loosely be termed "successor networks." Often the impetus for an alternative network grew as much from internal opposition or dissatisfaction with CLS as from disappointment at its defeat. Nevertheless, bits and pieces of the CLS experience recurred in these networks: some of the crucial methods or ideas; some of the internal communal energy; some of the organizing strategies; some of the personnel.

One such network grew from non-United Statesean legal academics exposed to CLS ideas while students or visiting scholars in the US. The Institute for Global Law and Policy at Harvard, which I direct, has been one organizational focal point for this network.