

The Law and Society Association
2011 GRADUATE STUDENT PRIZE

Shauhin A. Talesh

“How Organizations Shape the Meaning of Law:
A Comparative Analysis of Dispute Resolution
Structures and Consumer Lemon Laws”

Nominated by Lauren B. Edelman,
University of California, Berkeley



Talesh’s innovative paper provides wonderfully fresh insights into how the meaning of law can be shaped within geographically different regulatory environments. Utilizing interviews, ethnographic research, and quantitative data analysis, Talesh expertly demonstrates how differently structured dispute resolution regimes – involving auto warranty disputes – in California and Vermont produced very different outcomes despite the fact that the regulatory laws within each jurisdiction were quite similar. The tables and charts that Talesh imbeds throughout the paper provide concise snapshots of important information that aids readers immensely in understanding the overarching comparative trends amongst and between public and private dispute resolution structures. Talesh’s paper is bold, tightly written, and represents a first-rate analysis that greatly illuminates how institutions construct and shape the meaning of compliance relative to their individual regulatory state law.