



Law Library Lights

In Maryland, We Do It All

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Maryland's court law librarians are actively involved in the Access to Justice initiative. Supported and spurred on by the commitment to the concept by former Chief Judge Robert Bell, librarians in the Circuit Courts and the State Law Library dedicate significant time and energy to the concept of getting legal information and resources to the community, where and when they need it. A comprehensive list of activities would be too lengthy for this space. Highlights, however, illustrate the many avenues Maryland's law librarians take to meet and exceed the needs of the community.

Maryland has twenty-four Circuit Courts, all of which have a law library on site, in some form or another. Of the 24, 21 are open to the public; but what is available in those 21 spans a broad arc, from those with professional staff and a significant collection in multiple access formats (see, for example, Montgomery County), to those with barely-bigger-than-a-closet, no staff, and only a few key resources in print (see, for example, Dorchester County). Of the 21 public libraries, eight have a professional librarian on staff. These librarians, together with representatives from the State Law Library, make up the Conference of Maryland Court Law Library Directors (CMCLLD), established by Judge Bell in 2008 with the purpose of "consulting and advising" Maryland State Judiciary officials and administrators in matters affecting court libraries. The CMCLLD's business includes a seat on the Maryland Access to Justice Commission

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(<http://www.mdcourts.gov/mdatjc>), where law librarians' voices lend weight to suggestions to improve public access in all areas of the Judiciary. Conference business also includes maintaining and regularly revising Best Practices for Maryland Court Law Libraries. These Best Practices include the Maryland County Public Law Library Standards, which all court libraries in Maryland can use as a guideline. Additionally, the CMCLLD maintains lists of Recommended Treatises, both Maryland-specific and general, which are used not just by court libraries but also by public library reference and acquisitions librarians, by Baltimore-area law firm libraries, and by the general public as aids in locating information.

CMCLLD members regularly provide training and education programs of varying kinds to help the community access legal information. These have included regular programs for public library reference staff at MLA/DLA (the Maryland Library Association/Delaware Library Association); recorded webinars on Ready Reference Law and e-Government, made available permanently on the Maryland Library Association's MERLIN site; legal research training at the Maryland Correctional Institution for Women; and a multitude of independent training and information opportunities for individual public library systems, court conferences, and other groups whose day-to-day interactions with the public make them integral players in Access to Justice.

Individually, Maryland court law librarians provide even further service. Joan Bellistri, Director of the Anne Arundel County Public Law Library, and Sandy Brewer, Librarian at the Howard County Circuit Court Law Library, have designed, spearheaded and successfully executed Lawyer in the Library programs at their respective locations. Reaching out to their local public library systems, both have expanded the single location clinic to branches of the public library system, offering

volunteer attorney access in the evenings at locations outside of the courthouse. Access to attorneys during non-working hours at a local library branch gives Access to Justice a whole new meaning for many self-represented litigants. Both Joan's and Sandy's programs have been running successfully for several years. They pair up often to deliver information to systems around the State on how to set up local Lawyer in the Library programs.

Joan reaches even further with her involvement in the Anne Arundel County's Homeless Resource Day project. Initiated in 2008, Homeless Resource Day provides one location with access to a wide variety of services for the homeless. In 2009, the Anne Arundel County Bar Association joined in, providing legal services through volunteer attorneys on site. Joan provides backup information services throughout the day for those volunteer attorneys. Her presence makes it possible for participants to get to the information resources they need.

A summary of Maryland court librarians' commitment to Access to Justice would not be complete without recognition of the People's Law Library of Maryland (PLL) website (www.peoples-law.org). The site began more than a decade ago as a collaborative effort of the Maryland legal services community. In November 2007, PLL found a new home at the Maryland State Law Library, where Web Content Coordinator Dave Pantzer now handles the day-to-day management and development of the site. A statewide Content Advisory Committee of legal professionals, together with members of CMCLLD and the State Law Library's own librarians, assists with writing and editing content. The People's Law Library of Maryland is a shining example of what can be achieved when library and legal professionals work cooperatively to provide daily, and even hourly, Access to Justice for exponentially more people than our small librarian population could manage alone. ■



From the Editor

The Legal Community, the Washington Community, and You

Ann Baum

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Welcome to a new year of *Law Library Lights*. I am excited to be serving as your editor for the upcoming year. I would like to thank our outgoing editor, Melanie Knapp, and welcome our new assistant editor, Judy Gaskell. This past year, as assistant editor, I had the privilege of learning about the issues important to the members of the LLSDC community through the articles submitted for publication. I hope that in the new publishing cycle, we will be able to continue and grow in that same tradition.

The theme for this issue is “Access to Justice: Bringing Legal Information and Resources to the Community”. The submissions we received in response to this topic are far-reaching and offer glimpses into a number of ways that libraries are making legal information more available. From Tracy Woodward, we have a discussion of the requirements of a law librarian to assist library patrons, and from Stephen Young, a reminder of the true purpose of a law library as part of a greater legal community. Catherine McGuire contributed a piece on the programs run by public law libraries to connect Maryland residents with pro bono legal services. Her discussion serves as a great reminder that while we often just think of the “community” as the library community or the legal community, there is the greater community of Washingtonians, Marylanders, and Virginians to consider.



Submission Information

If you would like to write for *Law Library Lights*, contact Ann Baum at abaum826@gmail.com. For information regarding submission deadlines and issue themes, visit the LLSDC website at www.llsdc.org.



From the Editor, Continued

In addition to these articles, we also have two interesting articles on changes in legal research. One, from Margaret Krause, reviews the changes made to citation conventions over the years. The other, from Charlotte Schneider, traces the process of updating a library website to make it more user-friendly. As librarians we are reminded that while we strive to bring our research techniques (and those used by the communities we serve) into the future, we are doing so to locate the resources from the past.

All of our columns are back for another year. President Edward O'Rourke kicks off our 75th anniversary year with a look back at how we've changed over three quarters of a century along with some plans for the future. Our two other columns, Book Review and Tech Talk, both use our topic of Access to Justice as their starting points. Dawn Bohls reviews *The New Jim Crow*, a look at the effects of racism on our justice system. And Roger Skalbeck discusses academic projects on the Access to Justice front.

We did not get much in the way of member news this time around, but we do have some pictures from recent LLSDC events. Remember that you can always submit member news for inclusion in our next issue.

And speaking of our next issue, the topic for the winter issue will be "Advertising Your Library: Getting Patrons into the Library and onto the e-Library" and spring's theme is "Doing More with Less: Making the Most of Your Library's Budget". I know that all of you have opinions on these topics and I encourage you to share them. But for now, enjoy this issue of *Law Library Lights*. ■

Member Spotlight

Emily Florio

Emily Florio recently relocated from Boston to become the Manager of Library Services at Finnegan, Henderson, Farabow, Garrett & Dunner, LLP. Emily currently serves as the PLL Treasurer and was the 2013 recipient of the PLL Emerging Leader Award. Prior to joining Finnegan, she was the Manager of Libraries at Fish & Richardson.



Member Spotlight, Continued

Events Edge

Alicia Pappas

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Autumn Greetings! Our summer ballpark outing and trivia close win are but a distant memory as we now turn to a new and important year for LLSDC. At the opening reception in September, the Board unveiled a new website and logo! There was also a lively discussion on proposed changes to the bylaws. It was a fun yet productive evening!

In 2014, LLSDC will celebrate its 75th anniversary as a professional community where law librarians have turned to for support, advice and friendship. On February 28th, DC law librarians and friends will come together to commemorate and celebrate this significant milestone. The event will be held in the ballroom at the Hamilton Crowne Plaza and with multiple generous sponsors, it will surely be a night to remember!

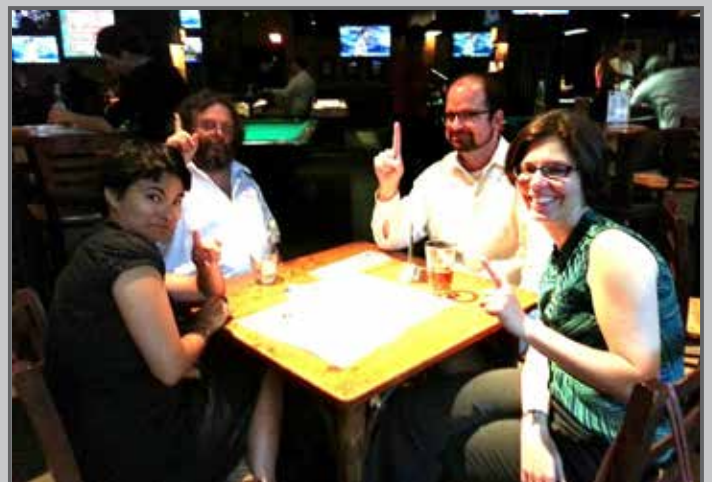
In an effort to recognize the society's history, I'm looking to the members to help me work on a slideshow project for the night of the event. If you're interested in helping to gather and organize these photos and items, please contact me at apappas@kpmg.com. If you have digital photos or items you'd like included, please go to this [form link](#) to submit them.

This is sure to be an amazing year of events with a few surprises along the way. We hope you'll join us as often as you can!

Be sure to follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) for more event photos and all upcoming calendar updates!



LLSDC on the big screen! Go Nats!



LLSDC members at the Nats game.

Member Spotlight, Continued



Some participants in the Battle of the Librarians Trivia Night at Buffalo Billiards!



Battle of the Librarians Trivia Night participants.



The LLSDC Opening Reception on September 25, 2013.



Bill Grady speaks to the members about the potential changes to the bylaws at the Opening Reception.



Are We Part of the Problem?

Stephen Young

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Introduction

Librarianship may not be the highest paid or the most glamorous of professions, however we have always taken comfort in the fact that as a profession we are recognized as helping others in society. Our reward is the feeling that we are doing good and that we are viewed in a positive light by others. But I would argue that this image of the librarian, as a helpful member of society, is not entirely accurate, and perhaps we shouldn't feel so good about our recent accomplishments. Instead of being one of the good guys, should we now own up to being one of the bad guys? In discussing this topic I am limiting the scope to include only academic law librarians. I am not arguing that the entire profession of librarianship is guilty of recent crimes, just those of us who happen to work in academic law libraries.

The Legal Education Landscape

So, how did this happen? How did we go from being heroes to villains? In searching for the answer we need only look at the sea-change that has occurred in the law school marketplace over the past few years. In 2010 enrolling in one of the 200 ABA approved law schools in the country was a choice made by over 52,000 students. Total law school student population for the year peaked at over 157,000 students. Three years later and those numbers are considerably down. Applicants for

2013 have declined 38% since 2010, and while enrollment hasn't declined as much, due to a lowering of admission standards, law schools nationwide are now confronting the realities of downsizing. This fall the number of students matriculating through law school is expected to be the lowest since 1977.

The reasons for this dramatic reversal in fortunes for law schools are now well documented through books such as Brian Tamanaha's "Failing Law Schools," and Steven Harper's "The Lawyer Bubble: A Profession in Crisis." Additionally, a series of high-profile articles in the New York Times (e.g. David Segal, "Is Law School a Losing Game," January 8, 2011, at BU1) simply added to the drum-beat of criticism being leveled at legal education. In recent years a cottage industry of blogs focusing on what they describe as the "law school scam" has grown up, providing a voice to those disenchanted with their law school experience and hoping to convince others not to follow in their path (e.g. "Third Tier Reality," "Law School Scam," and "Outside the Law School Scam"). While not wishing to regurgitate the content of these publications, the argument they make is that law schools entice applicants by promoting skewed employment statistics, and then provide them with an over-priced education that bears little resemblance to the actual practice of law. The



argument often concludes with anecdotal evidence of graduates who have incurred vast amounts of debt while in law school but who are unable to obtain a professional legal position months or even years after graduation. According to these commentators, law school is a scam; it promises one thing, but in reality it delivers something completely different.

As librarians I believe that we have tried to divorce ourselves from the negative press our parent institutions have received. While we recognize many of the problems in the industry (e.g., the costs of obtaining a legal education, the weak employment market, and the wide gap between “thinking like a lawyer” and the practice of law), we often are unwilling to associate the library with these perceived failings. I contend that academic law librarians should be willing to accept some of the responsibility for the current state of legal education. If we want to be recognized as a vital and active component of legal education, the library can’t simply decouple itself from legal education when the system comes under attack. Law Librarians fought for many years to obtain a place at the law school decision making table. But if we sit at the table we must also share responsibility and take ownership in the decisions that are made.

Specifically, I would argue that law school libraries have willingly contributed to some of the negativity that legal education has attracted in two significant ways; we have participated in actions that have aggravated the rapid rise in the cost of legal education, and we have been remiss in acknowledging who our real customers are.

Our Fiscal Responsibility

The criticism that is currently leveled at legal education would not be as strong if the cost of legal education had not risen so sharply over the past twenty years. There’s little doubt that part of this steep rise in costs can be attributed to what

I would call the law library “arms race” that took place during this period. Academic law libraries felt compelled to buy more databases, hire more staff, build bigger facilities, attend more professional conferences, develop more robust research collections, and explore new technologies at a pace that was ultimately unsustainable.

“[L]aw school librarians have willingly contributed to some of the negativity that legal education has attracted.”

While much of this was no doubt done in the name of creating a better library, I’m not sure that it was necessarily the best use of resources for our students. One can certainly argue that law libraries were anticipating and responding to demand from library users, and I think there is some merit to this argument. One can also point to the ABA and U.S. News & World Report as instigators of this arms race. Our desires to improve our ABA statistics and improve our ranking were certainly contributing factors in the explosion of expenses incurred by academic law libraries over the past couple of decades; however, these arguments do not absolve us of our obligation to follow through on our fiduciary duty to the people paying the bills, namely the students.

Ultimately, we need to re-evaluate our goal of creating a better law library. How many of our students benefit from an expensive research collection in one faculty member’s “hobby topic,” or benefit from professional librarians attending conferences around the country? How many students need access to expensive, specialized databases, or directly benefit from library subscriptions to obscure foreign law journals? In our self-serving race to create a better library perhaps we forgot who we were creating it for.



We now need to focus less on our own criteria for what constitutes a better library, and focus more on what constitutes a better library *for our students*. As an example, should we spend money on the latest and greatest online catalog just because every other law library has it, or should we redirect that money into buying study aids and casebooks, or even give the money back so that it could be used for scholarships? This “give them what they want” approach to librarianship is often derided in the profession, but when the students are paying the bills shouldn’t we at least consider their needs first?

Customer Service

This brings us to the second area where our actions over the years have contributed to the current negative image of legal education; our inability to recognize who our customers are. The term “customer” is often looked down on in librarianship as somehow not fully appreciating the learning partnership we develop with our “patrons.” We prefer to think of our role as mentors, coaches, or teachers who assist people in their scholarly pursuit. However, by doing this we somehow lose track of the reality that we are paid by these people to provide a service. I would argue that if we are more willing to recognize the law school student as a customer our service relationship with them

“Moving forward, I would suggest that academic law libraries evaluate the programs and services they offer to students and faculty and determine whether there is an imbalance. Do the needs of the student receive priority over the needs of the faculty? If not, why not?”

would improve. Compounding this inability to recognize the customer has been the academic law librarian’s deferential treatment of law school

faculty, often times at the expense of the student (e.g. beneficial loan periods for faculty, or more personalized research training sessions for faculty). Thus, not only are we not treating our customers as customers, we are also relegating them to a place behind the faculty. By focusing on the faculty, it could be argued that for far too long librarians have hitched their wagon to the wrong horse. This failure has not gone unnoticed. A small part of the recent backlash against law schools has been the sense that the law student, who pays the salaries of the faculty and staff, are treated as second class citizens.

Moving forward, I would suggest that academic law libraries evaluate the programs and services they offer to students and faculty and determine whether there is an imbalance. Do the needs of the student receive priority over the needs of the faculty? If not, why not? The old model of deference to the faculty at all costs needs to be re-examined. We need to focus on how we can provide real customer service to our real customers.

Conclusion

Up to now, most of the library literature that has addressed the changes in the law school marketplace has characterized the library as a victim of these changes. Many of these articles and blog posts describe how libraries have lost staff, had budgets reduced, and subscriptions canceled due to the downsizing of law schools. However I believe that, as a profession, we need to acknowledge the role we played in creating the current state of legal education. We were not innocent victims - we were willing accomplices. It would be easy to overstate the role of the law library in creating the current state of legal education; clearly, there were other factors, many of them outside of the control of the library, which contributed to our current state. Equally, though, we must also recognize that we did play a role, however small, before we can correct it going forward. ■



President's Column

75 Years of Excellence

Ed O'Rourke

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I am proud and honored to be your president during this 75th anniversary of our existence as a society. LLSDC has made many strides since its founding in 1939. Back then who would have thought of WestlawNext, Lexis Advance, the internet, iPads, iPhones, social media, email, and the like? Our world has become “smaller” and more “accessible” in the last 75 years. I can now watch my favorite English soccer team from the comfort of my own home, read stories about it on the internet, and meet fellow supporters for match watching events locally or during overseas trips to the live matches. The same thought applies to information requests - if I need information from another state or another country, I am usually very successful as I am lucky enough to come across a friendly librarian on the other side willing to help and sometimes go above and beyond the call to provide the information. In this day and age of globalization, having contacts in other areas of the country and world is very important.

Since that founding year we have grown and developed into the second largest chapter of AALL in the country, in addition to being (at least in my opinion) the very best when it comes to education, mentoring, cooperation, leadership and outreach to other organizations such as ILTA, ARMA, and SLA to name just a few. LLSDC's members also offer a diverse array of talents and come from different backgrounds - attributes which are essential to the success of any organization.

We have started off this anniversary year with a bang - a new website, a new logo, a very active discussion of a change in our bylaws, and planning for our 75th Anniversary reception to be held in February. In addition, your very active and talented board has chosen a number of new committee and SIS leaders over the past couple of months.



President's Column, Continued

We would like to thank those departing for their service and commitment to the society and at the same time we welcome those will continue our tradition of excellence. If you have some free time, please take a look at the website. It is very user friendly, very modern, and was developed with you the member in mind. We are still transferring over parts of the former website and will soon have a private area for member information and other items which would be available only to us as a society.

Going forward, I would like to meet as many of you as possible and encourage you to consider volunteering for events and committees this year. Even if you can provide a small portion of your time it will be greatly appreciated and your talents and ideas will be utilized. This is your society and my goal along with the board is to make this year a very memorable one. We are always well represented at AALL and other similar events which is a testament to us as the leading chapter in the nation.

Again, I am very proud and honored to serve as your president. I am also very lucky and privileged to serve with your very talented board. This will truly be a very exciting year! ■

Access To Information In Your Law Library

Tracy Woodard

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Access to justice begins with access to information. Law librarians work with, disseminate, and create information. We bring our cumulative knowledge and savvy with us to our law libraries and then impart this knowledge both proactively and upon being asked.

As the firm-wide Legislative Librarian, I have completed hundreds of billable hours of legislative history, regulatory intent, and legal research, which supports the firm, its clients and our communities. Questions can range from general reference to esoteric legal research and the goal is to provide access to the information.



You may be familiar with providing access to information for the following types of general reference questions: We need the docket for this case.; Can you get this article?; Do we have this book or how can we get it?

These types of general reference questions are usually handled in ten minutes, but it can take longer to provide access to the information if

1. the case is from a state district court and the docket is not posted on the state court's website yet. In this scenario the resolution can mean waiting (never do that), asking the court clerk (sometimes you get lucky), or sending a runner to the court;

2. the article is from a source that you don't have access to. The resolution can mean an ILL request or pay per view access; or

3. we don't have access to the book. The resolution can be ILL or a purchase request.

You may also be familiar with providing access to information for the following types of legislative research questions.

1. Can we get the legislative history of this section of the code?

The resolution is to see if the legislative history was already compiled, or compile it.

2. Is there any legislative history as to why the following language was added to this amendment?

The resolution is to use compiled legislative history if it is available and comb through it for discussion of the language in question, or compile the legislative history and then comb through it for discussion of the language in question.

3. What is meant by this phrase in this federal regulation?

The resolution is to see if the phrase was at least defined as a term and start checking the preambles to see if there was discussion about the phrase in question.

Providing access to information isn't always easy. For example, it is wise to remember that with legislative and regulatory history one should anticipate sinkholes, like technical corrections and renumbering (see my upcoming article in issue 41-1 of International Journal of Legal Information for more information), and have a strategy to resolve these issues so that you may answer the call of the question and provide access to the information.

Nevertheless, law librarians know that providing access to information, whether it is general reference or in-depth legal research, takes our cumulative knowledge and know-how to impart this information to our communities. We work with, disseminate, and create information. We know the information that impacts our communities, and we can research at any instance, and anticipate questions.

Please email me to chat more about legislative history and legal research. ■



Technology Expands Access to Justice

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In the spirit of this issue's "Access to Justice" theme, let's look at a technology-focused pilot meant to increase access to justice through several law school clinical efforts.

Access to Justice Clinical Course Project (A2J Clinic)

The Access to Justice Clinical Course Project is an initiative to develop technology-enhanced programs at participating law schools, in an effort to develop teaching materials and programs to expand these efforts at law schools across the country. This is coordinated by the Center for Computer-Assisted Legal Instruction (CALI), the Center for Access to Justice & Technology (CAJT) at IIT Chicago-Kent College of Law, and Idaho Legal Aid Services.

The mission of a model A2J Clinic is two-fold: to introduce law students to skills necessary for a 21st Century law practice and to produce A2J Guided Interviews and other technical resources that statewide legal aid organizations can use to lower the barriers to justice for low-income people.

For full disclosure: I'm involved in one of the participating courses at Georgetown Law Center. This spring it's called "Technology, Innovation, and Law Practice Practicum – Access to Justice and the Consumer Law Revolution." There are other projects under development at the University of Miami law school's Health and Elder Law Clinic, as well as the CUNY School of Law Elder Law Clinic. Columbia Law School, UNC School of Law, and Concordia University School of Law, as well as a long-standing center at the IIT Chicago-Kent College of Law all have projects leveraging technology to expand access to justice.

You can view a model course platform here: <http://a2jclinic.classcaster.net/>. This includes an example curriculum, course overview and resource library. The A2J Clinic project announcement is found on the A2J Clinic website¹, and updates will be published online over the coming months. There is a growing collection of video tutorials on the A2J Author YouTube channel at <http://www.youtube.com/user/A2JAuthor>.

Tech Talk, Continued

One component of all model courses requires students to learn technology systems in order to apply them to support specific access to justice needs. This isn't simple software training akin to learning Microsoft Word or PowerPoint. Instead, it's a focused experience where students are presented with a defined service need that is executed using tools suitable for this purpose.

One of the tools is the A2J Author system, which I wrote about in the Fall 2012 Tech Talk column here in Law Library Lights. The platform is being completely revised so people can author using Mac, PC or other operating systems, and it is meant to produce output that foresees access using mobile devices as well as the existing model using traditional computer terminals.

Students are also learning document assembly platforms such as HotDocs, which are used in conjunction with A2J Author to help prepare court documents and other filings.

Justice, Lawyering and Legal Education in the Digital Age

As part of the same A2J Clinic project, Ron Staudt and Marc Lauritsen edited a symposium issue of the Chicago-Kent Law Review for the symposium "Justice, Lawyering and Legal Education in the Digital Age." This was held as part of the CALI conference on June 15 this year in Chicago.

All symposium materials as well as the presentations are available online:

<https://www.kentlaw.iit.edu/institutes-centers/center-for-access-to-justice-and-technology/2013-law-review-symposium>

▶ [Access to Justice and Technology Clinics: A 4% Solution](#) by *Ronald W. Staudt* and *Andrew P. Medeiros*

▶ [If Only We Knew What We Know](#) by *Conrad Johnson* and *Brian Donnelly*

▶ [Thinking Like a Lawyer, Designing Like an Architect: Preparing Students for the 21st Century Practice](#) by *Tanina Rostain*, *Roger Skalbeck*, and *Kevin G. Mulcahy*

▶ [The Teaching of Law Practice Management and Technology in Law Schools: A New Paradigm](#) by *Richard S. Granat* and *Stephanie Kimbro*

▶ [Teaching Law and Digital Age Legal Practice with an AI and Law Seminar](#) by *Kevin D. Ashley*

▶ [Developing an E-Curriculum: Reflections on the Future of Legal Education and on the Importance of Digital Expertise](#) by *Oliver R. Goodenough*

▶ [Law Schools as Knowledge Centers in the Digital Age](#) by *Vern R. Walker*, *A.J. Durwin*, *Philip H. Hwang*, *Keith Langlais*, and *Mycroft Boyd*

▶ [Gaming The System: Approaching 100% Access To Legal Services Through Online Games](#) by *William E. Hornsby, Jr*

▶ [Liberty, Justice, and Legal Automata](#) by *Marc Lauritsen*

Technology alone won't solve the access to justice problem. However, great progress is being made by people building and sharing tools to meet defined needs in this area. ■

Notes

¹ Law Schools Team Up with CALI to Harness Skills of Law Students, Develop Online Tools for Low-Income Litigants. December 27, 2012. http://a2jclinic.classcaster.net/aals_announcement/



Date Discrepancies in Citing to Supreme Court Decisions, Legal Research Database Comparison: *Fairfax Devisee vs. Hunter's Lessee* on its 200th Anniversary

Margaret M. Krause

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It sounded like a simple reference question. What date was *Fairfax Devisee vs. Hunter's Lessee* decided in the Supreme Court? This precursor to the *Martin vs. Hunter's Lessee* landmark Constitutional Law decision was important in its own right as a land title decision. Why then was it so difficult to ascertain when the decision was issued?

Despite the fact that there is no national standard of citation, researchers have come to rely on a few standard resources, including *The Bluebook*¹ and the *ALWD Citation Manual*². Since the first edition of *The Bluebook* was published in 1926, it's been recommended that a case citation include a date. "The date in citation of cases should appear at the end of the citation."³ It's become a commonly accepted practice in most court rules to include a date of decision.

Older court decisions were often published without dates and it is apparent that the date confusion surrounding the *Fairfax* decision has to do with it being a 19th century decision. Prior to publication of volume 107, the official reporter of Supreme Court opinions, *U.S. Reports*, did not print the date of decision for published opinions. The Supreme Court decisions were not even necessarily printed in chronological order in the earlier centuries.⁴ Rule 10.5 of the 19th edition of *The Bluebook* reiterates this fact and directs researchers to Anne Ashmore's handy Supreme Court dates of decisions handout for proper citation purposes.⁵

According to Ashmore's handout, which is based on the Engrossed Minutes of the court, the *Fairfax*

vs. Hunter's decision was handed down in 1813.⁶ Joseph Story released the decision in March 1813. Why then do so many citations to the decision cite it as an 1812 decision?

In this day of reliance on electronic databases for citation purposes, many researchers simply check Lexis, Westlaw, or Bloomberg Law and consider it done. This decision exemplifies the discrepancies that occur in early Supreme Court citations. The fact that these discrepancies continue to occur is just unacceptable.

Westlaw was built by relying on the published case reporters and in the eleventh volume of the *U.S. Reports* the date of February 27, 1812 is inscribed in the margins next to the *Fairfax* decision.⁷ Therefore, that is the date of decision provided on the Westlaw legal research platform. Competitors, Lexis and Bloomberg Law, however provide the 1813 date for the *Fairfax* decision, which indicates that they may have relied on the Ashmore dates for the early Supreme Court decisions when establishing their databases.⁸

A further analysis of the documents that cite to the *Fairfax* decision, proved equally confusing. On WestlawNext, over 500 citing documents are retrieved when KeyCite was run for the *Fairfax* decision. These documents include cases, briefs, secondary sources, appellate court documents and more. When the search results were narrowed by searching for "1812", there were 197 documents remaining. When narrowed to "1813", there were 202 documents remaining. There was no date included for 109 documents. In other words, the



documents citing to the *Fairfax v. Hunter* Supreme Court opinion were split almost 50/50 in their choice of date included in the citation.

Since Shepherd's on Lexis Advance cites to fewer documents than KeyCite, it retrieved only 155 citing references, most of which are very old cases. As a matter of fact, 132 of the cases that cited to the *Fairfax* decision did not even include a citation date. The date of 1813 was more frequently cited in the Shepherd's system, with sixteen of the documents citing to 1813 and seven citing to 1812.

Bloomberg Law's BCite service cited to even fewer cases. BCite only retrieved 96 references to the *Fairfax* decision, with 75 of them citing no date. Of the remaining 21, thirteen of the citations were to 1813, and eight cited to 1812.

As free and low cost legal databases continue to proliferate and become credible resources for legal researchers, this date discrepancy among older Supreme Court decisions will inevitably only continue to grow. For this research question, Justia⁹ provides the 1813 date for *Fairfax v. Hunter's*, while Fastcase¹⁰ and Findlaw¹¹ use the 1812 date. GoogleScholar¹² covers all the bases, by including both the 1812 and the 1813 date in the heading of the decision.

This date discrepancy is troubling as it is just one example of the inconsistencies of electronic publishing that are continuing to erode the credibility of legal resources. With the extensive research provided by Anne Ashmore, let us hope that the electronic databases will at least be consistent in their citations to Supreme Court decisions in the future. ■

Notes

- ¹ *The Bluebook, A Uniform System of Citation*, (2010)
- ² Association of Legal Writing Directors and Darby Dickerson, *ALWD Citation Manual: A Professional System of Citation*, (2010)
- ³ *A Uniform System of Citation*, (1926)
- ⁴ Anne Ashmore, *Dates of Supreme Court Decisions and Arguments*, (May 29, 2013), <http://www.supremecourtus.gov/opinions/datesofdecisions.pdf>
- ⁵ *The Bluebook, A Uniform System of Citation*, (2010)
- ⁶ Anne Ashmore, *Dates of Supreme Court Decisions and Arguments*, (May 29, 2013), <http://www.supremecourtus.gov/opinions/datesofdecisions.pdf>
- ⁷ Ross E. Davies, et. al., *Justices at Work, or Not*, 4 Green Bag 217, 220 (2011)
- ⁸ *Id.*
- ⁹ <http://www.justia.com/> (June 4, 2013)
- ¹⁰ <http://www.fastcase.com/> (June 4, 2013)
- ¹¹ <http://www.findlaw.com/cascode/supreme.html> (June 4, 2013)
- ¹² <http://scholar.google.com/> (June 4, 2013)

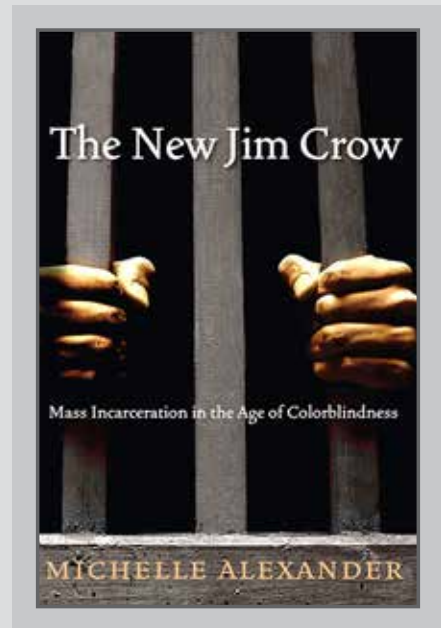
Legal Research Service	Year of Citation 1812	Year of Citation 1813
Bloomberg Law		X
Fastcase	X	
FindLaw	X	
Google Scholar	X	X
Justia		X
Lexis Advance		X
WestlawNext	X	

Book Review

Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*, rev. ed. (New York: The New Press, 2012)

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The New Jim Crow is one of those books that somehow seem to be everywhere at once. Although it was originally published in 2010, the book's popularity continues to expand. In recent months, I've seen people reading it on the Metro; it was the subject of a recent local book club discussion; bloggers have discovered it; and three years out, the author, Michelle Alexander, continues to give interviews about the book. Having grown up in a small Southern town, I'm not one of those who believe that racism in this country is dead, although I was quite certain that things had improved greatly since I was a child. Alexander argues otherwise. Curiosity about the book, along with a *Law Library Lights* issue topic of "Access to Justice," led me to choose *The New Jim Crow* as the subject of my book review.

Alexander argues that the get-tough War on Drugs of the past three decades has served as a convenient and extremely effective cover for what she calls "the new Jim Crow," a new system for implementing racially-motivated discrimination in this country: "The fact that more than half of the young black men in many large American cities are currently under the control of the criminal justice system (or saddled with criminal records) is not--as many argue--just a symptom of poverty or poor choices, but rather evidence of a new racial caste system" [p. 16].¹

Throughout the Introduction, I remained fairly skeptical that the problem could be anywhere near as great as Alexander was asserting. How could institutionalized, government-funded racism on such a grand scale possibly exist in this day and age? Reading on, however, as Alexander built her argument

Book Review, Continued

study by study and statistic by statistic, I grew more convinced and increasingly horrified.

Alexander has a hard sell to make her case, since she realizes that she has the incredibly difficult task of having to generate sympathy for convicted criminals. But make the case she does. Building on the “get tough on crime” sentiment, the Reagan administration started the War on Drugs in the 1980s. While using race-neutral language, the War on Drugs has nevertheless directed vast resources to the incarceration of poor minorities. Where approximately 41,000 people were in jail or prison on drug charges in 1980, that number is now an astounding 500,000 [p. 61]. By 1991 – within a decade of the start of the War on Drugs – “one fourth of young African American men were now under the control of the criminal justice system” [p. 56]. Persons under the “control” of the criminal justice system include not only those in prison or jail, but also those on probation or parole. Today, there are more black Americans under control of the justice system today than there were slaves in 1850 [p. 180].

Far greater numbers have criminal records that continue to haunt them. Even after leaving prison, life for ex-offenders is incredibly difficult, especially for black men, as they enter a “period of invisible punishment” [p. 186]. They can be legally barred from public housing, legally (or often illegally) denied employment because of

their criminal records, prohibited from receiving public assistance such as food stamps, and subjected to costs assessed for their imprisonment that they have no way of paying. Alexander asserts that “These sanctions are imposed by operation of law rather than decisions of a sentencing judge, yet they often have a greater impact on one’s life course than the months or years one actually spends behind bars” [p. 186].

Despite the fact that studies have shown whites are at least as likely as minorities to use or sell illegal drugs, “three-fourths of all people imprisoned for drug offenses have been black or Latino” [p. 98]. Police departments have been enticed by the prospect of additional funds and special equipment to increase their drug arrests: “The new system of control is traceable, to a significant degree, to a massive bribe offered to state and local law enforcement by the federal government” [p. 73]. Police efforts in the War on Drugs are aimed at poor, minority neighborhoods, those communities with little political influence and lacking the resources to fight against the skewed enforcement of drug laws.

To emphasize the racial nature of the drug war, Alexander contrasts the treatment of black drug offenders with the treatment of drunk drivers:



Book Review, Continued

Although drunk driving carries a far greater risk of violent death than the use or sale of illegal drugs, the societal response to drunk drivers has generally emphasized keeping the person functional and in society, while attempting to respond to the dangerous behavior through treatment and counseling. People charged with drug offenses, though are disproportionately poor people of color. They are typically charged with felonies and sentenced to prison [p. 206]. . . . In view of the nation's treatment of predominately white drunk drivers and drug offenders, it is extremely difficult to imagine that our nation would have declared all-out war on drug offenders if the enemy had been defined in the public imagination as white. [p. 207]

What would happen if, instead of incarcerating minorities for nonviolent drug offenses, our society were to offer them treatment and counseling? That approach has not been one of the goals of the War on Drugs. In the early 1980s, the FBI's drug enforcement budget increased from \$8 million to \$95 million, while the budget of the National Institute on Drug Abuse was slashed almost 80%, down to \$57 million [p. 49].

I feel that I've done little in these paragraphs to convey the power of Alexander's book, but a recent Pew study goes a long way in showing that racism is far from dead in this country.

The Pew study documents the differing perspectives of whites, blacks, and Hispanics regarding racial progress in recent decades and adds support to Alexander's arguments.² While 79% of blacks say that "a lot" more needs to be done to achieve racial equality, only 44% of whites gave the same response [p. 9 of the Pew study]. In response to a question regarding treatment of blacks in their community by police, 70% of blacks says they are treated less fairly, 51% of Hispanics see blacks as being treated less fairly, but only 37% of white felt blacks were treated less fairly [p. 12 of the study]. The study shows that whites typically view racial progress over the past 50 years much more favorably than do African-Americans.

The New Jim Crow is not a feel-good book. In fact, it's an incredibly dark and depressing book, especially because it's describing a real situation in our own country. Still, I encourage everyone to read it. There are no easy answers to the problem of mass incarceration, and Alexander does not offer any. Awareness that the problem exists, however, is a necessary first step before any action can take place. ■

Notes

¹ Page references are to the Kindle version of the book.

² Pew Research Center, *King's Dream Remains an Elusive Goal; Many Americans See Racial Disparities* (August 22, 2013), available at http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/files/2013/08/final_full_report_racial_disparities.pdf.



A Better Resource For Faculty And Students: Transformation Of A Law Library Website

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Introduction

As a new law librarian, freshly out of library school, I came into my current position with an interest in technology, mostly focused on social media use for the library. Almost immediately, and with little to no experience in updating web pages, I was given the task of editing and maintaining the library's website, which was in desperate need of a makeover.

My limited knowledge of website construction, design, and maintenance comes from two completely different experiences: a quick lesson on Microsoft FrontPage from a college class (I was an accounting major so I simply don't recall how this lesson was relevant to that line of education), and some on-the-job experience with Drupal from my work with the Legal Information Institute.

My experience with the Legal Information Institute proved to be invaluable when it came time to update the Rutgers-Camden Law Library website because of a similar Drupal interface. I made sure to contact our IT department to find out the full extent of my access and editing permissions. Permissions control what I can do on the website¹, and permissions are managed by the Law IT department.

Next, I had to come up with a game plan. Fully recognizing that updating all the law library pages

would take months, my plan had to be flexible (and so did I). My initial objective was to first redo the pages that I believed were, or should have been, the most-used pages on the website (e.g. information about the library, collection, resources, and reference librarians). For this, the other librarians were my focus group. Three of us were new to this library and the library website at the time, and since we were using the website to help us get familiar with some of the available reference resources, I spoke with them on a near daily basis both before and after any significant changes. Their feedback proved invaluable.

I also acknowledged that what I wanted to do would involve using more HTML (HyperText Markup Language) tag options than the Drupal rich-display² offered, so I went and got myself a starter guide for HTML³. From there, most of the work I did was in that code.

Drupal 7

In the first version of this article, I talked about Drupal 7 at the end because the upgraded web page editing software had only *just* been introduced to the school. Upon revisiting this article, I decided to incorporate the pre-Drupal 7 changes and the post-Drupal 7 changes within each section below, rather than save all the Drupal 7 changes until the end.



What do I mean by pre- and post-Drupal 7? The Law Library's Drupal software used to be hosted on a library-run server that utilized a template built from scratch by a librarian and the Assistant Director of IT. Because this system was built in-house, they only added CSS (Cascading Styling Sheets⁴) coding for things that were necessary at the time.

A couple of years before I got to Rutgers, this system was migrated over to the main web server for the law school. All of the librarians had access to add, modify, and delete Law Library content, restricted only by the capabilities of the man-made system that was coded by the librarian and IT. The upside to this arrangement was that it gave me complete freedom to create new pages and update existing content; the downside was that the Law Library's pages looked entirely different from that of the law school's, creating a visual disconnect, despite the Law Library being a menu option from the Law School website.

The Law Library's Drupal 7 software is still hosted on the main web server for the law school, now utilizing a template designed by a third-party company that has more coding capabilities. The initial changes that I made to the library web pages were done in the older version of Drupal, and before I knew of the system's coding restrictions. As mentioned above, most of this work was done in the code, rather than in the rich-display format.

When our IT department offered to upgrade our web pages from the old Drupal to Drupal 7, I was warned that this upgrade would come with costs: specifically, the inability to add new pages, and to manage the order of the pages from the menu options. The trade-off was that our web page designs would be consistent with that of the Law School's web pages, which had been my ultimate goal when I began this project. As I have a friendly

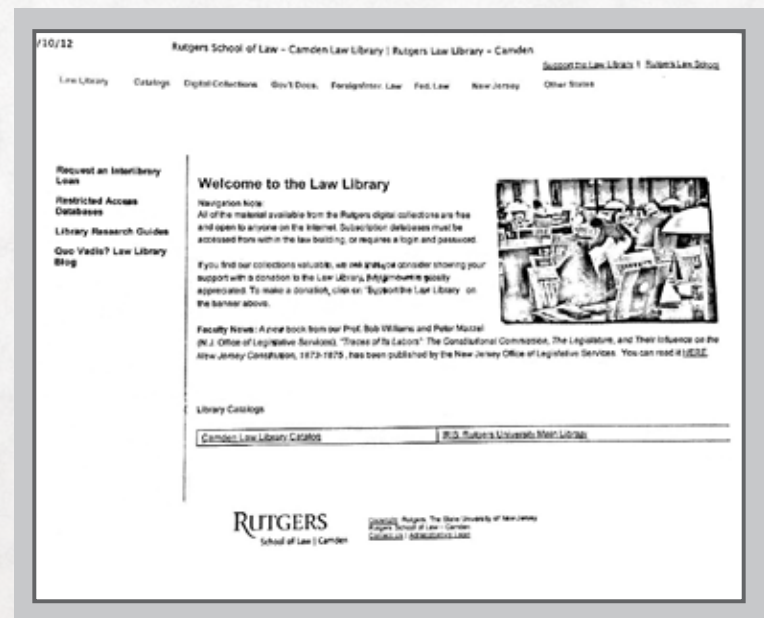
relationship with the IT department, and my experience thus far had confirmed that they responded to requests rather quickly, I was willing to accept these restrictions.

Each section will discuss the initial changes that I made (which became the pre-Drupal 7 changes) before the upgrade, and then any changes that were necessary after the upgrade (the post-Drupal 7 changes, and current version).

Homepage

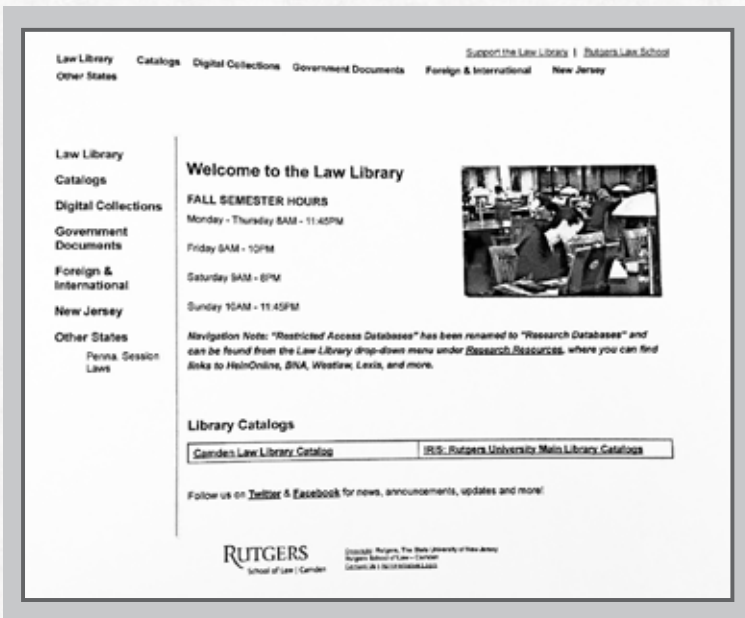
This undertaking really gave me a chance to think critically about the way words appeared on any given web page, by themselves, in relation to the other words on the page, and in furtherance of the library's mission. While I was thinking about what was visually appealing both to me and to my colleagues, ultimately, I had to make changes that would be both accepted and appealing to those I believed to be our main groups of website users⁵: the law school community, the campus community, and the public.

The first change was logically to the Library homepage. This was the first page that our patrons saw of the library website. The old homepage (Image 1)



had three notes: the first addressing content, the second requesting donations, and the third highlighting a faculty member in the news. Beneath these paragraphs were links to the catalogs of both the Law Library and the main university library, in an outlined table. Having little experience with my library at the time, I did note that many calls that came into the reference and circulation desks were inquiries about library hours. A quick glance at the former homepage shows that there was no bright, blinking neon sign indicating on which page the hours could be located. So, the first change that I made in August 2012 was simply to display the regular semester hours on the homepage;

(Image 2)



this change was minor, yet significant.⁶

Main menu items across the top of the page are called “Primary Navigation⁷” while the menu items along the side of the page are called “Secondary Navigation⁸” When visitors arrived at the Law Library homepage, the Primary Navigation links were static across every law library web page. The menu on the left of the page displayed the four secondary links of the Law Library option

from the main menu. Clicking on any other Primary Navigation link should have displayed the secondary links of that main menu option. For some strange reason, the Secondary Navigation menu only ever displayed the Law Library’s secondary links despite having clicked on the other main menu links. While I had the permissions to designate a new or existing page as Primary or Secondary, the control over what displayed as Secondary Navigation was beyond my permissions. So, I had to request that our IT department fix the Secondary Navigation to allow the correct menu display for any given main menu selection.

The next change in November 2012 addressed the visual appeal of the information⁹. We added a link to the Newark Law Library catalog, and in doing so, we decided to draw users’ eyes to the library catalogs by turning the hyperlinks into Drupal’s pre-formatted headings¹⁰ (“<h2>” tags), enlarging the text and making the links more prominent. I had originally wanted to do away with the lines of the table, but the result did not do much to enhance the clarity of the information, so I left the visible lines. While I was keen on learning HTML to control the look and feel of the website,¹¹ the task of learning and then incorporating CSS to add more distinction¹² to certain information seemed daunting in the face of all of the other changes that had to be made, so I had to make do with just HTML for the time being. I did add some “website flair¹³” with buttons that linked to the library’s social media accounts (Image 3, top of next page).

(Image 3)



The new layout moved our main menu to the right side of the page, displaying our offerings much more prominently. Unfortunately, this made the homepage picture the main focal point on that page, forcing down the information that website visitors might be more interested in. This presented a challenge to me in how I wanted to present the information for the best visual appeal for our website users. I decided to keep the table, doing away with visible lines. I got creative with the bold ("**"¹⁴") formatting option and headings tags to make the hours and catalogs pop out for users. The navigation notes and information about other website changes, followed by an "In the News" section are farther down the page. If you visit the web site now, you will also notice that I had to do away with the social media buttons, so I created simple hyperlinks within the designated footer ("" tag¹⁵) area. Since the Law Library is a department of the law school, the banner across the top of the page, including menu items, and the banner across the bottom of the page, including contact information, are static law school web designs. In the bottom banner, the law school has incorporated their own social media buttons, so in an effort to avoid confusion, I opted for clean hyperlinks as opposed to seemingly duplicative social media buttons.**

The upgrade to Drupal 7 affected the visual display of the information on our homepage. (Image 4)



Consistency In Appearance — Details Do Matter

After modifying the homepage, my next goal was to establish a consistent format across all of our pages. The library's primary function is to support the mission and curriculum of the law school and the scholarship interests of the law school community, respectively, so I wanted our pre-Drupal 7 pages to look somewhat similar to those of the law school, with proper sections for information and resources clearly designated and separated and with appropriate headers for each section. I wanted the library website to be functional for the law school community so that

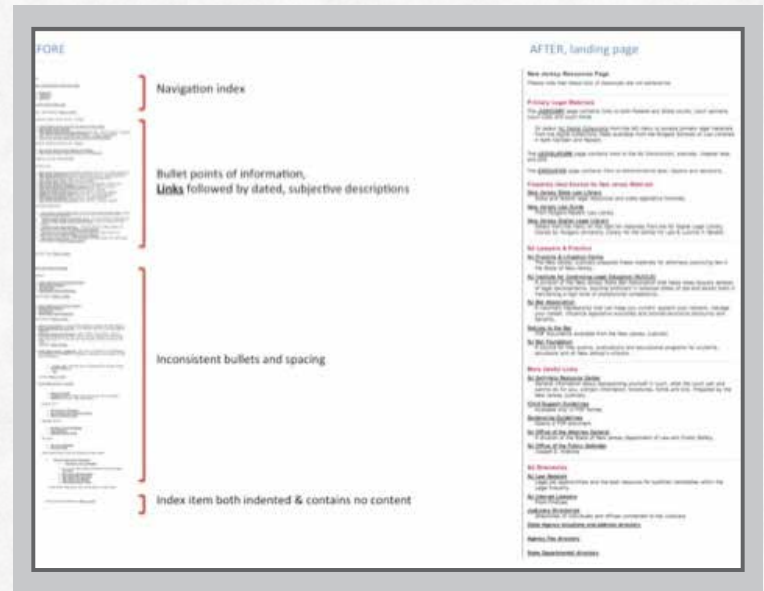


they would have easy access to the resources that we were making available. The former layout was inconvenient for the librarians, not to mention the faculty and students!

One immediately noticeable thing was that the titles of menu items and the titles of pages they linked to sometimes differed. In some places, users would find abbreviations and symbols for words that were written out in other locations (e.g. “Int’l” and “International”). Oftentimes, the abbreviations were inconsistent within a single page. So, I decided to standardize the menu items as either “and” or “&,” but not both, and if periods are used in abbreviations (e.g. “N.J.” vs. “NJ”), then there had to be consistency in that as well. I did away with the abbreviations within menu item titles because they were visually unappealing otherwise. Where menu items used to simply display the types of resources (e.g. formerly: “foreign & int’l law” or “gov. docs.”), I decided to tack on the word “Resources” to these menu item titles to remove any confusion for the average user. A reason for this was one of our ongoing digitization projects—converting government documents to a digital format, which are accessible from our catalog. While we want to publicize the existence of these digital government documents, I wanted to reduce user confusion from similar documents found on the Government Documents webpages (.gov sites), offering resources, tools, and guides for finding Government Documents, separate from our digital offerings.

Many of our old pages had been set up as tables¹⁶ with visible lines and, in some places, bullet points, and even worse yet, a bulleted list within a table with visible lines. This format was able to accommodate all of the information being offered to the website visitors, but it was a poorly thought out design coupled with intermittent maintenance that made the information difficult to find and therefore use. Due to the lackadaisical

input format¹⁷ offered by Drupal’s rich-display, many web pages were several pages long (Image 5)



with inconsistent spacing between lines; while others had inconsistently indented and spaced out bullet points—in some places several line returns (i.e. new paragraphs <p>¹⁸) and indented bullet points that should have been more prominent. This display resulted in a lot of good information going unnoticed and unused. Furthermore, because of the intermittent maintenance coupled with the inconsistent layout on any given page, many links went unchecked for years (based on the “Last Updated On” information in Drupal’s content management system), leaving hyperlinked texts that led to many 404 errors (i.e. “Page Not Found”).

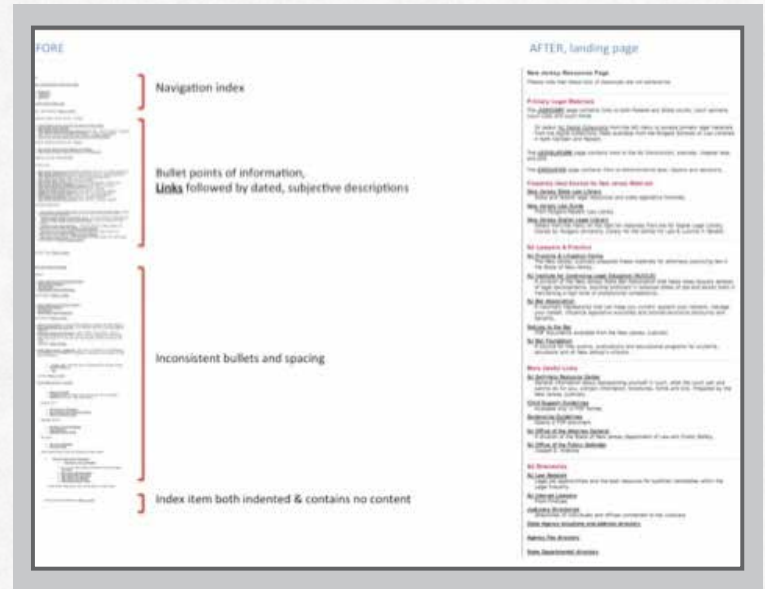
My first step to creating a consistent feel across all pages was to make sure that each page had a proper heading. I attempted to employ the Title (“<title>¹⁹”) tag, but I was not happy with the spatial layout that resulted, so I used the Heading 3 (“<h3>²⁰”) tag for the page title, the Heading 4 (“<h4>²¹”) tag to note either a disclaimer or a description, all followed by a Horizontal Rule (“<hr />²²”) to physically create a break between the header and the page content. Moreover, where

sections on each page were separated by the Horizontal Rule breaks, I used the pre-formatted Section Header (“23”) offered from the rich-display to change the color of the text of the section titles to red, allowing different information sources to stand out to users. (Image 6)



This pre-formatted option was my only option for changing the text color display. As previously mentioned, the way that the library’s old Drupal system had been set up did not allow the incorporation of different style elements within the markup language. Even in the full HTML display, those changes would not have been reflected visually—the system would simply ignore those commands because it was not programmed to recognize them.

My next step was to figure out what to do with the information within the tables with visible borders. (Image 5)



While I wanted to completely do away with tables, the old system didn’t offer the rich-display modules that I would have needed to properly space out and line up information (such as left- or center-justifying text.). I kept some tables, for spatial consistency, but I learned how to cleverly code the table formatting to display information in a way that was visually appealing. The information about the collection and the list of reference librarians were converted into similar tables. However, what made these tables different, and therefore more aesthetically pleasing was that I employed some of the table formatting options to make sure that the table borders were not visible, and to make sure that the top cell(s) of the table were configured as a table Heading to properly give a title to the list of information (Image 6, top of next page). The information that people seek is in bold followed by a description that is not bold. This bold/normal formatting is consistent with other lists of resources on any given Library web page.

The lists of information from the above example allowed for the use of specifically formatted tables due to the nature of the information (i.e. short lists (Image 6))



with short descriptions—no more than one line). For the longer lists of information, I decided to convert some of the paragraphs (“<p>” tags) and bulleted lists (which used “” and “” tags²⁴), to detailed lists (using “<dl>,” “<dt>,” and “<dd>” tags²⁵); while I did not have the modules necessary to indent, center- or right justify information within an area of the page, the detailed lists offered a way to do just that. Each link was automatically left-justified and bold so that it stood out from the description (“<dd>”) that rested immediately underneath and was automatically indented.

Also, Drupal 7 displays hyperlinks as a different color than text, setting off the link title from the description of that resource below, which was a look that I had originally wanted, but could not make happen with the programming restrictions of the old system. So I ended up changing all of the detailed lists back to paragraphs with line breaks (“
” tag). This made all the information left-justified, with no indenting, creating a clean look to our lists of resources.

Reorganization Of Information

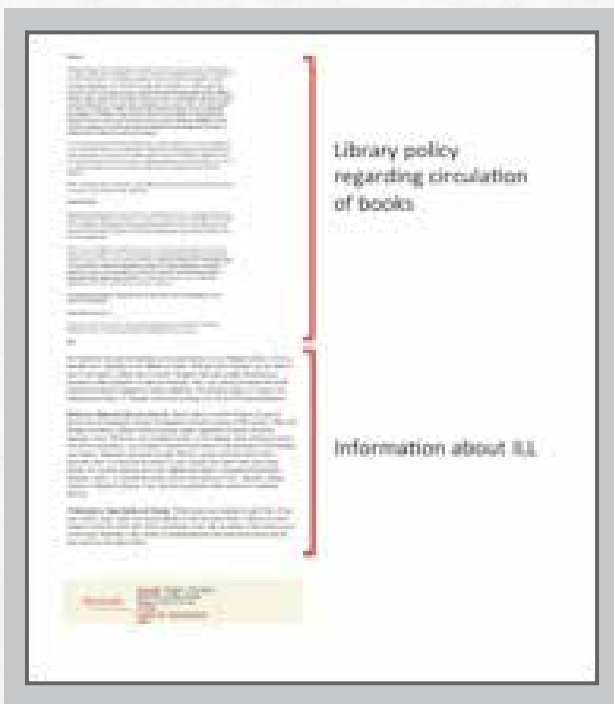
After several discussions about some of the web pages with a colleague, I decided that I should proceed with updating pages based on the assumption that users don’t scroll²⁷; so the most important information had to be “above the fold” (i.e. near the top of the page).

One example of this was the page containing the Library Policies, which were at the bottom of the very long Student Services page (Image 6) and not clearly labeled on a menu title. It did not make sense to keep most of the library policies at the bottom of a page without any directive that that was where that information could be found, especially on a page titled “Law Library Guide to Student Services”; after all, library policies apply to more than just students. Also, there were some other library policies on another page. I consolidated all policies onto a new page entitled “Library and Lending Policies,” so there should be no confusion as to where those are located, and to whom they apply.

As I mentioned earlier, there was useful, substantive content on some of the pages, which saved me the trouble of having to create content from scratch. The problem was that the pages were so long and monotone that it was hard to distinguish any one detail from any other—



everything looked the same so any piece of information was easily lost to the untrained eye. For example, the New Jersey Resources page (Image 7 and 8)



shows how the Detailed List formatting created a cleaner look for a single web page. A more appealing display of the information increases

most users' ability to find what they are looking for simply because it is easier to read.

I believe that the detailed lists were extremely helpful for the pages-long lists of resources (hyperlinks followed by a short description of that resource), and seemed more helpful for organizing the information within individual cells on the tables as you can see on the (now) Judicial Branch Resources page, available from our Government Documents Resources.

Next Steps: Content Management

The most important content change I made was at the start of this project. I knew that we could not fix all the content issues right away, so I decided to start with the most used resources on the website: the list of databases for research. As I said at the beginning of this article, the law library's mission is to support the law school community, and one of the ways that we can do that is by having easily accessible resources presented in a manner that makes those resources easy to find, with the least amount of effort, frustration and confusion. So, having the list of databases used for research behind a link titled "Restricted Access Databases" did not seem logical. To me, the link name was a deterrent to website visitors; in fact, I had spoken with a 3L journal editor who had never once clicked on the link to see what the restricted access databases were. Now, all of our databases for research are behind a link titled "Research Databases" in an effort to promote access and user interaction.

Furthermore, some information was duplicative on several website pages, so I wanted to get rid of obvious overlaps that confused visitors (and me). The duplications dealt mainly with our digital resource offerings: U.S. government documents and opinions, and New Jersey courts opinions. I was often confused by these duplications because, in the process of



finding resources available to help my research, I often thought that there were several different databases from which to check simply because the link to that resource was in several locations, usually under different link titles. For instance, there used to be links to the New Jersey Courts database available from both the New Jersey Resources page as well as the Digital Collections page. The confusion stemmed from the fact that the hyperlinks employed different page titles for those hyperlinks, giving me and possibly other users the impression that the same databases available from various places on our website contained different information, when they were, in fact, one in the same (e.g. the New Jersey Resources page used “NJ Courts” within a list of links for other NJ resources and specific courts’ opinions, while the Digital Collections page used “New Jersey Courts” followed by separate links for “US District Court for the District of New Jersey” and “New Jersey Court opinions”). I had to make a decision: were those databases New Jersey resources or Digital Collections? I ultimately decided that they were Digital Collections. So, as part of an ongoing library project, I created a link to the Digital Collections page from the New Jersey Resources page, rather than duplicating the hyperlink to the New Jersey Courts database. Moreover, many of the links went unchecked for years. Any given broken link could only be fixed by finding the entirely new URL for the hyperlinked item.²⁸

The new layout of the information is much cleaner and makes the presentation of available resources much easier to scan through; at the same time, it highlights areas where we need to update or create more content (e.g. our new “Study & Practice” page was born of information from the research page that might not necessarily be classified as “research resources” as well as using ideas from our librarians for content to be created). This will be an ongoing group effort.

Conclusion, Of Sorts

What was once a series of web pages haphazardly fitted together with virtual scotch-tape has become a cohesive, optimized interface that operates smoothly. It was my ultimate goal that by improving the functionality of the website and the presentation of the information, resources would be easier to find, not just for librarians, but also for faculty, students, and the public. We have been answering fewer questions regarding library hours. And now that the librarians all know where to find certain resources, we’ve created a whole host of potential teachable moments for reference desk inquiries.

This upgrade, like most, came with its pros and cons. Since the overhaul, I’m happy to say that I do not spend much time updating the website. The librarians work as a team to ensure that our hyperlinks remain live, and will notify me accordingly if something needs to be added, deleted, or simply fixed. The upside is that all of our webpages match those of the law school, and they are more logically organized. The only downside to the new Drupal is that I’ve lost some of my editing permissions; specifically, the ability to add a new page and then publish it for all users to see.

Rather than have me preach to you about why law librarians should know HTML, read this blog post on the Learning LibTech blog: <http://cynng.wordpress.com/2013/03/17/why-you-should-learn-html/>. ■

Notes

¹ “Permissions” defined at <https://drupal.org/getting-started/6/admin/user/permissions>, last accessed on October 3, 2013. Because Law IT manages all of the various law departments’ web pages, user permissions are generally restricted to access for necessary pages, only (i.e. librarians only have access to edit law library web pages).

² More commonly known as WYSIWYG (“What you see is what you get”) <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/WYSIWYG>, last accessed on October 1, 2013. This display looks like familiar word-processing software where the available HTML tag’s editing options look like buttons that easily enable the user



to insert mark-up language into the editor without knowing the different HTML tag options.

³ Boumphrey, F. (2012). *Html5 for dummies elearning kit*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc. (This is not an endorsement; I've just had success with this series in the past.)

⁴ Boumphrey (2012) p. 10. These formatting options can control the style of the text (i.e. font size, type of font, etc.) so that the text stands out from the surround text in a noticeable way. I don't get into CSS all that much in this paper because I didn't use many CSS formatting options, with the exception of the "section header" option that changed the font color of select text (*post*, at 5).

⁵ I was not using analytics at the time, so this was a subjective conclusion based on observation and the shared references experiences of my colleagues.

⁶ Again, no formal analytics were collected, but the number of calls to the reference and circulations desk regarding hours were significantly reduced.

⁷ Also called "Main Menu," defined at <https://drupal.org/documentation/modules/menu>. Last accessed on October 1, 2013.

⁸ Also called "Secondary Menu" defined at <https://drupal.org/documentation/modules/menu>. Last accessed on October 1, 2013.

⁹ See, generally, Conroy, Karin, "Website Design Best Practices" (2012). The Lawyerist (Blog), available from <http://lawyerist.com/website-design-best-practices/>, last accessed on October 1, 2013. Again, without using CSS features, it was tricky to make certain words, like Section Headers, stand out on a page that was designed to make all text display in a consistent, monotonous format.

¹⁰ For dummies, p. 31. I used headings because I would not have been able to change the size of the font otherwise, even with CSS.

¹¹ Initially, since the library web page design was different from that of the law school web page design, CSS would have been used to create a more consistent display between the law school pages and the law library pages (e.g. larger, bold section headings followed by smaller text, and a different text color for hyperlinks).

¹² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cascading_Style_Sheets. The "styling" that could have been added, had the system been programmed to accept such displays, included: font sizes, font colors, etc.

¹³ See Dority Baker, Marcia, "Adding Website Flair With Buttons" (2012). Faculty Publications, UNL Libraries. Paper 276, available from <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libraryscience/276>, last accessed on October 1, 2013.

¹⁴ Defined, with examples at http://www.w3schools.com/tags/tag_strong.asp, last accessed on October 1, 2013.

¹⁵ Defined, with an example at http://www.w3schools.com/tags/tag_footer.asp, last accessed on October 1, 2013.

¹⁶ Tables require several tags, depending on the number of rows and columns utilized. Table is defined with additional styling attributes at http://www.w3schools.com/tags/tag_

[table.asp](#), last accessed on October 2, 2013.

¹⁷ See footnote 3. In Drupal, there are not as many formatting button options as we're used to seeing in our documents editors, whatever they may be. In a documents editor, you can control the line spacing, and the degree of indentation for a bullet list, usually fairly easily with the ruler at the top of the document; in the Drupal rich-text editor, line spacing and paragraph indentation were sometimes hard to control because, despite the notion that "what you see is what you get," line spacing and indenting text often looked different in the editor than it did on the published page. These specific formatting problems were easier to control in the code. See, generally, <https://drupal.org/node/669114>, last accessed on October 1, 2013.

¹⁸ Defined, with an example at http://www.w3schools.com/tags/tag_p.asp, last accessed on October 1, 2013.

¹⁹ Defined, with an example at http://www.w3schools.com/tags/tag_title.asp, last accessed on October 1, 2013.

²⁰ Defined, with an example at http://www.w3schools.com/tags/tag_hn.asp, last accessed on October 1, 2013.

²¹ Defined, with an example at http://www.w3schools.com/tags/tag_hn.asp, last accessed on October 1, 2013.

²² Defined, with an example at http://www.w3schools.com/tags/tag_hr.asp, last accessed on October 1, 2013.

²³ http://www.designplace.org/tutorials.php?page=1&c_id=24 & http://www.htmlgoodies.com/tutorials/html_401/article.php/3479661/HTML-40-SPAN-Tag.htm. Note: this section header is actually a CSS styling feature that the old system otherwise would not have recognized. When I told the Assistant Director of IT that I needed to change the color of some text to distinguish sections, he worked out how to program this section header option into the software for me.

²⁴ Defined at http://www.w3schools.com/tags/tag_li.asp, last accessed on October 2, 2013.

²⁵ Defined at http://www.w3schools.com/tags/tag_dd.asp, last accessed on October 2, 2013.

²⁶ Defined at http://www.w3schools.com/tags/tag_br.asp, last accessed on October 2, 2013.

²⁷ Soussan Djamassbi, Marisa Siegel, Tom Tullis, Generation Y, web design, and eye tracking, *International Journal of Human-Computer Studies*, Volume 68, Issue 5, May 2010, Pages 307-323, ISSN 1071-5819, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhcs.2009.12.006>. (<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1071581909001918>) "... the top part of the page received high levels of fixation while the area below the fold received no fixation within the first five seconds of viewing, and very little fixation over the entire viewing time (319)... Through eye tracking, it was found that Generation Y did not scroll, suggesting that important information should be placed above the fold of a web page... (320).

²⁸ Thank you to Melanie Gordon, a unit computing specialist at Rutgers-Camden, who migrated all the library pages into Drupal 7, checking for and fixing broken links along the way.



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