



# The ALL-SIS Newsletter

Volume 25, Issue 2

Spring 2006

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Michael J. Slinger  
2005 - 2006 ALL-SIS Chair

There is an ancient proverb attributed to the Chinese that is offered as a gesture of good wishes: “May You Live in Interesting Times.” For all of us, the last year has certainly been interesting, but unfortunately not just in good ways. Our lives and our profession have had to face numerous and sometimes very difficult challenges: the devastation of natural disasters especially Hurricane Katrina whose affects are still being felt grievously (see the [article](#) by Brian Huddleston on how Loyola University New Orleans School of Law dealt with Katrina’s aftermath); the continuing battles over patron privacy and the Patriot Act; a threat to change ABA accreditation

language to weaken faculty status for law library directors (fortunately defeated); and the continuing pressure of striving for excellence with increasingly shrinking dollars and sometimes less staff.

During this year as has been the case for many previous years, we fortunately found support from our professional associations and professional colleagues. Almost daily, I find my work life is made easier through helpful advice from individuals and groups who are linked to me by support for our profession. On a regular basis we find the truth in the statement that we are much stronger collectively than we would ever be

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## Searching for Future Law Librarians

Michael Slinger  
Chair, ALL-SIS

The ALL-SIS Executive Board is seeking your help to identify students who potentially may be interested now or in the future in exploring a career in academic law librarianship. These could be students you know as current JD students at your school or recent graduates, students pursuing library or information degrees or

even staff members who have expressed an interest. We would like to contact these people and send letters or emails with information about academic law librarianship as a career option, about AALL and ALL-SIS, and about the various grants and scholarships available to students who may be interested in pursuing a law or information degree. If

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## An Academic Law Librarian in a Law Firm World: The Myths and the Truths about Working in a Law Firm

Jennifer S. Murray, Librarian  
Greenberg Traurig, Phoenix

And the winner for the question that people most frequently asked me in 2005 is “How do you like being at a law firm?” It is not an easy question to answer. So I was thrilled when I was asked to write this article because I finally have an opportunity to give the question the answer it deserves. As I talked with people about law firm librarianship, I discovered many conceptions about law firms. Some are true; some are not. Here is what I have learned over the past year about these conceptions.

### *The pay is better.*

It depends. This conception of law firm librarianship seems to come up a lot. Yes, there can be holiday bonuses. And, yes, the salary might be more than in academia. But this isn't always the case. It really depends on which law school and law firm you are comparing. Some law schools have better budgets than others and, as a result, can give larger salary increases. Some law firms have a bad year and can't give a salary increase. So, as I learned in law school, the safest answer is: it depends.

### *You don't have time to be involved in any professional activities.*

Myth. I still have time. Actually, it's much easier to get involved in AALL as a law firm librarian. Let's face it. Academic law librarians outnumber any other type of law librarian in AALL by quite a bit. So I'm finding that the law librarian community really appreciates an active law firm librarian. While it is true I don't respond as quickly to emails and phone calls as I could when I was in academia, I do still respond. And it might take me a little while longer to get things done, but I still get them done. And if I have a deadline, I'll still meet it. I think that the lack of participation in AALL and

other extracurricular activities on the part of law firm librarians is due to a lack of incentive to endure the stress of those activities. Academic law librarians have the carrot of tenure to lure them to become active. Law firm librarians don't really have any carrot. They have to do it out of genuine interest and desire.

### *The hours are awful.*

Truth. Lunch and wage and hour laws have gone the way of the Easter Bunny, Santa Claus, and the Tooth Fairy. I remember them fondly. And law firms don't have winter or spring breaks. But, with that said, my time is more my own. I have more freedom to structure my day as I want and decide how to use my time. So, for me personally, it's not a bad trade off.

### *Everything is a rush.*

Truth. Attorneys usually want things yesterday. But, you know what? This isn't such a bad thing. If you only have a limited amount of time, you can only do so much; whereas, in academia, the focus on being exhaustive can take forever. I've become adept at what I like to call “shock and awe” research.

### *The bottom line is money.*

Truth. There are two questions I automatically ask whenever I receive a research request. The first is “Is there a billing number?” The second is “What is the timeframe?” But, as the previous paragraph alludes, the timeframe is usually a rush. So the answer to the first question is the one I really care about. The concept of money and working for a business is where much of the law firm jargon comes into play. For example, my first week at the firm, someone mentioned biz/dev. Was this a new rap artist? No. I quickly learned that biz/dev is

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## Firm Law Librarian, Cont'd

short for business development. So began my introduction to a whole new world of jargon ... law firm speak.

*Law firm librarians do a lot of legal research.*

Myth. If I had time to do the math, I would estimate that 60 percent of my research is non-legal. Over the past year, I have learned how to do research that I didn't even know was possible.

*Law firms do their research online.*

Myth. While we do a lot of research online, there are still resources that law firms maintain in print. The reason for this is two-fold. First, some law firms cannot afford the cost of online subscriptions to various resources. Second, as we all know, there are just some functions of print research that cannot be replaced by an electronic version of the resource.

So, this all begs the question though. How do I like being at a law firm? I like it quite a bit. I'm still learning so much and growing as a librarian. But this stems from the fact that after 4 years of being a reference librarian, I was ready for a change. I do one day hope to return to academia. I miss the students the most. I didn't realize how much I enjoyed being part of the learning process. For now, however, I have found a comfortable niche and am pleased with the growth I have been able to achieve with this change.

## ALL-SIS Education Committee 2005 - 2006

Debra Denslaw (Chair)  
Indiana University-Indianapolis

One important outcome of AALL's September 2005 Education Summit is the revised charge to the ALL-SIS Education Committee. The new charge provides the Committee with clear objectives to assist members in identifying worthwhile educational opportunities in a variety of formats and in

addressing the needs and challenges of continuing professional development for academic law librarians.

In meeting its new charge, the 11-member Education Committee will monitor and promote announcements about seminars, workshops and conferences of potential interest to academic law librarians. In part, the Education Committee will serve as an intermediary between members, asking ALL-SIS members to collaborate by notifying us of upcoming local, regional, national, international, web-based and recorded programs. The Committee also encourages members to provide reports and comments about programs (especially recurring events) they have attended. Additionally, through the year, the Committee will initiate and facilitate discussions on the many issues related to professional education.

We will be monitoring notices from a variety of sources. Please contact any of the Committee members with ideas for programs we should promote, a report or evaluation of a program you have attended, or ideas for discussion topics.

### Members

Ajaye Bloomstone, Louisiana State University  
Christine Ciambella, George Mason University  
Anne Cottongim, Wayne State University  
Debra Denslaw (Chair), Indiana University-Indianapolis  
David Fetrow, Ohio Northern University  
Sarah Hooke Lee, Northeastern University  
Barbara Morgan, University of Massachusetts  
Maryellen O'Brien, University of Florida  
Merle Slyhoff, University of Pennsylvania  
Sally Wambold (Vice-Chair), University of Richmond  
Julia Wentz, Loyola University of Chicago

## When Job Descriptions Matter Least: Lessons Learned from Hurricane Katrina and Loyola's Semester in Exile

Brian Huddleston, Senior Reference Librarian  
Loyola University New Orleans School of Law

Law librarianship is a profession where the unpredictability of our daily routines is something that most of us enjoy and appreciate. Despite this, I used to worry that I was getting bored by the routine that played itself out at the start of each school year: every fall, we get a new crop of 1L students, we participate in orientation, give library tours, help with their research and writing homework, etc., etc. But fall 2005 would make me appreciate such "boring" routines in a way I never could have imagined and it was more unpredictable than I could have ever wanted.

The fall semester classes for Loyola University New Orleans School of Law started on Monday, August 22nd. By the next weekend, Hurricane Katrina was threatening the Louisiana coast and both the city and the university put their evacuation plans into effect. On Saturday the law library closed early and university and law school classes were canceled for Monday and Tuesday, with the reopening and resumption of classes tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, August 31st.

Like previous hurricane evacuations, most people in New Orleans thought it was a case of "better safe than sorry," and most of us packed only two or three days' worth of clothes and supplies. Even when Katrina made landfall Monday, after shifting east of New Orleans and devastating the Mississippi Gulf Coast, we thought we had once again missed the worst of the proverbial "big one." But then, like the rest of the country, we watched the news broadcasts of the water rising from the breached levees and knew we wouldn't be home soon.

The School of Law started the fall with a total of 818 students in two curriculums - common law

and civil law - and a day and evening division (the evening division only provides the civil law curriculum). Like most schools of our caliber, we are very tuition-dependent and not able to endure an extreme drop in our revenue stream. Canceling the fall semester with no contingency plan for our students would be disastrous.

Within days of Katrina, the AALS and ABA worked out an agreement with the two New Orleans law schools and schools throughout the country that enabled most of our upper level students to take courses elsewhere for the semester with the understanding that they would return home in the Spring. But only a few schools agreed to take in some of our first year students. Even if most of them deferred and returned in fall 2006, our financial profile would be devastated and there was no realistic way to double our incoming class next year to make up for the financial shortfall that would result. In that scenario, the budget cuts would likely be extreme: even tenure would not save the junior faculty if we had to downsize to a dramatic extent and the law library's budget would have been similarly eviscerated. But unknown to most of us, events were in motion that would prevent this dire scenario from playing out.

The University of Houston Law Center had experienced its own hurricane in 2001. Serious flooding forced them to relocate much of their summer program that year to other facilities throughout the university and the city. Watching the news of Hurricane Katrina, they quickly decided to do what they could for either of the displaced law schools in New Orleans. Luckily, several of the administrators from Loyola School of Law, including the Dean, had evacuated to Houston and the Law Center staff got in touch

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## When Job Descriptions Matter Least, Cont'd

with them to discuss several possible plans. It was eventually decided that the best option was for Loyola to set up a “satellite” program at the University of Houston Law Center for the fall semester. Our faculty would teach a full roster of courses for our first year students, including both the common law and civil law curriculums. The classes would be scheduled around the Law Center’s own courses and the semester would be compressed into eleven weeks, from October 3rd to December 17th, with exams back in New Orleans in January (the Spring 2006 semester was pushed back accordingly). As it turned out, in addition to the first year courses, we were able to offer a fair number of required upper level courses and electives. (We would eventually have about 310 students in our Houston program, roughly 180 first year students and 130 upper level students.)

While all this was happening, my wife and I had evacuated to a friend’s house in North Carolina (along with our traveling menagerie of four cats and a dog). Loyola’s e-mail and web servers were down and so I re-subscribed to the law-lib listserv from a personal e-mail account. That is how I learned of the slowly-forming plans in Houston.

Watching the news for countless hours was grating, and so, needing to do something to try and help, I started scouring on-line message boards and news forums for word of co-workers and students. I also posted my own messages to help spread the word about the Houston program. I also started a roster of our displaced students with their non-Loyola e-mail addresses and other contact information. A faculty member set up a temporary web page and we set up Google Groups for our displaced faculty and students to facilitate easy e-mail distribution. This is how we slowly started to aggregate and pass on information to

the Loyola School of Law community in the first days and weeks of the New Orleans diaspora.

I didn’t know what I could do to help in Houston, but I knew I could do something. Even if it was just answering phones and making copies, another set of hands would be useful. My wife has relatives in Houston who could help us find a place to live, so I was perhaps the one reference librarian most able to relocate there and help out. (Our library director, P. Michael Whipple, teaches a section of Torts each fall and also eventually made it to Houston to teach.)

Just as Loyola was extremely lucky to have the opportunity to relocate our semester to Houston, I, personally, was very lucky to have the supportive staff at the O’Quinn Law Library ready to accommodate any librarians who showed up. Director Spencer Simons and his staff were preparing to accommodate several librarians before I even knew I could come to Houston and I had an office and a computer waiting for me when I got there. But it turned out that I would be doing very little traditional librarian work.

The immediate task I took up was to coordinate the textbook orders. All the major legal publishers had agreed to donate books that students had lost or had not evacuated with. A few faculty had already made arrangements to get books for the students in the courses they would teach, but the publishers wanted to deal with a single person instead of the twenty-five faculty who eventually taught at Houston. There was only one problem: we didn’t know how many students we were going to have, let alone what classes they would take.

Yes, we had a ballpark estimate of how many first year students were going to be in Houston, but an increasing number of upperclassmen also

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## When Job Descriptions Matter Least, Cont'd

started to indicate their interest in taking classes from our own professors. We hadn't thought early enough to try to survey the students coming to Houston about whether they were in our Civil Law or Common Law program, or, for the upperclassmen, what classes they wanted to take and the first we heard from some students would be upon their arrival in Houston literally on the morning that their classes began. We didn't even have a formal registration process in place. The plan was for students to show up and sign their class rolls, and then we would get the records straight later. So to estimate the quantity of textbooks needed, I adopted the technique that I had heard our mayor use when asked a similarly un-knowable post-Katrina question: the "SWAG" method - Scientific Wild-Ass Guess.

Though the companies were very accommodating, I tried to be conservative in the quantities of books I ordered. It turned out I underestimated how many students - particularly the first year students - had indeed evacuated with their books and I would end up shipping back a fair quantity of some titles. But some books for other classes required multiple re-orders, as we had seriously underestimated how many students would take the upper level courses. In the end, the three big publishers - Thomson/West, LexisNexis, and Aspen - collectively donated over 3800 books with a total list price of over \$180,000.

Besides ordering textbooks, I performed a lot of other miscellaneous tasks. For example, none of the faculty secretaries had evacuated to Houston. Some professors were in e-mail contact with their secretaries and got help that way, but I picked up some of the slack and did some purely administrative support functions, such as coordinating with the Law Center's in-house print shop and uploading syllabi to course web pages.

(Luckily the university's servers for e-mail, the web site, and Blackboard course pages were up and running by the time we started classes in Houston on October 3rd.) And though I'm not an information technology person, I assisted with the IT stuff anyway. The Law Center's tech staff went beyond the extra mile, but as a somewhat familiar face (though the 1Ls barely knew me or anyone from Loyola), I helped the occasional student get set up on the Law Center's wireless network, and also coordinated with the Houston staff on enabling our students to print. We were lucky to have some of our Westlaw and Lexis student representatives among the evacuees to Houston, and between them and the O'Quinn law library's staff, our accounts had been shifted over to Houston and the stand-alone printers were soon up and running for our students and faculty. But having had only a week of classes in New Orleans, the 1L students still hadn't received their Westlaw and Lexis IDs and that was one task that ended up taking up a good bit of my time.

I called this article "When Job Descriptions Matter Least" because it struck me early on that I would normally never be doing much of the stuff I did in Houston. I think most librarians don't consider themselves bound by the typically vague paragraphs of text contained in a job advertisement or in a human resources manual. But the biggest lesson that I learned from Loyola's semester in exile is that perhaps we should all take some time to consider the unanticipated and think about how we can prepare for situations where we might have to work way beyond the scope of our typical work duties. Such planning has applications besides preparing for possible disasters. Not to be morbid, but this is often considered what I call "bus accident" contingencies: what if any random member of your

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## When Job Descriptions Matter Least, Cont'd

library staff got run over by a bus tomorrow - could someone step in and do their job with a minimum of adjustment and transition?

One principle of military organization is that everyone should be able to perform the job of the person above you in the chain of command, and ideally have at least an idea of what happens at one or even two levels beyond that. Of course, this presupposes that those higher up have moved through the lower ranks and most libraries don't have as strict a rank hierarchy and promotion scheme as the military services. But we should all have an idea of what the folks below us, above us, and in parallel departments, do.

As a relatively minor example, I don't know what our account numbers are with different publishers, but it would be good to at least have that information handy when the tech services people aren't around and I need to talk to a customer service representative. Similarly, our tech services people should at least know what Westlaw and Lexis are, and understand how we distribute individual accounts for these services to all our students and faculty.

These aren't unique managerial insights by any measure, and I'm not saying anything that hasn't be considered or written about numerous times already. But now we at Loyola have seen first hand how unanticipated circumstances can throw both the library and the law school into unknown territories and hopefully other institutions can benefit from our experience by collectively brainstorming about how they might prepare to adapt to similar, yet unpredictable, contingencies and situations.

*Editor's Note:* I asked Brian for an update on the situation as I was finalizing this issue. He said "we're back in New Orleans, exams from the Houston program are wrapping up this week and

our pushed-back Spring semester starts on Monday. The swath of the city closest to the river - where both the university and our house are - are pretty much returned to normal, but the rest of the city is still largely a wasteland and long-term prospects are still a big unknown. So we refer to this part of New Orleans as either "the sliver along the river" or "the isle of denial." The law school is expecting just over 80% of our students to be back next week, which is a good bit better than early predictions."

## The Call for Papers Has Begun!

Patty Wellinger, Westminster Law Library  
University of Denver College of Law

Have you been thinking of writing an article of interest to law librarians? Maybe you just need a push to get started? Whether for fame or fortune, this is your chance to enter the AALL/LexisNexis™ Call for Papers Competition.

The AALL/LexisNexis Call for Papers Committee is soliciting articles in three categories:

- **Open Division** for AALL members and law librarians with five or more years of professional experience.
- **New Members Division** for recent graduates and AALL members who have been in the profession for less than five years.
- **Student Division** for students in library, information management or law school. (Students need not be members of AALL.)

The winner in each division receives \$750 generously donated by LexisNexis, plus the opportunity to present his or her paper at a special program during the AALL Annual Meeting in St. Louis. Winning papers will also be considered for publication in the Association's prestigious Law Library Journal.

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## ALL-SIS CALI Legal Research Authoring Group

Sara Kelley, Reference Librarian  
Georgetown University Law Library

ALL-SIS has a committee whose goal is to encourage librarians to author CALI lessons on legal research topics: the ALL-SIS CALI Authoring Group. The committee works with CALI to solicit and review proposals for and drafts of CALI legal research lessons. I am the committee chair; other members are Pat Fox, Nancy Johnson, Kit Kreilick, and Kris Niedringhaus.

CALI recently redesigned its web site to include daily and weekly "Top 25" lesson lists on a page called "CALI Zeitgeist," [www2.cali.org/index.php?fuseaction=lessons.zeitgeist](http://www2.cali.org/index.php?fuseaction=lessons.zeitgeist). According to this new feature, 7 of the top 25 lessons run by 2Ls and 3Ls on 1/17/2006 were legal research lessons.

There are currently 35 legal research lessons available at [www2.cali.org/index.php?fuseaction=lessons.subjectlist&cat=LR](http://www2.cali.org/index.php?fuseaction=lessons.subjectlist&cat=LR). Eight of those lessons were completed over the last year. There are also 17 new lessons in progress. We encourage you to write a CALI lesson and to use existing lessons in your teaching and reference work. The committee and the authors welcome feedback on CALI's legal research lessons. See [www2.cali.org/index.php?fuseaction=lessons.gridlist&categoryid=24&categoryname=Legal%20Writing%20&%20Research](http://www2.cali.org/index.php?fuseaction=lessons.gridlist&categoryid=24&categoryname=Legal%20Writing%20&%20Research) for a list of completed and suggested lesson topics, and [www2.cali.org/index.php?fuseaction=static.lrcap#progress](http://www2.cali.org/index.php?fuseaction=static.lrcap#progress) for a list of proposal deadlines and lessons that are currently in progress. The next deadline for submitting a lesson proposal is March 6, 2006, but additional rounds close about every two months.

Please contact Deb Quentel ([dquentel@cali.org](mailto:dquentel@cali.org)) or any member of the committee for additional information.

## Program Planning Committee Report

Lee Peoples  
Chair, Program Planning Committee

Program Planning Committee members Lee Peoples (Chair), April Schwartz (Vice-Chair), Paddy Satzer, Eric Young, Kira Zaporski, Ajaye Bloomstone (Sub-Committee Chair), and Ruth Levor worked diligently under tight deadlines to compile and rank programs for the 2006 AALL Annual Meeting. In October we received excellent news from the Annual Meeting Program Planning Committee (AMPC). They accepted 10 out of the 25 programs sponsored or co-sponsored by ALL-SIS for the 2006 meeting. Those programs are:

- **A-1 Exploring Uncharted Territory: The Culture and Context of the University**
- **D-5 Up and Down the Career Ladder: Finding the Right Rung for You**
- **E-2 Teaching Online Legal Research to Law Students: What Do Students Really Need to Know When They Arrive at a Law Firm?** (co-sponsored by RIPS)
- **E-3 Invasion of the Podcast People - Podcasting for the Law Library** (sponsored by SC-SIS and co-sponsored by ALL-SIS)
- **F-6 Pioneering Global Health Law: Pandemics, Trends, and Research Strategies** (sponsored by FCIL-SIS and co-sponsored by ALL-SIS)
- **G-6 Forging Connections with Library Friends Groups** (sponsored by SIS-LHRB and co-sponsored by ALL-SIS)

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## Planning Report, cont'd

- **H-5** Managing Beyond the Library: Successful Management of IT Departments for Law Librarians (co-sponsored by CS-SIS)
- **J-5** Counting Electronic Resources - Should We Count and If So, What?
- **J-6** And You Thought Gadgets Were Only For the Kitchen: Part III: The Return!
- **W-1** Oh What a Tangled Web: Advanced Web Searching and Teaching (off site workshop)

The Committee, working with the ALL-SIS Board, will be offering the following two programs along side regularly scheduled AMPC programs:

- *What Public Services Should Know About Tech Services and Vice Versa*
- *Harnessing Digital Video Technology*

The high quality and high number of programs submitted for ALL-SIS sponsorship and the hard work of Committee members contributed to the acceptance of so many programs. Watch the next newsletter for more information about these programs and the 2006-2007 program selection process.

## ALL-SIS Seeks Nominations for Annual Awards

Ed Edmonds, Director of the Schoenecker Law Library and Professor of Law, University of St. Thomas

The ALL-SIS Awards Committee ( Rhea Ballard-Thrower, Ed Edmonds, and John D. Edwards ) is now accepting nominations for the following three awards and one grant:

- The Frederick Charles Hicks Award for Outstanding Contributions to Academic Law Librarianship

- The ALL-SIS Outstanding Article Award
- The ALL-SIS Outstanding Service Award
- The ALL-SIS CONELL Grant

**The application deadline for all awards is March 31, 2006.**

We also anticipate several special grants will be created for attendance at the annual AALL meeting. Details will be available in the near future.

### **The Frederick Charles Hicks Award for Outstanding Contributions to Academic Law Librarianship**

recognizes an individual or group which has made outstanding contributions to academic law librarianship through continued efforts to improve law librarianship. The award, presented by the Academic Law Libraries Special Interest Section (ALL-SIS) of the American Association of Law Libraries, is named in honor of Frederick Charles Hicks, the first great American law librarian/scholar who was also the first academic law librarian to serve as president of AALL. Past recipients have included Penny Hazelton, Frank Houdek, Dick Danner, Bob Berring, Tim Coggins, and Barbara Bintliff.

#### **Criteria:**

A nominee can be an individual or a group, and should exhibit extended and sustained contributions in one or more of the following areas:

- History of contributions to the field of law librarianship through research, publications and other activities displaying an active participation in the advancement of academic law librarianship;
- Achievement in a particular area of academic law librarianship;
- Service to AALL;
- Service to the ALL-SIS

#### **Submission Procedure:**

Individuals may nominate themselves or others.

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## Award Nominations, Cont'd

Preference will be given to members of the ALL-SIS.

Nominations must include:

- A letter of nomination, including the candidate's full name, title, and institution name and address. If the candidate is retired, include name, home address, and most recent former employer;
- A narrative supporting the nomination, to include a discussion of the candidate's contributions to academic law librarianship;
- The name, e-mail and phone number of the nominating party.

Nomination materials may be sent electronically or in paper (5 copies) to the ALL-SIS Awards Committee Chair.

The award will be presented annually at the discretion of the Awards Committee.

**Deadline:** All nominations must be received by March 31, 2006.

**The ALL-SIS Outstanding Article Award** honors section members for contributions to the enhancement of academic law librarianship through publishing. Articles published in any format in any publication other than *Law Library Journal* and *AALL Spectrum* (articles from those publications are eligible for AALL Article of the Year awards) during the year prior to the award qualify for consideration. Any aspect of academic law librarianship may be addressed. A plaque will be presented to the author or authors of the winning articles. The 2005 award recipient was Nancy M. Babb for *Cataloging Spirits and the Spirit of Cataloging*, 40 *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly* 89 (no. 2, 2005). The names of other

previous award winners can be found at

[www.aallnet.org/sis/allsis/awards/articleaward.html](http://www.aallnet.org/sis/allsis/awards/articleaward.html).

### Criteria:

- Article must be authored by an ALL-SIS member. For co-authored articles, at least one author must be a member of ALL-SIS.
- Nominated articles for each year's award must have been published in the previous calendar year, i.e. 2005.
- Articles will be evaluated on:
  - Relevance of topic to some aspect of academic law librarianship, including but not limited to public services, technical services, legal research or teaching;
  - Quality of writing;
  - Effectiveness of communication technique.
- Articles may have appeared in any publication (paper or electronic) including AALL publications (except *Law Library Journal* or *AALL Spectrum*), chapter newsletters, non-AALL publications, or in-house publications.
- When appropriate, awards will be presented for excellence in writing in different areas of academic law librarianship, such as technical services, public services, or administration.

Awards will not be presented in a given year if the Committee does not feel submissions meet the award criteria.

### Submission Procedure:

- Articles for consideration may be sent electronically or in paper (5 copies) to the ALL-SIS Awards Committee Chair.

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## Award Nominations, Cont'd

- Articles may be submitted for consideration by any AALL member, including the authors.

**Deadline:** All nominations/submissions must be received by March 31, 2006.

**The ALL-SIS Outstanding Service Award** honors an ALL-SIS member who has made outstanding contributions to the SIS in areas of section activity and in professional service.

### Criteria:

The following criteria will be considered in reviewing nominations for this award. Nominees may excel in one or more of the following areas:

- Outstanding leadership in the Section, at meetings, and in committee work.
- Special and notable service to the Section, such as participation in special projects.
- Participation in Section educational programs and public speaking activities.
- Mentoring activities which encourage others in the section.
- Activities which encourage others to join the Section.

The above list is not intended to be an exhaustive list of criteria. Individuals whose contributions to the Section take other forms may also be nominated.

### Submission Procedure:

Individuals may nominate themselves or others. Nominees must be a member of the ALL-SIS, active or retired. Nominations may be submitted by any SIS member.

Nominations must include:

- A letter of nomination, including the candidate's full name, title, and institution name and address. If the candidate is retired,

include name, home address, and most recent former employer;

- A narrative supporting the nomination, to include a discussion of the candidate's contribution to the SIS;
- A curriculum vitae of the candidate;
- The name, e-mail address and phone number of the nominating party.

Current Executive Board members and Awards Committee members are ineligible for nomination.

**Deadline:** All nominations must be received by March 31, 2006.

**The ALL-SIS CONELL Grant** is in the middle year of a three-year pilot program. The grant will be given to a newer law librarian to attend CONELL, the AALL Conference of Newer Law Librarians. The grant will cover the cost of CONELL registration and a hotel room for one night. The purpose of the CONELL Grant is to promote participation by newer academic law librarians in AALL and the ALL-SIS.

### Criteria:

To qualify for the grant, the winner must be an ALL-SIS member. The winner must:

1. Agree to become a member of the ALL-SIS CONALL/Mentoring Committee,
2. Attend CONALL, the ALL-SIS Conference of Newer Academic Law Librarians, and
3. Write a short article for the ALL-SIS newsletter about CONELL.

CONELL is a well-attended event and its registration may close before the ALL-SIS Awards Committee announces the CONELL Grant winner.

*(Continued on page 12)*

## Award Nominations, Cont'd

We recommend that applicants register and pay to attend CONELL before receiving notice of the ALL-SIS CONELL Grant winner in early May.

### Procedure:

To apply for the CONELL grant, complete the application and submit it with:

1. A current resume and
2. Two letters of recommendation from current or former teachers or employers that discuss your potential to contribute to the field of academic law librarianship and your need for the grant.

The grant will be presented annually at the discretion of the ALL-SIS Awards Committee. There is no requirement that the grant be given every year. Previous CONELL Grant winners are ineligible.

Nominations/submissions for all three awards and the grant may be sent in print or electronically to the ALL-SIS Awards Committee Chair, Ed Edmonds, Director of the Schoenecker Law Library and Professor of Law, Mail #MSL 112, 1000 LaSalle Avenue, Minneapolis, MN 55403-2015 or [epedmonds@stthomas.edu](mailto:epedmonds@stthomas.edu). Ed Edmonds' telephone number is 651-962-4899.

## Using Feeds to Serve Law Library Patrons

Diane Murley, Reference/Web Services Librarian  
Southern Illinois University School of Law

When I use the term feeds, I mean any of several types of web files used primarily by blogs, news sites, and other frequently updated websites to distribute content, including text, images, sound, and video content. Feeds go by many names: RSS feeds, news feeds, site feeds, XML feeds, syndication, channels, and others. The availability of a feed is usually indicated on web pages with a small graphic (known as a chicklet) or

with a "Syndicate this site" or "RSS" link.

Feeds make it possible for you to stay current with news items and blog postings from dozens or hundreds of sites without having to visit each of those sites repeatedly to find out if it has been updated. You subscribe to and read feeds with a special program called a news aggregator or feed reader. Aggregators and readers include programs loaded onto your computer, such as [FeedDemon](#), or websites, such as [My Yahoo!](#) and [Bloglines](#). You can also subscribe to feeds by email, using services such as [RMail](#) or [FeedBlitz](#).

Using the aggregator or reader of your choice, you subscribe to feeds for the websites and blogs that interest you. When blogs and other websites with feeds are updated, their feeds are also updated with headlines and frequently with excerpts or full-text. Your aggregator or reader automatically checks the feeds to which you have subscribed, collects the new information, and organizes and displays it in reverse chronological order. Simply by checking your aggregator for new items, you can review new information from many sources in a matter of minutes.

### What Feeds Can Do For You

Most law librarians monitor a large number of information sources, either for professional current awareness or to watch for information of interest to patrons. Perhaps the most obvious thing that feeds can do for you is help you monitor news sites and blogs. These sites are frequently updated, and visiting each individual site can take a lot of your time. When sites are very frequently updated, older information is pushed off the front page. You would have to visit some sites more than once a day or miss some entries.

Using a feed reader to monitor the feeds of news sites and blogs can save you time in two ways. First, a feed is only updated when its website is updated, and

*(Continued on page 13)*

## Using Feeds, Cont'd

an updated feed only contains the new information. Second, you only have to look in one place to see all the updates. All feeds to which you have subscribed can be aggregated and displayed in your feed reader.

[Law.com](#) is an example of a legal news site that has a [feed](#). Jurist, a legal news and research service based at the University of Pittsburgh School of Law, tracks law-related news and primary source materials and makes them available on its [Paper Chase](#) website and through its [feed](#). Several sections of the ABA, including [Environment, Energy and Resources](#); [Law Practice Management](#); [Litigation](#); and the [Legal Technology Resource Center](#), also have feeds for their news. For more examples, see the Virtual Chase's extensive list of [RSS News Feeds for Law](#).

Law-related blogs are also important current awareness sites. [SCOTUSblog](#) focuses on the U.S. Supreme Court and has a [feed](#). There are a number of legal blogs with feeds at [Law Professors Blogs](#). To find law- and legal-related blogs, go to [blawg](#).

Another important way that feeds can help you is by monitoring government information. Federal agencies make news and announcements, product recalls, proposed regulations, reports, statistics, and other information available through feeds. See [FirstGov's RSS Library](#).

Most states are not yet taking full advantage of feeds to distribute government information. As with previous uses of the internet to distribute state government information, some states are far ahead in their use of RSS technology, but the others will catch up soon.

Last summer the National Library of Medicine announced the availability of feeds for delivery of [daily updated search results from PubMed](#). See [instructions for creating and](#)

[subscribing to PubMed feeds](#) from the NLM Technical Bulletin.

[Auto Recalls](#) is a public interest project of [Justia.com](#), a company that designs and optimizes law firm websites. You can subscribe to feeds of recall information for All Vehicle Makes, a single manufacturer, a particular model, or a model and year.

[PubSub](#) is a [matching service](#) to which you can subscribe to feeds to receive updates when new content is created that matches your subscription. With [PubSub SEC Filings](#), you can subscribe to receive notifications of SEC filings by company, subject or form type.

The [Washington & Lee School of Law Library](#) has created a nice service to which you can subscribe to receive [Current Law Journal Content](#). Set up a profile to subscribe to a feed containing tables of contents from as many or as few journals as you choose.

Subscribe to customized searches of blogs and news with [Yahoo](#) and [Feedster](#), and news searches with [Google](#). Use feeds to track UPS and USPS packages at [Simple Tracking](#). There are feeds for [National Weather Service watches, warnings, and advisories](#); [comic strips](#); [new music and video releases](#); and almost any current information need.

### Creating Feeds to Distribute Information

Feeds can also help you distribute information to library patrons. The easiest way to create a feed is to publish the information you want to distribute in a blog. Most blogging software will automatically create and update one or more feeds. At our library, we started the [Law Dawg Blawg](#) to enable us to distribute "research tips, library announcements, news and links of interest" quickly and easily. This semester I also started a

*(Continued on page 14)*

## Using Feeds, Cont'd

course blog as part of [CALI's Legal Education Podcasting Project](#), which I use to distribute audio summaries of each week's legal research class and other course materials via feeds.

If you want to distribute new and updated information that won't fit into the blog format, you can create a feed by hand, provided you are willing to work with the raw code. The coding used to create feeds is fairly simple, but you have to remember to update the feed whenever you update something on your website. We have a [feed](#) to alert our users to new research guides, acquisitions, electronic resources, and other updates to the website. This feed is for simple announcements only, and I usually only update it once a week. There are services to which you can subscribe that will create feeds for websites, but we didn't need a service for our situation.

### For more information on Feeds:

- Robert J. Ambrogi, [What RSS Can Do for Lawyers](#), an article from Law Technology News, a Law.com newsletter; and *Feed Me! Don't Have Time to Surf the Web? Let RSS Do It for You*, 3 Internet Law & Strategy 5 (Nov. 2005).
- Cindy L. Chick, [RSS Tutorial: What Is RSS?](#), part 1 of a six-part series at [LawLibTech](#) (the entire series is listed in a side column off the home page).
- Kevin Lanahan, Missouri Dept. of Conservation, [Basic Guide to Creating an RSS News Feed](#).
- Diane Murley, [Finding Blawgs on Any Legal Topic](#) and [What RSS Feeds Can Do for You, a series](#), both at [Law Dawg Blawg](#).
- Bonnie Shucha, [Tutorial on Reading Blogs with Bloglines](#) and an [Audio Workshop - Staying](#)

[Current in Less Time: Blogs, RSS & Alert Services](#), both at [WisBlawg](#).

### Links in this article:

ABA's Environment, Energy and Resources:  
<http://www.abanet.org/environ/>;

ABA's Law Practice Management:  
<http://www.abanet.org/lpm/>;

ABA's Litigation:  
<http://www.abanet.org/litigation/>;

ABA's Legal Technology Resource Center:  
<http://www.abanet.org/tech/ltrc/>;

Ambrogi, *What RSS Can Do for Lawyers*:  
<http://www.law.com/jsp/ihc/PubArticleIHC.jsp?id=1122627913641>;

Auto Recalls:  
<http://auto-recalls.justia.com/>;

blawg:  
<http://www.blawg.org/>;

Bloglines:  
<http://www.bloglines.com/>;

CALI's Legal Education Podcasting Project:  
<http://www2.cali.org/index.php?fuseaction=help.faq&topicid=000000010>;

Chick, *RSS Tutorial: What Is RSS?*:  
<http://lawlibtech.com/archives/000314.html>;

Comic strips (Tapestry):  
<http://www.tapestrycomics.com/>;

FeedBlitz:  
<http://www.feedblitz.com/>;

FeedDemon:  
<http://www.feedException.com/>;

Feedster:  
<http://www.feedster.com/>;

FirstGov's RSS Library:  
[http://www.firstgov.gov/Topics/Reference\\_Shelf/Libraries/RSS\\_Library.shtml](http://www.firstgov.gov/Topics/Reference_Shelf/Libraries/RSS_Library.shtml);

Google News Feeds:  
[http://news.google.com/intl/en\\_us/news\\_feed\\_terms.html](http://news.google.com/intl/en_us/news_feed_terms.html);

Jurist's Paper Chase website:  
<http://jurist.law.pitt.edu/paperchase/>;

## Using Feeds, Cont'd

- feed: [http://jurist.law.pitt.edu/paperchase/blogger\\_rss.xml](http://jurist.law.pitt.edu/paperchase/blogger_rss.xml);
- Justia.com:  
<http://www.justia.com/>;
- Lanahan, *Basic Guide to Creating an RSS News Feed*:  
<http://www.ia.mo.gov/dmd/tutorials/BasicGuide-RSSNewsFeed.shtml>;
- Law.com:  
<http://www.law.com/>;  
feed: [http://www.law.com/rss/rss\\_newswire.xml](http://www.law.com/rss/rss_newswire.xml);
- Law Dawg Blog:  
<http://lawdawglib.blogspot.com/>;  
feed: <http://feeds.feedburner.com/LawDawgBlawg>;
- LawLibTech:  
<http://www.lawlibtech.com/>;
- Law Professors Blogs:  
<http://www.lawprofessorblogs.com/>;
- Murley, *Finding Blawgs on Any Legal Topic*:  
<http://lawdawglib.blogspot.com/2005/02/finding-blawgs-on-any-legal-topic.html>;
- Murley, *What RSS Feeds Can Do for You*:  
<http://lawdawglib.blogspot.com/2005/12/what-rss-feeds-can-do-for-yourecap.html>;
- My Yahoo!:  
<http://my.yahoo.com/>;
- National Library of Medicine's daily updated search results from PubMed:  
<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi?DB=pubmed>;
- Instructions for creating and subscribing to PubMed feeds:  
[http://www.nlm.nih.gov/pubs/techbull/mj05/mj05\\_rss.html](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/pubs/techbull/mj05/mj05_rss.html);
- National Weather Service watches, warnings, and advisories:  
<http://www.weather.gov/alerts/>;
- New music and video releases (Yahoo! Shopping feeds):  
<http://shopping.yahoo.com/rss/>;
- PubSub:  
<http://www.pubsub.com/index.php>;
- Matching service information:  
<http://www.pubsub.com/about.php>;
- PubSub SEC Filings:  
<http://www.pubsub.com/edgar.php>;

- RMail:  
<http://www.r-mail.org/>;
- SCOTUSblog:  
<http://scotusblog.com/>;  
feed: <http://www.scotusblog.com/movabletype/index.xml>;
- Shucha, *Audio Workshop - Staying Current in Less Time: Blogs, RSS & Alert Services*:  
<http://wisblawg.blogspot.com/2005/04/audio-workshop-staying-current-in-less.html>;
- Shucha, *Tutorial on Reading Blogs with Bloglines*:  
<http://wisblawg.blogspot.com/2004/09/tutorial-on-reading-blogs-with.html>;
- Simple Tracking:  
<http://www.simpletracking.com/>;
- Virtual Chase - RSS News Feeds for Law:  
[http://www.virtualchase.com/resources/rss\\_law.html](http://www.virtualchase.com/resources/rss_law.html);
- Washington & Lee School of Law Library:  
<http://law.wlu.edu/library/>;
- Washington & Lee School of Law Library Current Law Journal Content:  
<http://law.wlu.edu/library/CLJC/index.asp>;
- WisBlawg:  
<http://wisblawg.blogspot.com/>;
- Yahoo Alerts:  
<http://alerts.yahoo.com/>.

## Call for Papers, Cont'd

For more information, a list of previous winners and an application, visit the AALL website at [www.aallnet.org/about/award\\_call\\_for\\_papers.asp](http://www.aallnet.org/about/award_call_for_papers.asp). **Submissions must be postmarked by March 1, 2006.**

If you have any questions, please contact a member of the AALL/LexisNexis Call for Papers Committee, Chair, Patty Wellinger, [pwelling@law.du.edu](mailto:pwelling@law.du.edu); Renee Rastorfer, [rrastorf@law.usc.edu](mailto:rrastorf@law.usc.edu), or Ed Greenlee, [egreenle@law.upenn.edu](mailto:egreenle@law.upenn.edu).

## Law Students Write About Law Libraries (or, What Students Really Think: A Survey of Student Blawgs)

Rob Hudson, Faculty Services Librarian,  
St. Thomas University School of Law

Many law students record their feelings as they progress through law school in Blawgs intended to inform their peers, but they also provide a wealth of information and amusement for librarians. These student Blawgs have creative names: So The Bear Says, Three Years of Hell, Parenthetical Statement, Reversed and Remanded, Buffalo Wings and Vodka, Inter-Meddler, and Mr. Uninhibited of the Cloudland, and many others. Law libraries claim a significant amount of attention in some law student Blawgs.

During first year library orientations tours, one student wrote: "I'm finding it hard to imagine that there's 45 minutes of stuff to see in the library. Unless they're going to have us shelve books, or complete a short research assignment while we're there." (Jeremy's Weblog, Aug. 1, 2002).

The Blawgs make it clear that many of law students flaunt Library rules, for instance:

- "...law students (here) are not generally known to be the pranking type, unless you count smuggling Starbucks or McAllister's sweet tea into the library." (So the Bear Says, Jan. 29, 2005).
- "There are some section two kids on the other side of the library with a couple of bottles of wine. Not celebrating, I don't think, but just to take the edge off this torture." (Parenthetical Statement, May 11, 2003).

Another point of resistance to library rules involves hiding, removing, or ripping library materials: "Tear the pages from important library books! You may have heard the rumors that this goes on at law school. Well, maybe it doesn't, but

that doesn't mean you shouldn't take it upon yourself to bring back a tradition from the days when people were cutthroat and generally uncivil towards each other." (Jeremy's Weblog, June 3, 2003). However, a year later that same student author seemed to retreat from his own boasts: "No more removing the copies of all relevant study materials from the library and hiding them under my desk so no one can find them." (Jeremy's Weblog, Mar. 3, 2004). Others state mixed emotions: "We don't stab each other in the back, we don't hide books in the Law Library, and we don't beat each other at flag football. Okay, it wasn't for lack of trying." (So the Bear Says, Mar. 9, 2004). A distinct bit of malevolence can be found, too: "I'll post more when I get home, but if I'm in the library a second longer, someone's ALRs are going to get mixed up on the shelves. Ha-ha. Put those in order, I'll just mess 'em up again." (So the Bear Says, July 8, 2004).

The art and decor of the library is important to law students: "What we need (here) are some gigantic stone lions in front of our library. That funky oxidized-copper bear sculpture is lacking in gravitas." (So the Bear Says, Apr. 8, 2004). Or from Columbia: "It is much easier to read and absorb 350 pages of Property while sitting in front of a roaring fire in an old stone fireplace, sipping a well-mixed Manhattan, than trying to do the same in Columbia law library. From this we can conclude that the library would be markedly improved by the addition of a large fireplace, comfy chairs, and a staffed bar. At present it has none of these things." (Three Years of Hell, Nov. 29, 2004). Library art has significance to more than one student: "The library was repainted over Christmas break. While this is a good thing, I

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## Survey of Student Blawgs, Cont'd

guess, it also sucks because they had to take down all the paintings and one hasn't returned yet. It's my favorite painting in the entire law school - it's a representation of Egon Guttman. I used to look at him every day walking to my favorite study spot ... but no more." (Parenthetical Statement, Apr. 14, 2004).

One of the most commented on issues in the law library is the temperature. The basic rule here, it appears, is that it is impossible to please everyone: "Can we turn off the Air already? The air conditioner seemed to be always on in the library and it would get especially cold in the study group rooms where the incessant whir of the air conditioner is heard." (Reversed and Remanded, Dec. 12, 2003). On the other hand, the same student writes: "But today it is Hot. And Sticky. Very unpleasant, though on the upside it makes going into the chilly library a refreshing moment." (Reversed and Remanded, July 20, 2005). Another student puts it this way: "And the library seems to be kept for the benefit of its books. The place is nose-bleedingly dry, which undoubtedly (is) good for old pages but it gives me perpetual colds." (The Columbia Continuum, Nov. 23, 2003).

Students remark on the presence of so many books in the library and wonder about their relevance: "So it turns out that law school libraries (which these days consist mostly of dusty federal reporters missing their digests and places you can plug in your laptop to get on Lexis-Nexis) can contain some hidden jewels. Last week I discovered a small collection of legal comic books in a basement corner ..." (Inter-Meddler, Aug. 25, 2003). "The law library here isn't quite as old, musty, and archaic as the Bodelian [sic], but it's getting there, and it definitely has that same feel of thousands of books, most of which languish

untouched for ages." (Three Years of Hell, Aug. 25, 2003). "But some books, like "important law stuff," may have a less clear point of view. These require reading. But first they require finding. Luckily, every library in the world has every book ever written, and owns an unlimited number of copies so the book you need is never missing from the shelf." (Jeremy's Weblog, July 2, 2003). It is not clear from the context of this last statement that any sarcasm was intended!

One student had this picturesque take on the Reserve collection at his library: "Studying in the reserve room at the library is like going over to somebody's house to play with their Nintendo, or their complete set of GI Joes, or Star Wars action figures. It seems amazing and inexplicably fun, but if I actually owned all these Hornbooks and Restatements and Nutshells and stuff I'd never even open them." (Dairy of a 1L, Oct. 1, 2003).

Students write that the law library is a place to find critical support: "So this afternoon I decided to read in the library. And after just a half hour, what a difference. I didn't get as much done, but just the fact that there were all these other people around - just the fact that I wasn't all alone in my room - made all the difference in the world. At least this afternoon it did. Hence, my advice. Get out of your room. Go to the library. You'll feel saner that way." (Jeremy's Weblog, Sept. 9, 2002).

The law library is the primary place that study groups meet, and this dramatically adds to a sense of support: "We did a nine hour stint in a group study room at the library a couple of Sundays ago. That's the longest I have ever sat and studied. I'm more focused while working with the group. It's nice to receive help and reciprocate it while affirming what understanding I have of the material. It makes me feel less lost, more in

*(Continued on page 18)*

## Survey of Student Blawgs, Cont'd

control, less behind.” (Southwestern, July 8, 2002).

However, at its worst the library is unsettling: “A bit of explanation ... the library is my preferred location for studying because - outside of finals - it is a quiet, not-too-stressful place to be,” one blawger wrote, “but when finals come, boy you better watch out. The library turns into a churning cauldron of frantic outlining, hair-pulling, and general fretting about everything related to law school. Yesterday was even better, because the geniuses that run our school’s IT system had the entire network down ALL DAY. Not that people need email or an outside connection to the Internet when trapped in the library for hours. Nah.” (Reversed and Remanded, May 5, 2005).

Some of the tenderest moments discovered in the Blawgs involved feelings and reactions to other students in the throws of despair, for example: “I think someone is crying in the library. I’m really sorry that they’re sad. I hope they’re not crying because of law school. I really don’t think it’s so important that it’s worth crying over.” (Diary of a 1L, Dec. 18, 2003).

Finally, the famous meeting of Bill Clinton and Hillary Rodham in a law library is repeated often for others, or so the Blawgs tantalizingly hint: “I’m totally selling out my slackitude! I’m here at the library at 6:45 PM! Then again, I did spend maybe half an hour of that time chatting with the lovely Miss V.” (Diary of a 1L, Feb. 11, 2004). Or, another Romeo wrote hopefully for “... 1L chicks who are into making out with minor (but brilliant) literary figures in the library.” (Buffalo Wings and Vodka, Nov. 24, 2004). Another Blawger reported: “I’m at my usual spot in the library and I’ve noticed an increase in the number of hot chicks walking in to presumably study. Apparently, a lot of them made

a New Year’s resolution to spend more time in the library, especially the blond ones.” (WaynesRoller, Jan. 11, 2004).

The world of law students is greater than just the Law Library, of course. Many students can be quoted as saying: “Library? I don’t even know where the library is!” (Jeremy’s Weblog, Mar. 22, 2004). This is why understanding the needs and experiences of our student patrons can be very helpful.

### Sources

My Law Student Blawg portal - [http://www.blawg.org/modules.php?name=Web\\_Links&op=viewlink&cid=12](http://www.blawg.org/modules.php?name=Web_Links&op=viewlink&cid=12)

I used this portal to find the following student blawgs:

So The Bear Says:

<http://sothebearsays.blogspot.com/>

Three Years of Hell:

<http://www.threearsofhell.com/>

Parenthetical Statement:

<http://www.bloglicious.com/tony/>

Reversed and Remanded:

<http://usdlawboy.blogspot.com>

Buffalo Wings and Vodka:

<http://wingsandvodka.blogs.com/>

Inter-Meddler:

<http://www.intermeddler.blogspot.com/>

Mr. Uninhibited of the Cloudlands:

<http://burntbones.blogspot.com/>

Jeremy’s Weblog:

<http://jeremyblachman.blogspot.com/>

Diary of a 1L:

<http://diaryofa1l.mikeshecket.com/>

## Learning While They Work: The Use of Student Assistants in Two Academic Law Libraries

Ron Wheeler, Assistant Director for Faculty,  
Research & Instructional Services  
University of New Mexico School of Law

Stephanie Davidson, Head of Public Services &  
Assistant Professor of Library Administration  
University of Illinois College of Law

### **Ron Wheeler**

At the University of New Mexico School of Law Library (UNM), we are effectively using student assistants to help with the completion of faculty research projects. We find that the volume of faculty research that our library is able to complete is far greater due to the effective use of student assistants. During the calendar year 2005, our library completed over 500 research requests for the law school faculty. With only seven professional librarians, without student help, that volume of faculty research would probably not have been feasible.

We have formed what we call our library research pool here at UNM. Each semester, the research pool employs approximately six law student researchers. These law students are interviewed, selected, and trained by a professional law librarian. Students working in the research pool are required to sign in and out, and to work on faculty research projects in a designated research pool office housed within the law library. Their work is thus closely monitored.

Several benefits flow from using student assistants in this manner. Law school faculty members find that using the library research pool eliminates the stress and hassle of their having to hire, train, and supervise their own research assistants. They merely submit research projects to the library research pool, and wait for the results. Additionally, our law school faculty has found that they are getting higher quality research

from the library research pool. We attribute this increased quality to the fact that a professional law librarian is responsible for quality control.

From the student perspective, working for the library research pool has benefits as well. Library student assistants can avoid stressful interactions with faculty who are working under publishing deadlines, or other types of time pressure. Their only interactions are with friendly, laid-back, law librarians. Students don't have to be embarrassed about their lack of legal research knowledge or skill either. All student work is monitored by a professional law librarian who helps them with research strategy, source selection, and end-product evaluation.

The hidden benefit of using student assistants in the law library is the training that students receive. This training factor is directly congruent to the law school's educational mission. Students in the UNM library research pool work closely with a librarian who works with them throughout every step of the research process. A librarian meets with students before any research begins to discuss the goals of the project, to outline a possible plan of action or research strategy, and to answer any of the student's questions. Once the research is complete, it is reviewed by a librarian for quality and completeness. If additional work is needed, the librarian meets with the student to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the students work. The student is then given the opportunity to enhance the research project. By working within the library research pool's structured process, students receive real world, hands-on, research training. Many of our research pool alumni have commented that their work in the library research pool has helped them in their

*(Continued on page 20)*

## Use of Student Assistants, Cont'd

later employment endeavors. Our research pool students use this employment experience on their resumes as proof of their legal research prowess and experience.

The one negative effect of using student assistants in the library is the time it takes to supervise them effectively. Here at UNM, we have one full-time law librarian whose primary responsibility is the supervision of our library research pool. She spends incredible amounts of time organizing, explaining, training, and evaluating student researchers. Nevertheless, in the final analysis, we find that using student research assistants is will worth the time and effort.

### **Stephanie Davidson**

At the University of Illinois, we have two groups of graduate student assistants: upper-class J.D. students and M.L.S. students from the University's Graduate School of Library and Information Science who already possess their J.D. degree. While the former function primarily as faculty researchers, the latter group forms a significant backup for our reference staff as well as in technical services. We're using both groups effectively to provide more services for our faculty, while also trying to create an educational experience for the students.

Our JD student workers form a research assistant pool that functions much like what Ron describes at UNM. We hire a small group of students, provide an initial library orientation and some introductory training on library databases and services, and then make the students available for faculty to hire with their research funds to work on projects as needed. We attend the first meeting between the student and faculty member, and stay in contact with the student throughout the project. If the student needs training or

support, we provide it, but most of their communication is with the faculty member. Our administration time is somewhat reduced by handling it this way, though we do spend additional time following up with faculty after the project is completed.

The Graduate Assistantship program at the University of Illinois was developed to provide additional support for library services; having Graduate Assistants (GAs) helps us immensely in getting our daily work done, so that we can continue to expand our services. In the Law Library, we hire GAs who already have their J.D. and are planning a future in law librarianship. They are an invaluable addition to our reference desk team, working with one of our five library faculty at the desk initially, and later sitting at reference on their own, albeit with backup available. They spend approximately half their time in Public Services at reference and working on projects, and the other half in Technical Services.

The Assistantship provides our GAs with opportunities to learn from the specific questions that come to the desk, and they have ample time to talk with our library faculty about law librarianship. But we struggle somewhat with the balance between providing the training necessary for them to be helpful to us in the library on the one hand, and helping them to become successful members of our profession on the other. We're building the training and educational component to address both issues. One of our newer library faculty members is responsible for coordinating the schedule of sessions and arranging topics, but the entire library faculty participates in offering sessions. Initial sessions included tax publications and reference sources; another covered ready-

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## Use of Student Assistants, Cont'd

reference sources for foreign law; another explored the most essential resources for the reference desk. In the second semester, we will continue with reference sessions, but also add topics such as applying for jobs, what to expect when you interview, and getting started in the profession.

While it's taken some time out of our schedules to build this program, we believe it's worth it for us as well as our GAs. The students welcomed the law library-specific instruction that will aid them in their interview process, and we believe that they're better prepared to handle questions at the reference desk. Finally, we feel a sense of pride in helping to develop future law librarians - our newest colleagues - while they help us keep the library running.

## Teaching Day: Team Teaching First Year Legal Research

Helane Davis, Associate Director & Head of Public Services, University of Kentucky Law Library

The day begins at 7:30, when I rush into my office to print another copy of my lecture notes. Class starts at 8, and the last minute changes I made the night before have rendered the notes I printed yesterday obsolete. A student stops by before class to ask a question about the last assignment. A cart full of books for a modified show-and-tell - the one all of the librarians are doing - waits outside my door. The printer churns as the student and I talk. The question answered, I grab my notes and handouts folder and head out of my office. A minute later, I round the corner of the stacks adjacent to the reading room where class is held, cart in hand.

Class begins with this week's homework being passed forward as I pass out last week's homework. I'm about to lose another 5 - 6 minutes of class time as returned assignments are read,

grumbles float into the air, and currently due assignments are unearthed. I take a few minutes to address any trends that were spotted on the homework. Most did fine, but at least one question seemed to confuse everyone. I also remind them that questions on the homework grades need to be directed to the librarian who graded that week's assignment. I'll be grading next week's homework, and I'm sure this rotation won't seem like such a good idea when I'm grappling with assignments from not only my 2 sections, but all 12 sections. But this week, it's a plus not to have any responsibilities outside of delivering lectures. And the questions, of course, but I'd get those anyway.

The housekeeping out of the way, I turn to the day's lecture. We're three weeks into the six-week course, and this week we're talking about researching federal statutes. As topics go, there is a lot to convey in my remaining 35 minutes. (I'll need to leave 5 minutes at the end to talk about the next assignment.)

I begin with a brief overview of the federal legislative process, do a drive-by explanation of what legislative history is, and then launch into an explanation of session laws and codes. It's early, and this group has always been on the quieter side, so it's hard to tell if they're following me or just silently craving more caffeine.

When we turn to the handouts for researching in the federal codes, I look down to a set of handouts that I'm not all that familiar with. This is one of the aspects of team-teaching this class. Those of us who've taught it before have handouts from earlier years, and in our weekly what's-up-what-do-we-cover-who-has-handouts meeting, the old handouts were suggested. One advantage to team-teaching is the ability to draw on the resources of five brains. But there's also a drawback, and it's just become clear to me.

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## Team Teaching, Cont'd

I don't own these handouts. Yes, they'll be a useful introduction to the publication that figures handily in the next assignment, but as I pick them up and start talking about them, there goes some of my teaching energy. Not much, just a little, maybe not even enough to outweigh the benefits of having one less thing to cover (like creating and reproducing handouts) but it's happened nonetheless.

And I've just learned something about myself as a teacher. The first week when I felt a bit off balance I thought it was because it was the first time I'd taught a class in this organization. (The first year legal research class is part of a year long research and writing curriculum, and although it is graded separately, it's never far from anyone's mind that it's only one part of a larger grade.) But I was wrong, that wasn't what was happening at all. The second week, with the first week jitters behind me, I thought my stress was related to time management. Sure, I was teaching legal research as an "overload" (with class preparation happening outside of the 40-hour window), but I was also still a librarian helping students with a class. It just happened to be mine.

No, it took three weeks for me to figure out what was going on, exactly. Or perhaps, three go-rounds with someone else's handouts. (Perfectly fine and illustrative handouts, I might add.) What I discovered was that the class didn't feel like *mine*. The handouts were merely a metaphor. That sensation I was feeling was "librarian as delivery system" and not "librarian as teacher."

As librarians we worry that students don't take legal research classes seriously, and I felt like I was undermining myself on this very issue. Compared to the teachable moments that arose every time a student came into my office with a question, I was much less engaged, energy-wise.

Sitting down to grade the following week's assignment - every single one of them - also didn't do anything to enhance my feelings of ownership.

Obviously, first year legal research is taught according to a variety of models. I'm not anti-team teaching, understanding the necessity that preceded the invention. But what I learned from this experience is that I'll have to work harder next time to make sure the experience is as good an experience for the *teacher* as it is for the students.

I want them to hear me, after all. And to get enough out of the class that they'll find a librarian a year or two later when they have a seminar paper to research and don't know where to begin. As for me, I plan to work on fresh examples when it comes time to plan fall's class.

## Ranking the Reviews: How and (Why) to Assess the Relative Quality of Law Reviews

Susan Herrick, Research Librarian, Thurgood Marshall Law Library, University of Maryland School of Law

Despite the raising of voices over the years expressing disenchantment with law reviews (from Fred Rodell, *Goodbye to Law Reviews*, 23 Va. L. Rev. 38 (1936) to Jonathan Mermin, *Remaking Law Review*, 56 Rutgers L. Rev. 603 (2004)), their proliferation remains "an awe-inspiring scholastic phenomenon.... Currently there are over seven hundred active law reviews in the United States, of which nearly two hundred are general-interest and the remainder are specialized." (Perry 1-2) The endeavor to rank law reviews has a similarly long history, dating back at least to 1930 (Perry fn. 8) and shows no signs of abating; nor does the effort to evaluate the ranking methods. (See the article reviewed herein as well as Gregory Scott Crespi, *Judicial and Law Review Citation Frequencies for*

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## Ranking the Reviews, Cont'd

*Articles Published in Different "Tiers" of Law Journals: An Empirical Analysis*, 44 Santa Clara L. Rev. 897 (2004), among others.) We continue to ask the questions: how do scholars and librarians assess the quality of law reviews? And is the attempt to do so worthwhile?

According to Dr. Ronen Perry, L.L.D., in *The Relative Value of American Law Reviews: A Critical Appraisal of Ranking Methods*, 10 Virginia Journal of Law and Technology (2005), available at <http://ssrn.com/abstract=806144>, the ranking of law reviews, if carried out by proper methods, has important benefits to the scholarly and legal communities. These benefits include increased competition among law reviews leading to improved quality; assistance to legal scholars in deciding where to submit and to ultimately publish their scholarship; and benefit to law reviews themselves in providing a measure of their success or failure to be used in improving their product. Other advantages include the benefits that accrue to students who serve on the editorial boards of highly ranked law reviews and to their respective law schools; assistance to the consumers of legal literature in selecting which of the many published articles to read; usefulness to librarians in making acquisition decisions (although Dr. Perry recognizes that this factor is limited by the increased reliance upon electronic databases such as Lexis, Westlaw, or Hein Online for law review articles); and just the plain old American love of rankings of any kind. After all, don't most of us feel compelled to look at the year-end "Top Ten" lists of books, movies, and music, the ubiquitous "best and worst dressed" lists, and just about anything of that nature that catches our eye?

Dr. Perry sets forth the basic requirements of a law review ranking methodology that would achieve the identified objectives. The ranking method must be based on a "quality-sensitive" set

of criteria and be "responsive to quality changes" (Perry 8); it must be based on objective criteria; it must be practical; and it must be based on data that are "readily verifiable" and not prone to manipulation by interested parties. Having articulated these requirements, Dr. Perry ultimately concludes that there is no ranking method that satisfies them all. The bulk of his article is devoted to a thorough analysis and evaluation of the various ranking methods currently in use, which fall into three categories.

The first category - methods based on direct evaluations of quality such as evaluation by a committee of experts or a general survey of quality - is rejected by Dr. Perry based on such methods' vulnerability to subjectivity and bias, as well as their impracticality based on both the sheer numbers of law reviews, even within specialized subject areas, and the difficulty of selecting a class of respondents.

The second category of methods, those based on indirect quality evaluation, presents its own set of weaknesses. For example, Dr. Perry rejects as entirely unreliable methods based on author prominence, article rejection rate, and law review editors' academic aptitude. He also spurns, as inaccurate and subject to manipulation, journal usage studies based on library or electronic database statistics.

Dr. Perry also reasons that the third type - complex ranking methods that employ several quality measures - are also intrinsically flawed, as they do not transcend the weaknesses of each component measure. Further, because the determination of the weight assigned to each component measure involves subjective judgment, no complex ranking method can ever be wholly objective.

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## Ranking the Reviews, Cont'd

Dr. Perry devotes a large portion of his article to a comprehensive survey and evaluation of law review ranking methods based on citation analysis. He begins by explaining that the various impacts of a particular law review could be evaluated by measuring the frequency of its citation in sources other than law reviews: for example, in texts, by appellate or trial courts, and on law school reading lists. He goes on to debunk, in a debate-provoking fashion, various criticisms of citation-based rating methods. He also thoroughly explores the adjustments that must be made to a citation-based ranking system to control for the distorting factors of self-citation, cross-citation in symposia issues, the publication time span of the journals to be ranked, subject matter distribution, and publication volume. Dr. Perry contrasts the reliability of a total journal citation frequency measure with a standardized criteria based on citations-per-word method. He concedes that citation-based ranking methods seem to be inherently biased in favor of the journals of the most highly ranked law schools. Dr. Perry concludes, however, that citation analysis is the most promising method of assessing the impact of law reviews on academic and professional discourse, and posits that the best ranking criterion is "an adjusted and standardized citation rate." (Perry 56, 66)

Along with its analysis of methodology, Dr. Perry's article provides an excellent review of the literature on law review ranking methods, and opens the door to further inquiry about subject specialized journals and comparison to ranking methods used in other disciplines. It also broaches the topic - well worth exploring further - of the citation of law review articles outside the academic community, a topic provocatively addressed by David Hricik and Victoria S. Salzmann, *Why There Should Be Fewer Articles Like This One: Law Professors Should Write More For Legal Decision-Makers and Less For Themselves*, 38 Suffolk U. L. Rev. 761 (2005).

## "Rebuilding the Profession" at AALL

Matthew R. Steinke, Reference Librarian  
Moritz Law Library, Moritz College of Law at  
The Ohio State University

In San Antonio this past summer, during the AALL annual meeting, I had the opportunity to attend a workshop called "Rebuilding the Profession" that was held at the St. Mary's University School of Law. The purpose of the seminar was to provide information about how law librarians could qualify themselves to pursue director level positions in academic law libraries. A number of highly-respected directors contributed to this successful program.

Janis Johnston, from the University of Illinois, discussed the administrative skills required to be a director of an academic law library. Law library directors run multi-million dollar non-profit organizations. Management skills are obviously a key component of director positions. Professor Johnston stressed that you had to manage: (1) operations; (2) your role in the institution; and (3) yourself. Managing operations includes things like budgeting and personnel management. It also includes leading the library - seeing the big picture for the organization. Secondly, it is important to manage your role in the institution. You have to learn to be a team player within the law school. You also need to be an effective advocate for the library and build solid negotiation skills. Lastly, you need to manage yourself. Professor Johnston stressed the importance of time management skills for a director. A director needs to effectively delegate responsibilities. Proper perspective is also important, as well as keeping a good sense of humor.

Martha Dragich Pearson, from the University of Missouri, and Barbara Bintliff, from the University of Colorado, discussed the

*(Continued on page 25)*

## “Rebuilding the Profession”, Cont’d

responsibilities of directors as members of the law school faculty. Professor Bintliff discussed the various institutional responsibilities of faculty members, including academic affairs and scholastic affairs. Faculty members are required to maintain expertise in their field of study. Professor Bintliff stressed the importance of academic freedom in law schools and that it depends on strong, functioning faculty. Professor Dragich Pearson discussed some of the difficulties with directors being faculty members. Directors are often required to handle their administrative/managerial work, plus carry full faculty responsibilities such as teaching, writing, and being active in professional organizations.

The next part of the seminar focused on ways that librarians could build their credentials so as to be competitive in the director job market.

Martha Dragich Pearson and Frank Houdek, from Southern Illinois University, discussed the importance of scholarship. Professor Houdek stressed that the library director is usually the only member of the faculty whose area of expertise is libraries and information science. Writing thought-provoking articles that demonstrate expertise in this area will impress a law school hiring committee. Professor Houdek also emphasized the importance of writing about issues that interest you. Professor Dragich Pearson stated that law school deans are looking for a record of accomplishment, but they are also looking for the promise of future success. Demonstrating a habit of writing can help show this future promise. Professor Dragich Pearson also discussed the importance of developing a subject area of expertise in your scholarship, rather than jumping around from topic to topic.

Lolly Gasaway, from the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, discussed the importance of

teaching experience and stressed that librarians should take advantage of every teaching opportunity available at their law schools. Librarians should also work at being good teachers. They should be extremely well-prepared, adopt technology and use it in the classroom, and pay attention to student evaluations.

Barbara Bintliff talked about the importance of service. The right kind of service can demonstrate a number of critical skills such as leadership, management, etc. Law school committees are a great way to get service experience. However, the traditional faculty time breakdown is 40% teaching, 40% scholarship and only 20% service. As valuable as service experience can be, it is important not to overdo it. AALL and regional organizations provide great service opportunities, but librarians interested in director positions should be cautious of making large time commitments if their publication and teaching records are not in order.

Penny Hazelton, from the University of Washington, discussed the importance of job experience. The traditional career ladder for librarians has been reference librarian, head of reference, head of public service, associate director, and director. However, job titles are not necessarily that important. More important, are what people actually do in the positions that they hold. Dean Hazelton also discussed how the quality of the institutions that you work for can benefit you in the job market.

The last part of the seminar was a discussion by Michelle Wu, from Hofstra University, and Charles Ten Brink, from Michigan State University, about interviewing for a director position. The interviewing process can vary tremendously from institution to institution.

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## “Rebuilding the Profession”, Cont’d

Before going on any interview it is important to investigate the institution and get as much background information as possible. During the interview it is important to find out the budgetary situation of the school and the library, and to discuss the responsibilities of the director. It is also important to understand that library directors tend to stay at their institutions for a number of years, and that schools tend to not have a lot of experience interviewing and hiring for these positions. In this environment, it is important for candidates to sell themselves to the schools.

I was very fortunate to have the opportunity to attend this seminar. As a newer law librarian, still learning my current position, I will not be applying for director vacancies anytime soon. However, I believe that the advice of these successful professionals will help me make good decisions at the beginning of my career, and that these decisions will pay dividends further down the road.

## Government Relations Committee Seeks Nominees for PAGI Award

A. Hays Butler, Chair  
PAGI Award Subcommittee

AALL’s Government Relations Committee (GRC) is seeking nominations for the Public Access to Government Information Award. Established in 1999, this award honors significant contributions by people or organizations involved in the protection and promotion of greater public access to government information. The award is jointly administered by the GRC and the Awards Committees. Recipients need not be law librarians or members of AALL.

Previous PAGI award winners are:

- 2005 Ayn Crawley, Director, Maryland Legal Assistance Network for *Maryland Peoples’ Law*

*Library* ([www.peoples-law.org](http://www.peoples-law.org));

- 2004 Senator Conrad Burns, Michael O. Leavitt & Senator Joseph I. Lieberman for *Regulations.gov* ([www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov));
- 2003 University of Georgia for *Georgia Government Publications* & Virginia Department of Planning and Budget for *Virginia Regulatory Town Hall*;
- 2002 U.S. General Services Administration for *FirstGov* ([www.firstgov.gov](http://www.firstgov.gov));
- 2000 Library of Congress for *Thomas* (<http://thomas.loc.gov>);
- 1999 U.S. Government Printing Office for *GPO Access* ([www.gpoaccess.gov](http://www.gpoaccess.gov)).

Selection criteria include:

- A contribution that significantly improves public access to government information, thereby increasing the public’s knowledge about the workings of government.
- The extent to which the individual or organization has had a positive impact on protecting and promoting public access to governmental information.
- The extent to which the effort advances the AALL mission and Government Relations Policy.

Though nominations are solicited annually, there is no requirement that the award be given every year.

**Nominations must be submitted no later than February 1, 2006** to the Chair of the Government Relations Committee, Timothy L. Coggins, University of Richmond Law School, Richmond, Va., 23172, [tcoggins@richmond.edu](mailto:tcoggins@richmond.edu), preferably in electronic format.

The award will be presented during the AALL Annual Meeting. For more information about this award, see [www.aallnet.org/about/award\\_information.asp](http://www.aallnet.org/about/award_information.asp).

## Message from the Chair, Cont'd

individually. I am very grateful to be a member of such a wonderful profession, and feel privileged to be a member of AALL and ALL-SIS. I feel confident that we will continue to work together to make our profession strong.

Although I am writing this on a surprisingly balmy day for Cleveland, with undoubtedly much more winter to come, it does bring to mind that seven months from now the AALL Annual Meeting will be held in St. Louis. This promises to be a particularly memorable meeting as it is AALL's Centennial. Many special things are being planned. ALL-SIS has its own Centennial Committee, chaired by Rosalie Sanderson, pitching in. As usual our excellent [Program Committee](#) led by Chair Lee Peoples and Vice Chair April Schwartz has had a great deal of success placing our sponsored programs on the Annual Meeting program. In addition, our SIS is taking advantage of new flexibility in Annual Meeting scheduling to offer two special programs:

- *What Public Services Should Know About Technical Services; and*
- *Harnessing Digital Video Technology.*

I hope you can make plans to join us in St. Louis this July.

I also want you to look forward to some new things we are trying. Shortly we will begin posting some questions on the ALL-SIS Listserv at regular intervals that we hope you will find to be provocative, interesting and that will stimulate lively discussion. You can also look forward to receiving a Members Survey in the coming months. This is your opportunity to tell us what works for you and/or what you would like to see us do differently. Finally, we are reaching out to new members with new membership kits that we hope will inform and excite our newest colleagues.

By the way, if you are working with an academic law librarian who is not a member of ALL-SIS, I would encourage you to ask them to join with us. The more members we have the stronger our voice and the greater the number of projects we can work on and accomplish. Being a member of ALL-SIS is a real statement of support for academic law librarians as a profession. Thank you for being a member.

Finally, I want to thank the many members of our ALL-SIS committees and the great people I work with on the ALL-SIS Board. We are a voluntary organization, but we accomplish some great things because our members give of their time to help us all.

Best wishes for a great 2006! I look forward to seeing you down the road!

Michael Slinger  
All-SIS Chair

## Searching for Future Law Librarians, Cont'd

interest is expressed or questions arise, we would want to follow up on that.

If you can help, we would certainly appreciate it. If you have any questions or suggestions, please contact Michael Slinger, [michael.slinger@law.csuohio.edu](mailto:michael.slinger@law.csuohio.edu).

## “How Do You Write? A Panel on Legal Scholarship

Ann Hemmens & Mary Whisner

Gallagher Law Library, University of Washington

Law students are involved in writing - from seminar papers to editing journals - and many could benefit from hearing experienced writers talk about the writing process. Some students might also be considering law teaching as a career - or simply might be curious about what their professors do besides teach. So we planned a lunchtime program with a panel of professors talking about how they write law review articles.

Mary Whisner moderated and asked the professors questions, including:

- How do you get ideas for articles?
- How do you gather information in the early stages?
- Do you do a lot of research and then write? Or do you write a lot and then fill in your research? Or both?
- Do you work out ideas by talking to people? If so, who?
- How many drafts do you go through? How do you edit yourself?
- Do you have other people read your drafts? Why? Who?
- When do you think your article is ready to submit to journals?
- How do you send it out? How do you decide where to send it?
- What happens after a journal accepts it? What’s “trading up?” How to decide what journal’s offer to accept?
- What’s the best thing about the editing process? What’s the worst thing?
- How long does writing and publication take?

- You were all on law journals as students. Now that you’ve been an outside author, what do you think it would have been helpful to know back then?

The professors shared the mike with one another. As we’d hoped, the panel came across as a conversation, rather than one person after another holding forth. We had time for a few questions from students at the end.

The professors often echoed their colleagues’ comments, but also provided diverse opinions and advice on the topics raised. For example, in response to questions about gathering information and formulating ideas one professor advised that “as junior writers, look to insert yourself into an existing discourse or debate between known practitioners” while another professor stressed the goal of searching “for something no one has written about.” When discussing their recommended sequencing of researching and writing, one professor advised that the students should not start writing too early, before ideas are formulated, while another stressed the importance of starting to write early, noting that “one of the biggest obstacles for students, professors, for anybody just beginning to write. ... It’s not supposed to be perfect when you start.”

The professors also provided very practical advice for students. In response to the question of how to determine when an article is ready to submit to a journal (or a paper ready to submit to a professor), one professor provided a three step analysis: (1) Is the formatting complete? (2) Is there a coherent argument that is easy to follow and can be summarized in a few sentences or an abstract? (3) In a fast-moving field of law, can you logically stop at this point?

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## Writing Panel, Cont'd

A student asked “as a student gathering ideas for writing, when should I go to a professor for help?” The consensus from all three professors was that the student should already have a general idea formulated and some preliminary (due diligence) research completed before approaching the faculty member for assistance with the paper.

We were very pleased with the turnout - there were about 75 students and three professors in the audience, and they seemed interested and engaged. The room was actually standing room only! Here are some of the steps in the planning that contributed to the success.

**The idea.** The germ of the idea was at AALL in Boston. Our colleague Nancy McMurrer heard a program on writing at which an audience member asked whether the panelists talked to their students about their publications. The panelists said no, but we later kicked around the idea and thought it sounded great.

**The administration.** Our early efforts at organizing the panel included contacting (via email) the associate dean for research and faculty development, the assistant dean for academics, and the faculty advisers to the student journals. There was some interest, but no one said “Gee, yes, let’s do it!” We picked up the idea a year later and decided to go with it. We let administrators know we were planning it, but did not wait for them to do anything.

**The journals.** Ann Hemmens contacted the editors-in-chief of the three student journals (*Pacific Rim Law & Policy Journal*, *Shidler Journal of Law Commerce & Technology* (an e-journal), and *Washington Law Review*). They agreed to co-sponsor the event - that is, we could use the journals’ names in the publicity and they would encourage their staffs to attend. Ann negotiated

with the editors to find a date that would work for all of them (as well as for us).

**The panel.** Mary recruited the panelists, choosing professors who had published at least two law review articles in the last couple of years. We chose to focus on traditional law reviews (as opposed to public health journals, philosophy journals, newspaper op ed pages, etc. - which could be topics for another panel).

She also selected based on a “niceness factor” - who would be willing to do this favor for the library and the students and would have a warm, friendly rapport with the audience? This factor helped with attendance. Some students came because they wanted to see professors they knew and liked.

The panelists have diverse scholarly interests. However, they were not as diverse demographically - three white men between 32 and 40 - but these professors were perfect on all the other criteria.

**Publicity.** Ann advertised the lunch hour panel through multiple mediums including: flyers posted throughout the Law School and Library, a brief article in the Law School’s weekly newsletter, and repeated email announcements to the student list and the Law School (faculty and staff) list. As co-sponsors of the event, the editors of our three journals encouraged their staffs to attend. To entice students to attend we promised “giveaways” - Gallagher Law Library pens, notepads, and mouse pads - all tools used in the writing process. And we obviously encouraged students to bring their lunch.

**Handout.** We had a simple, one-page handout. It listed two recent publications by each speaker (including the moderator, Mary), plus the

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## Writing Panel, Cont'd

speaker's first publication (often a student note). (Including Mary's publications exposed the students to the idea that law librarians also write and that there's a field of law librarianship - covered, among other places, in Law Library Journal.)

The handout gave the URL of our guide, *Writing for and Publishing in Law Reviews*, <http://lib.law.washington.edu/ref/lawrev.html>. The guide includes resources for developing paper topics, finding journal addresses, and researching journal rankings. At the start of the panel, Mary projected the guide on the classroom's screen and pointed out the URL in the handout so students could refer to it later.

**Logistics.** To create a relaxed and inviting atmosphere, we reserved a medium-sized classroom and encouraged students to bring their lunch to the event. The three panelists sat at a table in the front of the room and Mary stood behind the lectern, posing questions and creating a conversation among the panelists.

Several students and staff who were unable to attend the panel asked that it be videotaped, so Ann worked with the Law School's audio-visual specialist to set that up. We are now digitizing the VHS tape and will make it temporarily available on the Law School server.

**Conclusion.** We were very pleased with the success of this event. We hope to build on it, and we encourage you to try it at your school.

## New Member Spotlight

Victoria Williamson  
Co-Chair, ALL-SIS Membership Committee



Hugh J. Treacy is Associate Director of Whittier Law School Library in Costa Mesa, California. He holds a B.A. and an M.A. in

History from Virginia Tech, an M.S.L.S. from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and a J.D. from Southern Illinois University, Carbondale. Prior to joining Whittier Law School Library in 2002, he has held various reference librarian positions for academic libraries, including SIU Law Library; and most recently, he served for 11 years as the Public Services Librarian at the Orange County Public Law Library in Santa Ana. Since 1992, he has been a member of AALL, the State, Court and County Law Libraries SIS, and the Southern California Association of Law Libraries where he served as Secretary (2000 -2002) and as member of its Newsletter Committee since 2002.

During his law school career Hugh received the SIU Law School Client Services Award (1990-1991) for his work at the Law School's Legal Clinic. He considered his work at the clinic as the most rewarding of his life and credits the late Professor and Clinic Director, Howard B. Eisenberg. He states: "A remarkable professor and attorney.... he instilled in his Legal Clinic students a recognition that underserved clients deserve the best representation possible despite their modest means, circumstances in life, or nature of their legal matter."

In his current position at Whittier Law Library, Hugh is primarily responsible for Library operations in the absence of the Director, and selection and

## New Member Spotlight

purchase of all monographs and new serials for its collection, a collaborative effort he shares with other Library staff. According to him, having Hein Online, JSTOR, and the Making of Modern Law digital collection and a NELCO membership are a few ways to get the most for their acquisition dollars. With nine years of prior academic library experience and a law degree, academic law librarianship became a natural path for him to follow. He considers his many law librarian colleagues and friends to be invaluable sources for advice and inspiration. Frank Houdek of SIU Law Library and J. Denny Haythorn of Whittier Law School Library are two academic law library directors that he admires greatly and aspires to follow in their footsteps.

A self-proclaimed “newsaholic,” Hugh prefers to watch and critique TV news programming and enjoys learning as much as possible about U.S. political and social history. He spends much of his leisure time on a family history research project, a legacy for his family and future relatives. Since he started this project 2 years ago, he has placed 4,800 names in his family tree and has tracked down a number of previously unknown living relatives. He also enjoys travel, photography, art and architecture, and finds lighthouses intriguing. His home and office are decorated with all kinds of lighthouse collectibles. He sings tenor in his church choir and enjoys classical, jazz and Celtic music.

Katie Thompson is a recent graduate of the University of Pittsburgh’s School of Information Science, but she is certainly no stranger to libraries. As an undergraduate and library school student, Katie worked at the University of



Pittsburgh’s Barco Library and prior to that she worked for five years at Edgewood Public Library in Pittsburgh.

Katie has just started her first job after graduating with her MLIS at UCLA’s Hugh and Hazel Darling Law Library as its Evening Access Services/Reference Librarian. She is already active in ALL-SIS as a member of the CONALL/ Mentoring Committee and has been honored with an AALL Annual Meeting Grant to attend the San Antonio annual meeting, where she was able to attend CONELL and CONALL. In addition to ALL-SIS, Katie is a member of the Research Instruction and Patron Services SIS, the Western Pennsylvania Law Library Association, and a new member of the Southern California Association of Law Libraries.

When asked why she joined ALL-SIS, Katie said she chose law librarianship because of her positive experiences working at the Barco Law Library and joined ALL-SIS because of the networking and professional development opportunities. In addition, she joined ALL-SIS because she believed she was “joining a community” of fellow academic law librarians. We can all wholeheartedly agree with her - ALL-SIS is more than just professional organization - it’s a community. ALL-SIS is proud to welcome Katie to the community of academic law librarianship and we’re lucky to have her.

Tanya Cao is Catalog Librarian of Diane and Harry Rinker Law Library of Chapman University School of Law in Orange, California. While relatively new in the law library field, Tanya has been a professional librarian for more



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## New Member Spotlight, Cont'd

than a decade. Prior to joining Chapman University Law School Library, she worked for library vendors Baker & Taylor and Follet, where she catalogued all kinds of audio-visual materials for public, academic and school libraries. She found that her intellectually stimulating work at Baker & Taylor and Follet has unbelievably helped her at her new job at the law library. It provided her with "free education" in Western, specifically American culture, history and politics.

A bicultural and multilingual transplant, Tanya was born and grew up in Beijing, China. She earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in Russian Language from the prestigious Beijing Foreign Language Institute, now called the Beijing Foreign Studies University. Before moving to the United States, she worked for several years at Zhong Shan Library, one of the largest provincial-level libraries in China. She received her M.L.S. degree from Simmons College's Graduate School of Library and Information Science in Boston. She landed her first professional librarian position at California Institute of Integral Studies in San Francisco where she earned her second Master's degree in business.

Tanya is what one might consider an "accidental" law librarian. She found an opportunity to work at Chapman University Law School Library after she got laid off in 2003. She knew that she wanted to go back to the academic environment and believed that she was destined to be at Chapman. While the transition from general subjects to legal topics has not been easy for Tanya, she nevertheless enjoyed the new challenge and learning opportunity. She recently completed the Lexis/Nexis Certificate of Mastery advanced core training program. She attended her first AALL Conference in 2004, learned from many dedicated law librarians about law librarianship and is proud to be a member of this profession.

## Member News

### In Memoriam

**Sara Turley Cole**, the long-time director of the law library at **The University of Memphis**, passed away on November 26, 2005, at her home, following a lengthy illness. Sara was born in 1943. She earned her bachelor's degree from Vanderbilt University and her library degree from University of North Carolina. She was hired in 1968 as the law school's librarian right out of library school by then Dean W. Walton Garrett. The library then consisted of Sara, one part-time clerical employee, an IBM selectric typewriter, and a modest collection of yet to be cataloged books. Sara attended law school part-time while building the law library, earning her J.D. from The University of Memphis (then Memphis State University) in 1972. She was admitted to the Tennessee bar the same year. In addition to directing the law library, she taught courses in Contracts and Legal Research & Writing. She retired due to health reasons in 2000.

### Accomplishments

Congratulations to **Martha Smith** at the completion of her law school education! She graduated in December after 5 years of study while working at the **Florida Coastal School of Law Library & Technology Center**. Currently she is studying for the February bar exam.

### New Positions and Promotions

**Linda Barrette** is the new Acquisitions Librarian at the **Florida A & M University Law Library** in Orlando, Florida. Linda received her J.D. from the University of New Mexico and her M.L.I.S. from the University of South Florida.

**Stephanie Davidson** started as Head of Public Services at the **University of Illinois** in September. She had been Reference & Electronic Resources Librarian at the Yale Law School.

**Sarah Gotschall** is a new reference librarian at the Law Library, **University of Arizona Rogers College of Law** in Tucson, Arizona. Sarah received her J.D. from Emory University School of Law and her M.L.I.S. from Kent State University. Sarah previously worked LexisNexis as a Senior Research Consultant - Customer Support.

**Sibyl Marshall** is the new Head of Public Services in the Joel A. Katz Law Library at the **University of Tennessee College of Law**. Sibyl was formerly a Reference Librarian and Acting Head of Public Services at Tennessee.

**Paul Moorman**, previously of Pepperdine, has taken a new job as Law Librarian-Research Services at the **University of Southern California**.

**Jacob Newman** recently joined **Florida Coastal School of Law** as a Reference Librarian. Jacob has a J.D. from John Marshall Law School and an M.L.S. from Rutgers School of Communication, Information and Library Studies. He



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Leah Sandwell-Weiss, Editor  
Reference Librarian & Adj. Asst. Prof. of Legal Research  
Law Library, Rogers College of Law  
P.O. Box 210176  
Tucson AZ 85721-0176  
Phone: 520-621-3140  
Fax: 520-621-3138  
[leah.sandwell-weiss@law.arizona.edu](mailto:leah.sandwell-weiss@law.arizona.edu)

## ALL-SIS Officers

Michael Slinger, Chair	<a href="mailto:michael.slinger@law.csuohio.edu">michael.slinger@law.csuohio.edu</a>
Suzanne Thorpe, Vice-President/Chair-Elect	<a href="mailto:s-thor@tc.umn.edu">s-thor@tc.umn.edu</a>
Carole L. Hinchcliff, Past President	<a href="mailto:hinchcliff.1@osu.edu">hinchcliff.1@osu.edu</a>
Susan Lewis-Somers, Secretary/Treasurer	<a href="mailto:slewis@wcl.american.edu">slewis@wcl.american.edu</a>
Carol Bredemeyer, Executive Board Member	<a href="mailto:bredemeyer@nku.edu">bredemeyer@nku.edu</a>

## General Information

ALL-SIS was established in 1979 to promote interest in and to address issues of common concern to those employed in academic law libraries. The SIS serves as the umbrella organization for all interests--administration, collection development, consortia, directors, fees for service, interlibrary loan, public services, technical services, middle management, etc.

ALL-SIS provides opportunities for all librarians to contribute to the overall betterment of the entire academic law community. ALL-SIS has grown to more than 800 members and is the second largest SIS in AALL. Our members come from all aspects of academic law librarianship. Because of the SIS's broad coverage and subtopic focus, all those working in academic law libraries can benefit from membership and are encouraged to join.

## The ALL-SIS Discussion Group

The ALL-SIS discussion group, aka mailing list, is used for official ALL-SIS announcements, news from AALL, and discussion of topics of interest to our members. If you're a member of ALL-SIS, you should be automatically subscribed! To send a message to the list, address the message to [all-sis@aallnet.org](mailto:all-sis@aallnet.org). Please direct any questions to the forum moderator at [owner-all-sis@aallnet.org](mailto:owner-all-sis@aallnet.org). For more information, see *ALL-SIS Discussion Group Instructions*, 23 ALL-SIS Newsletter 18 (Summer 2004), available at [www.aallnet.org/sis/allsis/newsletter/23\\_3/Discussiongroup.htm](http://www.aallnet.org/sis/allsis/newsletter/23_3/Discussiongroup.htm).

## ALL-SIS on the Web

ALL-SIS is on the web! Visit the ALL-SIS Home Page at [www.aallnet.org/sis/allsis/](http://www.aallnet.org/sis/allsis/). Electronic versions of *The ALL-SIS Newsletter* are available on our website, as well as other vital information.

## Newsletter Information & Deadlines for 2005 - 2006 Academic Year

Please submit all articles and announcements to the ALL-SIS Newsletter Editor. Are you working on any interesting special projects? Have you attended a meeting and learned something you want to share with colleagues? Do you just

want to rant and rave about some problems related to academic law librarianship? If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, please send your thoughts. Any format, printed, faxed, or e-mailed will do, but it would be easiest for Newsletter production if the article is sent either as an attached text or word processing file or as the body of an e-mail. The **deadline** for this year's remaining issue is **May 17, 2006**. Thank you for your contributions and for your consideration.