

FCIL NEWSLETTER

Foreign, Comparative, and International Law
Special Interest Section



From the Chair

BY MIKE MCARTHUR

It is amazing how the calendar just continues to march on. I hope the change in season has treated everyone kindly so far. The call for stories of travel is a welcome one, as the pandemic disrupted so many of our connections. This past year I took the belated opportunity to visit loved ones, as well as deepen my professional connections, in Japan.

One of the main reasons I appreciate FCIL librarianship is the perspective engaging with other cultures and institutions provides. At the turn of the century legal education changed dramatically in Japan and the academic law librarian role didn't evolve to fill the space we now occupy. In some ways, visiting the law libraries in Tokyo felt like stepping into an alternate reality.



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Resource Reviews: Jus Mundi

Part of a series of reviews prepared by the Electronic Research Interest Group

BY CHARLES BJORK

Jus Mundi, which describes itself as “the Search Engine for International Law and Arbitration,” was founded as a start-up legal research platform in Paris in 2019. The platform employs AI-powered tools to extract metadata from primary source materials that enable it to offer enhanced searchability and discoverability across a wide range of content.

Jus Mundi’s subject matter coverage includes: inter-state disputes involving the application of public international law and the law of the sea; international trade disputes; investor-state disputes; and transnational commercial disputes between private parties. Jus Mundi’s content coverage includes: multilateral and bilateral treaties focusing on dispute settlement, trade, and investment; decisions issued by international tribunals (ICJ, PCIJ, PCA, ITLOS) in inter-state disputes; decisions issued in international trade disputes (WTO and GATT); decisions and awards issued by arbitral panels in investor-state disputes and in transnational commercial disputes; procedural and evidentiary rules; selected secondary sources licensed from reputable publishers; and practitioner-written analysis and commentary (“wiki-notes”). Jus Mundi’s sister platform, Jus Connect, offers data-driven profiles of international arbitration professionals throughout the world, and an automated tool to check for conflicts of interest. Jus Connect is not available to academic subscribers.

Jus Mundi aspires to expand its coverage of international law and dispute resolution to include the following subjects: construction law, criminal law, data protection law, energy law, environmental law, human rights law, and IP law. The expansion of Jus Mundi’s subject matter coverage will be driven by subscriber demand, with the expectation that one new subject area will be added to the platform every two to three years.

From the Chair

The professionals I spoke with have very different roles than we would equate to in the U.S., but the work has many similarities as well. We spoke about challenges with budgets, licensing hurdles, and the satisfaction of providing quality research support. But more than anything, the continual march forward into the future is on our minds. Systems are changing, tools are evolving, and the future is upon us.

I hope we can continue to share our experiences and learn from each other.

-Mike

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Resource Reviews: Jus Mundi

How well-known is the source?

Jus Mundi markets itself primarily to large international law firms, multinational corporations, government ministries, and regulatory agencies. Academic institutions constitute only a small fraction of Jus Mundi's paid subscriber base. More recently, in an effort to expand access to legal information in developing countries, Jus Mundi has begun to make its platform freely available to academic institutions in 80 less developed jurisdictions.

Since it was initially developed for the law firm market, Jus Mundi is better known among legal practitioners and law firm librarians than it is among law faculty, law students, and academic law librarians. That said, Jus Mundi shrewdly provides temporary access to its platform to law students who participate in international moot court competitions. That is how we first heard about Jus Mundi at Georgetown - from students who had been exposed to Jus Mundi while participating in an international moot court competition and who wanted to be able to continue to access the platform through the Georgetown Law Library.

How accessible is it?

As previously noted, Jus Mundi is primarily a subscription-based resource marketed to law firms, multinational corporations, and governments. Jus Mundi does offer lower-cost subscription packages to academic institutions in most jurisdictions. Only academic institutions in 80 less developed jurisdictions are eligible for free access to the platform.

While much of Jus Mundi's primary source content is accessible elsewhere, on both free and subscription-based platforms, these platforms tend to be narrowly focused on a single subject or tribunal. Many of the free platforms have very limited or non-existent search capabilities. One of the key attributes that sets Jus Mundi apart from competitors is the ability to search the full texts of primary sources pertaining to international dispute resolution across multiple subject areas on a single platform, with enhanced searching tools and multiple post-search filters.

How authoritative is it?

Jus Mundi obtains its primary law content from reputable sources, including international court and tribunal websites, inter-governmental organizations, and international arbitral institutions. Jus Mundi partners with leading practitioners and law firms to produce its practitioner-written analysis and commentary ("wiki notes"). More recently, Jus Mundi has begun to license selected secondary source content from reputable publishers, including Oxford University Press and Juris Legal Information. Jus Mundi subscribers have the option of adding some or all of this licensed secondary source content to their base subscription. These secondary source add-ons will be of interest primarily to Jus Mundi's law firm, corporate, and government subscribers. Most of Jus Mundi's academic subscribers already purchase or license secondary source content directly from publishers like OUP and Juris.

How comprehensive is it, in terms of its contents?

Jus Mundi offers comprehensive coverage of decisions issued by international tribunals in interstate disputes and of decisions issued in trade disputes under the WTO and the GATT.

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Resource Reviews: Jus Mundi

With respect to treaties that govern international dispute settlement, trade, and investment, as well as procedural rules, Jus Mundi's coverage is at least as comprehensive as any other platform. Jus Mundi's coverage of primary sources related to investor-state dispute settlement is comparable to what is available on other subscription-based platforms, such as Kluwer Arbitration and the Investor-State Law Guide.

What sets Jus Mundi apart is the breadth of its coverage of decisions and awards issued by arbitral panels in international commercial disputes between private parties. At the time of writing, Jus Mundi had nearly 50,000 such international commercial arbitration decisions in its database – far more than any other free or subscription-based platform. If the parties to the dispute have consented to disclosure, Jus Mundi usually provides a link to the full text of the arbitral decision or award in its original language. If not, Jus Mundi provides as much information as it can, such as the party names, the nature of the dispute, and the applicable law and arbitration rules. For some disputes, the party names are redacted.

Jus Mundi achieves its broad coverage of international commercial disputes by partnering directly with many of the world's leading arbitral institutions, including the International Centre for Dispute Resolution of the American Arbitration Association in New York, and the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) in Paris, among others. In fact, content from the ICC Dispute Resolution Library (ICC DLR), which the ICC previously made available on its own stand-alone subscription-based platform, is now hosted exclusively on Jus Mundi.

How easy-to-use (user-friendly) is it?

Jus Mundi's interface is very intuitive and easy to use. It supports both natural language searching, which is enhanced by AI, and Boolean searching. After running an initial search, you have the option of limiting the search results by content type: treaties, cases, procedural rules, and publications (licensed secondary sources, as well as practitioner-written analysis and commentary). You can then further narrow the results by applying multiple post-search filters, which are displayed on the right side of the screen. These vary depending on the type of content selected. Some of the post-search filters, such as industry type, are not available to academic subscribers.

Jus Mundi's interface is available in both English and French. Searches run using English language search terms will retrieve documents in English, as well as documents in other languages that contain equivalent terms. Search terms entered in a language other than English will retrieve only documents in that language. Documents retrieved on Jus Mundi may be displayed in your browser in HTML format, downloaded as a PDF with hyperlinks to related content available on Jus Mundi, or downloaded as a clean PDF without hyperlinks.

Jus Mundi's interface is very similar to that of ECOLEX, the excellent free platform for international environmental law research that is a joint initiative of the United Nations Environment Programme, the U.N.'s Food and Agriculture Organization, and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature. In my opinion, ECOLEX has one of the most user-friendly interfaces of any international legal research platform, free or subscription-based. I don't know if Jus Mundi intentionally modeled its interface on ECOLEX, but anyone who is familiar with ECOLEX will notice many similarities between the two platforms.

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Resource Reviews: Jus Mundi

How useful is it in terms of its ability to answer both common and rare (difficult-to-find) questions?

What makes Jus Mundi particularly useful is the ability to conduct enhanced full-text searching across a broad range of primary law materials. For example, you can run a search on the exact phrase *force majeure*, narrow the search results to cases, and then filter by type of case; by court, tribunal or arbitral institution; by the applicable treaty or governing law; by the applicable procedural rules or rules of arbitration; and by the date of decision. Jus Mundi also has a citator tool, which enables you to determine if a passage from a decision has been cited by a court, tribunal or arbitral panel in a subsequent case, and directly link to the citing passages in those subsequent cases. While similar features are available on platforms that focus more narrowly on international trade or investor-state arbitration, no other platform combines Jus Mundi's sophisticated searching, filtering, and citator tools with its broader subject matter coverage.

How current (up-to-date) is it?

Jus Mundi's content is updated every business day, as one would expect from a platform whose primary subscriber base consists of large international law firms and multinational corporations.

Summary

Jus Mundi will be of greatest interest to libraries at law schools where international economic law is a significant component of the curriculum. In particular, any library that serves a large cohort of foreign-trained LLM students interested in pursuing careers in international commercial arbitration or investor-state arbitration will want to give serious consideration to a Jus Mundi subscription. Even if your library does not fit this profile, it is still worth keeping an eye on Jus Mundi to see if the platform can fulfill its aspiration of becoming a one-stop-shop for researching the resolution of all types of international disputes.





FCIL-SIS Continuing Education Committee Webinar

Our webinar on Collection Development in Foreign, Comparative, and International Law will take place March 21, 2024, at 11 am-12:30 pm Central and will feature Alex Burdett (Reference/Foreign & International Law Librarian, New York University School of Law), Laura Cadra (Senior Collection Development Librarian, Loyola Marymount Law School, Los Angeles), Sherry Chen (Associate Director for Collection Strategy, Penn Law School), and Gabriela Femenia (Director of the Law Library and Associate Professor of Law, Temple Law) as panelists.

Register now for the FCIL collection development webinar.



Resource Reviews: N-Lex

Part of a series of reviews prepared by the Electronic Research Interest Group

BY ERIN GOW

N-Lex is designed as a single entry point to European Union (EU) national law collections.

How well-known is the source?

N-Lex is part of a suite of online resources provided by the EU. It is less well-known than the primary database of EU law, EUR-Lex, but is prominently linked from the EUR-Lex page and likely to be familiar to researchers who frequently undertake EU legal research.

How accessible is it?

N-Lex is a free, online database that is easy to access either directly or from better-known sites such as EUR-Lex.

How authoritative is it?

As a database maintained by the Publications Office of the EU, N-Lex is quite reliable. Its primary purpose is to collect and link out to national law, however, so the information found here can't be directly authenticated by the EU. While you can rely on this site to link to high-quality sources, whether those collections are authenticated or official sources of law depends on the practices in each member country.

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Resource Reviews:

N-Lex

How comprehensive is it, in terms of its contents?

The level of coverage varies from country to country within the N-Lex database, with some national laws directly available in the N-Lex database and others requiring the searcher to follow a link out to an external national site. Similarly, legal materials may only be available in selected languages and the collection of laws from non-EU countries is markedly less complete, with the warning that “the full N-Lex functionality is not available for these sites.”

How easy-to-use (user-friendly) is it?

Searching legal documents across multiple jurisdictions is always complicated, but N-Lex provides several user-friendly tools to make the process smoother for researchers.

The landing page allows searchers to immediately access information about national law by selecting the relevant country name (with the country’s flag for visual reference) or by clicking on the country in a map of the EU. A page for each EU country offers quick links to national legal databases and national laws in EUR-Lex. There is additional information about the national database, which provides a handy overview of what you can expect to find, useful search tips, and whether documents will be available in your language. For most countries, you can also search the national legislation directly in N-Lex, which allows you to take advantage of the EUROVOC thesaurus that will suggest terms in the language of the country you are searching and provide suggested translations for search terms.

Another useful tool is the multi-country search function, which allows searching national law across multiple countries at the same time. Not all countries are available in this search interface, but for those that are, it can significantly reduce the time a researcher must spend to undertake a single search rather than searching every national database separately.

How useful is it in terms of its ability to answer both common and rare (difficult-to-find) questions?

N-Lex can be extremely useful in finding national law from EU member countries. For some questions, this may simply involve searching directly in N-Lex, but some questions may require the searcher to follow links out of N-Lex to undertake searches directly in external national databases.

How current (up-to-date) is it?

The recency of information in N-Lex varies based on the information posting cycles of each national database that it incorporates, and may occasionally fall out of step if temporary technical errors mean that N-Lex can’t make the necessary connection with a particular national database. When such errors occur, however, N-Lex still provides the option to follow a direct link to the national databases, for direct access to the source material.

Editor’s note: Want to submit a Resource Review or participate in another ERIG project? Visit [their website](#) or reach out to [Noreen](#).



Decolonizing a Human Rights Research Course: First Steps

BY SUSAN GUALTIER

In Fall 2023, I had the opportunity to teach an online, asynchronous course on Human Rights Legal Research. Although I have been teaching variations on the traditional FCIL research course for the duration of my library career, this was my first chance to teach a specialized class on an FCIL topic. Given the novelty of the topic, it was also a chance to design a course completely from scratch for the first time in a few years, which is always both challenging and exciting.

As I considered how to structure my course and how much doctrinal content I would need to include, I decided that to treat the topic fully, I would need to introduce ideas relating to colonialism in international law and attempt to teach the course from a decolonized perspective. I use the word “decolonized” loosely here; I am aware of the argument that the word is used too broadly in academia and should only be used to refer to the return of land to indigenous peoples. Here, I use the word “decolonization” to refer to a strategy for teaching legal research in a way that challenges the traditional framework centering the European tradition, the Western tradition, and the Global North.

I firmly believe that at least some doctrinal teaching is necessary in research courses, not only to frame the research methodologies, but also because understanding the history and substance of what we are researching can inform how and where we look for sources as well as how we weigh and prioritize them. For example, in the context of human rights law, an understanding of the colonialist history of international law can help us to better weigh and balance the scholarly teachings that we choose to cite. It can help us to recognize instances in which Western standards or standards of the Global North are unfairly imposed upon states outside of those regions, or to identify matters that might be better addressed by regional courts or at a national level where there is a greater understanding of local norms. It can also help us to understand religious and customary legal systems more completely, and to recognize them as legal systems on par with the common law and civil law systems of the Western tradition.

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Decolonizing Research Courses

After deciding to decolonize my course, one of the first things I did was to reach out to Sue Silverman at Brooklyn Law School, after learning that she would be presenting at WestPac on decolonizing FCIL research classes. From my own experience, I had some idea of how I wanted to address colonization issues relating to foreign law research, but less sense of how to introduce these issues in relation to the international legal order. Sue was kind enough to send along some of her resources, which I reviewed and was able to mine for citations to potential readings. As an introduction to colonialism, I chose [Antony Anghie's article](#), *The Evolution of International Law: Colonial and Postcolonial Realities*, 27 *Third World Quarterly* 739 (2006), which argues that colonialism was and is central to the formation of international law. I assigned this article to my students during the second week of class, which covered the history of international law and introduced the sources outlined in the ICJ Statute, with an accompanying video explaining why I was introducing the topic of colonization. This seemed like an ideal moment to introduce the question of colonialism for the first time - after the first week's introductory sources, but before digging into the different types of sources of international law and how to research them.

Once the topic had been introduced, it was easy to work questions relating to colonialism into my course videos and assignments, and to link them to most of the resources we covered. I also assigned weekly discussion topics that lent themselves well to prompting the students to think critically about questions of colonization. Most of my discussion topics were written in a "choose your own adventure" style, where the students were asked to identify a resource or jurisdiction that interested them and to post about it in a discussion forum, answering a set of questions about their resource or topic. For example, when discussing regional human rights systems, some of the questions I posed to the students included: "Do you think that custom and general principles may differ between regions? Given that most international law is based on Eurocentric norms, is it reasonable or desirable to expect all countries to comply with those norms? Would some issues be better decided in international or domestic courts rather than regional ones? Are there issues that might be best decided by regional courts rather than international or domestic ones?" I also encouraged students to cast a wide net and choose jurisdictions outside of their comfort zone, including countries with non-Western legal systems and difficult-to-research countries.

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Decolonizing Research Courses

Overall, I found that the students responded well to my efforts toward decolonization. Even when the discussion prompts did not specifically address questions of colonialism, the students tended to bring the topic up themselves when evaluating and discussing resources. I noticed that they began to de-center Western sources and sources from the Global North and to seek out a broader selection of sources. Because the students had responded so well to the open-ended nature of the discussion prompts, I assigned them an exam based on the same model, and a number of students chose topics dealing with colonialism, or otherwise addressed it in their discussions. In general, I found that the class was more attuned than my past classes to a wider variety of sources, and that they were more open and critical in their thinking. I even received a comment in the course evaluations stating that the student appreciated the sensitivity to questions of colonialism throughout the course.

A few closing thoughts: first, teaching the course online and asynchronously made this process a lot smoother. Had I been teaching in person, I might have been more wary about opening a discussion of colonialism for the first time, especially during a period in our political history when the terminology surrounding colonialism is particularly fraught. Teaching online also allowed me to introduce this discussion in a contained capacity, so that I could use it to bolster critical thinking about the resources without detracting or taking away time from the skills portion of the curriculum. Second, teaching the course on a pass/fail basis gave the students more freedom to experiment with researching topics and jurisdictions outside their comfort zone. While the students were all extremely engaged, it was evident that none of them were worried about losing points by exploring something that was unfamiliar to them. Third, I believe that, generationally speaking, today's students are already well-informed about decolonization in general and are already thinking about these issues. I don't say that to imply that we shouldn't explore these questions in our classes; to the contrary, I suspect that many students expect them, and that we must lean into this expectation in order to do the critical work of decolonizing legal education and information literacy.

All in all, I count my first efforts toward decolonizing this course to be a teaching success. I look forward to working toward the greater decolonization of future courses, and I am excited about the conversation surrounding this topic that seems to be opening up within the field of legal research education.





An Ephemeral Reference Question

BY ELAINE TORNÉS

I was a little agitated, turning the pages of all the books in the library, and the clock was ticking against me.

A moment before, I was reading an article and concluding that democracy is a bird living in purgatory, and suddenly, I had two patrons in front of me, hoping that I would help them with their project. I was so sure of myself in recommending that poem that I couldn't find it now.

In my mind, I had even the typeface in which it was printed, the size, weight, and color of the book that had such a masterful excerpt. I even had the sensation of reading that poem a few minutes ago for the first time and not years ago. Nevertheless, I continued the search with optimism, inspiration, and curiosity as I remembered the verses tattooed in my memory.

It was a 17th-century poem by Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, perfect for my patrons' research. Her revealing verses on injustice and inequality were the answer to support their complex and stellar work on feminist perspectives. I had every word of the poem on my lips and its author very much in mind.

"Where are you, poem by Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, where are you?" I repeated to myself as I minutely inspected each shelf. This poem by the Mexican nun and scholar de la Cruz comes from the voice of a woman who confronted the high hierarchy of the Catholic Church that forced her to abdicate her intellectual pursuits (Hernández Menéndez, 2001). Still, I couldn't find this powerful poem whose vigor in denouncing social norms on women's education and intellectual freedom stays intact in the strata of our times.

I knew I was about to find the poem if I carefully turned the thin, yellowed pages of all the books that had been maturing over time in that forgotten section of the library. The patrons were waiting for my masterful reference material, the product of an educated and trustworthy human mind. But the clock was still ticking against me, and I was getting impatient not finding it.

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An Ephemeral Reference Question

How can you forget something you know so well? I woke up even more agitated and without the poem in hand. I understood that in reality and dreams, we can forget anything, no matter how deeply rooted it is in us. However, if we keep searching, we will find it. And so it was. The next day, I found the poem I was dreaming (literally) of finding, but my inquisitors were nowhere to be found. At least the deadline for that reference question had also evaporated with the dream.

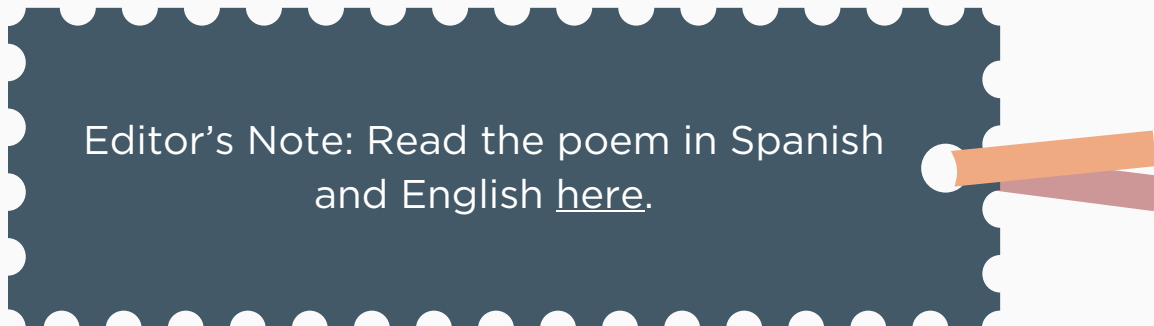
With all the human production we have achieved since Neanderthal times, we can pretend that we are more robots than humans until one or two dreams remind us that since day one, we are still breathing at the same pace as the clouds and are too paradoxical to be just scarlet.

The poem is titled “Hombres Necios” or “Foolish Men.” It was a real poem, but it came in an ephemeral reference question. Perhaps dreams can become more than dreams if we chase them. No matter what, we must remain humans with dreams, humans with ourselves, humans in our interactions with others, and humans on the real or subconscious level.

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Regan Loggans, Teaching Women’s History: Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, Feminist Poet of New Spain, New-York Historical Society, <https://www.nyhistory.org/blogs/juana-ines-de-la-cruz-feminist-poet-of-new-spain> (last visited, Jan. 19, 2024).

Mayra Hernández Menéndez, Hombres Necios que Acusáis 208 (Editorial Oriente, 2001).





Editor's Note on Special Features

The Newsletter team hopes to do a special feature each February, highlighting unique items of interest to FCIL librarians. If you have ideas or want to be featured, reach out to the editor at janet.kearney@nyu.edu.

Special Feature: Connecting with FCIL Groups

One of the most amazing things about being an FCIL librarian is the places it takes us, both physically and through our desks at work. From the people we are able to meet from around the world to the wide variety of law types we encounter, there is a never ending amount of professional development related to FCIL. In this Special Feature, we want to highlight other FCIL-related organizations that focus on different aspects of the work. We hope you find inspiration in the work of other professional development organizations (and maybe a new conference to add to your wishlist!).

BRITISH AND IRISH ASSOCIATION OF LAW LIBRARIANS - BIALL

The British and Irish Association of Law Librarians (<https://biall.org.uk/annual-conference/>) provides the opportunity to follow discussions of British and Irish legal information, to participate in training related to legal research and law librarianship in the jurisdiction, and to meet law librarians working in the field. There is an annual conference based somewhere in the UK or Ireland each summer, which is a small enough event that it provides a great opportunity to meet a lot of people and have meaningful discussions. There are also additional online webinars and events that allow those who can't travel to participate in BIALL activities throughout the year. For even more participation and integration in BIALL, members can offer to volunteer with committees and groups.

-Erin Gow



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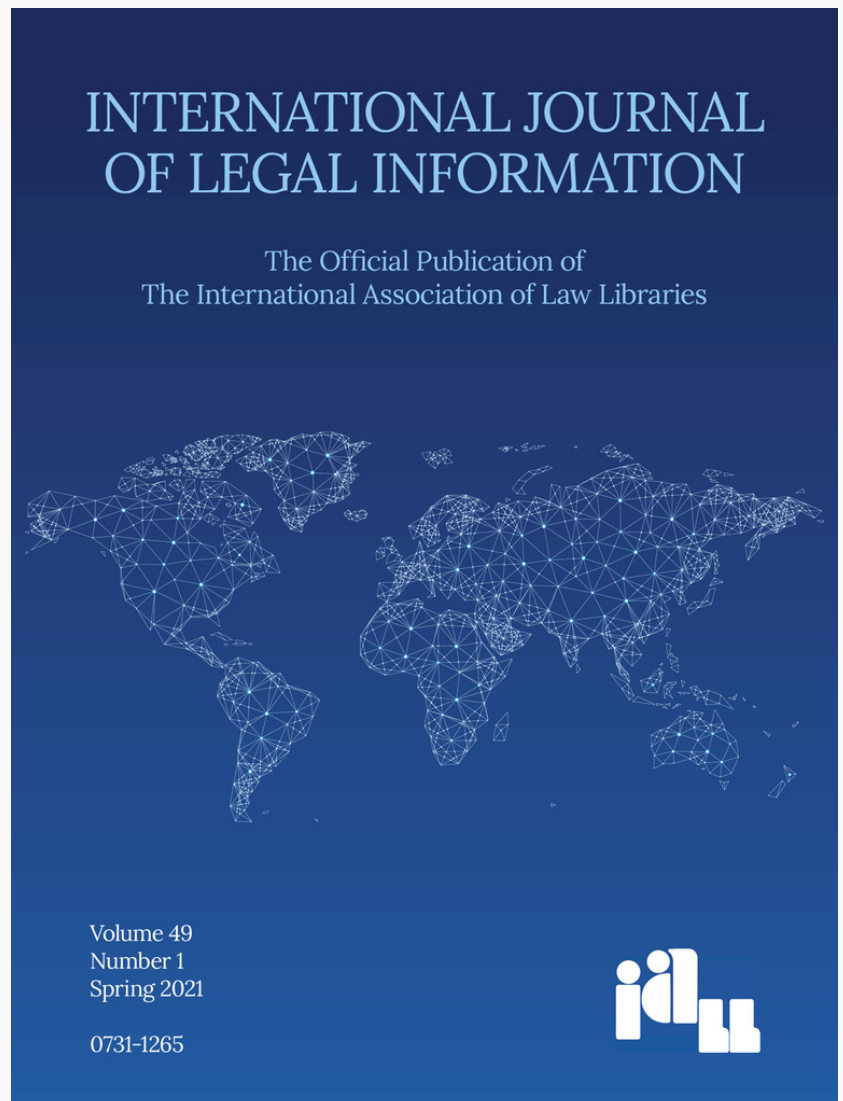
GET (RE)ACQUAINTED WITH THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF LEGAL INFORMATION

Hi! I'm the new editor of the International Journal of Legal Information (IJLI), the official publication of the International Association of Law Libraries (IALL). Let me (re)introduce you to this great journal.

The IJLI publishes original articles, conference papers, bibliographies, and other items concerning all aspects of law and law-related information. Along with this content, the IJLI has a book review section (Caroline Osborne, editor, West Virginia University) and an international calendar of conferences and events (Amy Flick, editor, Emory University).

The IJLI is published three times per year by Cambridge University Press (CUP). IALL members receive a print copy of the IJLI, and electronic copies are available online with a Cambridge Core subscription. Individual forthcoming articles are now available open access via CUP's FirstView feature until print issues are published. Thus, you don't have to be an IALL member to read articles from a forthcoming issue of the IJLI!

HeinOnline includes the IJLI in its Law Journal Library, indexing the various iterations of the IJLI from 1960 to the present, and providing the full text of the journal with a three-year embargo. Lexis contains the full text of the IJLI, beginning with the January 2005 issue (vol. 33, no. 3 [Winter 2005]), currently extending through September 2022 (vol. 50, nos. 1-2 [Summer 2022]). Both EBSCO (in the LISTA database) and ProQuest (in the LISA database) also index the IJLI.



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INT'L J LEG. INFO.

The IJLI has come a long way since its earliest precursor, the International Association of Law Libraries Bulletin, commenced publication in 1960 with two pages of content. In 1973, the Bulletin became the International Journal of Law Libraries, which transitioned to the International Journal of Legal Information in 1982.

I was honored to begin my editorship last summer, taking the reins from Mark Engsborg (Emory University), who served as editor for almost twenty years and is now IALL president. If you have an original article or other authored work that you'd like to submit for consideration for publication in the IJLI, please contact me. Even if you only have an idea, please reach out. I want to hear from you! My email address is jgrant27@uic.edu.

-Julienne Grant



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LAW LIBRARIES - FROM VIKINGS TO AUTONOMOUS SHIPS: IALL IN OSLO

In June 2016, I took a Baltic cruise that stopped for one day in Oslo. I had my eight hours on land completely organized and was able to see a lot of the city, which I chronicled in the [February 2017 issue](#) of the FCIL-SIS Newsletter. I was able to get to the Norwegian Parliament ([the Storting](#)), see Edvard Munch's "[The Scream](#)," and visit Oslo's spectacular [Vigeland Sculpture Park](#) (highly recommended).

I was, however, yearning to return and have more than eight hours in this beautiful Norwegian city. That wish will come true in June of this year when IALL's 42nd Annual Course will be held in Oslo.

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IALL IN OSLO

Here are the particulars: June 16-20, “From Vikings to Autonomous Ships: Past, Present and Future Law in a Norwegian and International Perspective.” Organized by the Law Library of the University of Oslo, “[t]his edition of the IALL annual course will take you on a journey through 1000 years, from the Vikings and their legal system and how it developed into the legal system we have today.” The conference venue is located in the middle of Oslo on the campus of the Faculty of Law of the University of Oslo.

The program includes a pre-conference workshop on June 16 on the topic of “CELL and the Library - Experiential Legal Learning, Digital Skills and Librarianship” and an optional day on June 20 at the Norsk Folkemuseum. Along with a stellar academic program, the conference includes a reception at Oslo’s city hall and a boat cruise. The Oslo harbor is truly one of the most beautiful urban inlets I have seen in my many years of travel.

I hope to see all of you in Oslo in June! For more information, see <https://iall.org/conf2024/>. Please also note the availability of three types of bursaries for the conference: members, non-members, and local. Application materials for these bursaries are due on March 4.

-Julienne Grant



Want to shout out your favorite organization? Send us an email, and we'll append it to the next issue in May 2024. Email the editor at janet. Kearney@nyu.edu.

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INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF LIBRARY ASSOCIATIONS AND INSTITUTIONS - HAVE YOU CONSIDERED IFLA?

Are you a fan of the UN Sustainable Development Goals? Looking for a conference that's a bit more "big picture" than your usual law library conference? The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) World Library and Information Congress (WLIC) brings together librarians from every sector of librarianship to "help set the international agenda and explore issues and developments of interest to the global library field". Normally, there is a WLIC held every year, but due to a number of issues the WLIC will not be held in 2024.

The IFLA leadership has instead decided to put on an Information Futures Summit, which is "a new kind of event for IFLA, focused on bringing the energy, expertise and rich diversity of our field together to find solutions to the information challenges facing us today". This Summit will take place in Brisbane, Australia from September 30 - October 3, 2024, and registration is open to all.

How will this Summit differ from past WLICs? As the Information Coordinator for the IFLA Section of Law Libraries Standing Committee, one of the biggest differences I anticipate is that the various committees and interest groups within IFLA will not be putting on any programming of our own, which is what normally happens at an WLIC (similar to how each SIS gets to sponsor a program of its own at AALL each year). This law library-focused (and law library-adjacent) programming is what could be the most relevant hook for someone within our group to attend the IFLA conference; you can see a list of our past programming to get a better sense of what we usually offer.

However, one of the great benefits of attending an IFLA conference is that you get to think bigger than just law libraries - how can we in law libraries help people around the world to exercise their right to information? At the IFLA WLIC 2023, our section hosted two wonderful presentations - one from Brazil and one from South Korea - that both spoke to the importance of making legal information more accessible to the public, which is highlighted in Sustainable Development Goal 16.10. I personally found these presentations - and others across the 2023 WLIC - inspirational in helping me to see ways in which my work as a law librarian can help contribute to real change on a global level.



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HAVE YOU CONSIDERED IFLA?

While the programming for this year's Summit is still forthcoming, if you are someone who is interested in how libraries can contribute to real change in the world, an IFLA conference may be for you! Going forward, IFLA did put out a call for hosts for 2025 so at this point we are anticipating having a "regular" WLIC in 2025 so stay tuned for information on that early next year! In the meantime, please feel free to reach out to any of the members of the Standing Committee for the Law Librarians Section with any questions you might have about IFLA conferences or the work we do - we'd love to hear from you!



Speakers from the WLIC 2023 Law Libraries Section program - from L-R: Patrícia Goulding, Suzanna Louzada, Eunhae Jung, and Alison Shea.



FCIL-SIS Candidate Statement: Vice-Chair/Chair Elect of the SIS

Editor's Note: Candidate statements are required to be published in the Newsletter! [Bylaw Art. VII.](#)

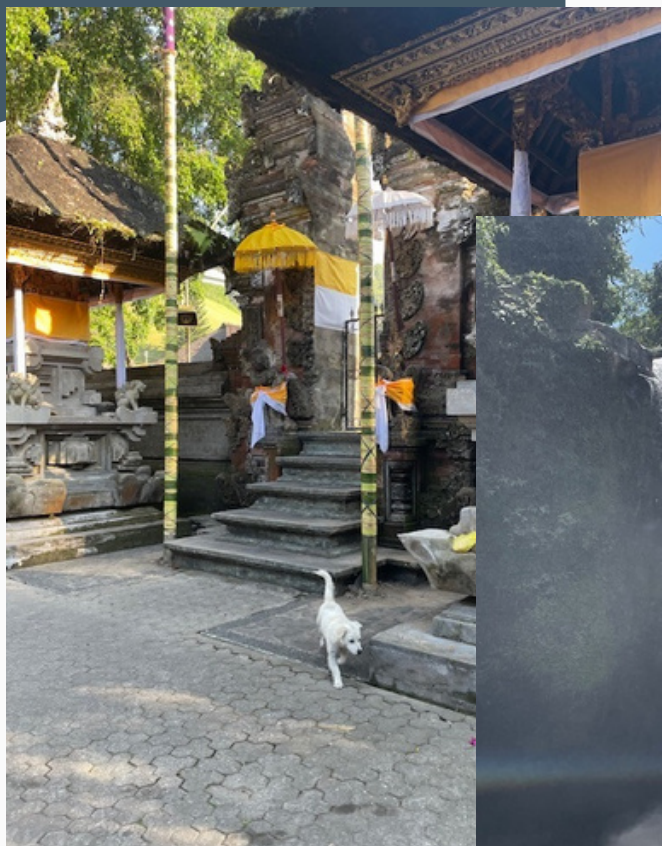
My name is Renu Urvashi Sagreiya, and I am the Reference & Digital Collections Librarian at the Jerene Appleby Harnish Law Library at Pepperdine University Caruso School of Law in Malibu, California. In this role, I provide library patrons with direction to library materials and expertise on complex legal resources, engage in vendor relations, support faculty scholarship, and offer legal research instruction. Previously, I worked as a Reference Law Librarian at Western State College of Law in Irvine, California, where I was responsible for teaching 1L & upperlevel legal research, running the law library's social media, managing ILL, and participating in collection development. My efforts at Western State to promote access to justice & legal Spanish through experiential learning were recognized in the May 2021 issue of Orange County Lawyer magazine in the article, "The Power of Being Understood: Producing the Next Generation of Multi-Lingual Attorneys". In June 2023, I presented about this Spanish for Law Students practice series and Virtual Citizenship Clinic in a panel developed by NELLCO Law Library Consortium, "Engaging with Patrons: Library Programs Outside Library Space".

I have demonstrated my leadership skills and initiative through my active involvement in FCIL-SIS. For instance, from 2021 to 2023, I served as Chair of the Customary and Religious Law Interest Group (CARLIG). During the 2021-2022 academic year, I successfully organized and moderated two programs: Canon Law 101 (October 2021) and Get Refusal & Domestic Violence in the Jewish Community (February 2022). The latter was a recipient of the AALL/Bloomberg Law Continuing Education Grant, and was co-sponsored with Jewish Law Librarians Caucus. These programs garnered CARLIG the 2022 FCIL-SIS Project of the Year Award in 2022. At last year's Annual Meeting in Boston, I was proud to be the recipient of the 2023 Spirit of the FCIL-SIS Award. In addition, starting in 2023, I was asked to lead the FCIL-SIS Annual Book Discussion Group, a beloved tradition that I look forward to continuing. Lastly, this year I began a new initiative, the FCIL-SIS Virtual Language Tables. According to the AALL Salary Survey, working in FCIL "usually requires facility with at least one foreign language and a working knowledge of, or willingness to learn the rudiments of, one or two other languages" (p. 43) and as such, this program will help FCIL-SIS members develop a critical skill for this niche area in law librarianship. I hope to start a Spanish language table as well once that generates sufficient interest! Since I joined FCIL-SIS in 2020, I have forged connections-both virtual and in person-with many wonderful colleagues in this profession. As a Candidate for Vice-Chair/Chair Elect, I hope that we can continue to work together to develop innovative programming and advance our professional development.



Editor's Note: Oh, the dread of winter. February is a literally dark time in New York, and the cold seems endless for a person raised in Louisiana. In an effort to alleviate some endless winter blues, this new column will highlight our exciting travels around the world! You'll see it every February. To include your travel pictures and stories, reach out to the editor at janet.kearney@nyu.edu.

Where in the World are the FCIL Librarians?



Susan Gualtier, Bali; Doha

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**Edward Hart;
Hong Kong**

In March, my son James and I visited Hong Kong to see our friend Mark Lister, Superintendent, Divisional Commander of the Marine South Division of the Hong Kong Police Force. He is one of the last few British ex-pats still on duty who were originally recruited to be police officers in the Hong Kong colony before the 1997 handover to China.

Got to tour his station and this patrol boat, used for extended patrols of the southern waters of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Area.

We also got to run a 5k at Hong Kong Disneyland!



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David Isom; Switzerland
After this year's IALL Annual Course in Geneva, I was fortunate enough to spend some time traveling in Switzerland. In Lugano's Parco Ciani, I came across this advertisement for the Lugano Human Rights Film Festival quoting Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.



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Sarah Martin; Boston

This is me (pretend) driving a duck bus/boat in Boston last summer! We went on this tour as a part of CONNELL, and it was really fun to see the city in this way.



Janet Kearney; Boston

I was able to bring my daughter along to AALL in Boston for her very first trip!



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Visiting St. Maarten Philipsburg Jubilee Library on its 100th birthday

By Mandy Lee

I turned the doorknob and pulled the door toward me. “Yeah, they’re still open,” I called down the stairs.

Crossing the threshold, I found myself in a narrow, rectangular room, walls a medium shade of blue that hinted at the Atlantic Ocean lapping at the St. Maarten shores beyond the library windows. Air conditioning greeted me.

At one end sat a man in a booth. He looked up.

“Hi,” I smiled. “I’m just looking around.”

He nodded. “This is our temporary location.”

“Where is your original location?”

“By the pharmacy.”

My eyes squinted as I tried to picture the location. “I think I know where that is.” Hurricane X had leveled the previous location in x. When do you think you’ll be able to move back there?

The ruins had yet to be removed, then the building rebuilt, so no one knew when.

I glanced at the books perched atop the shelves. The titles were mostly in Dutch, which seemed incongruous with the world outside. While officially part of the Netherlands, Sint Maarten caters quite heavily to the many American tourists who arrive on the island each year.



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St. Maarten Philipsburg Jubilee Library

So much so that I tried to recall hearing anyone speak Dutch on the island, and couldn't. Google, with its choice between, "Nederlands" and "Afrikaans" was one of the few reminders. The local supermarket no longer sells Droste chocolates imported from the mother country.

Seemingly the only patron in the place, I felt the need to say more. "I'm a librarian in Chicago. Every time my family and I come here, we drive by, and I look outside and take pictures. I wanted to come in."

I moved into the next room where I saw shelves labeled, African diaspora, St. Maarten, Entrepreneurship, Dutch, English, an empty reference kiosk.

I wondered how many people came to this temporary location, on the upper floor of a building that houses the Adolphus Richardson Office Technology company. The library sign doesn't face the road; it greets passers-by heading west. If I were to drive east on my way past the building I wouldn't know that there was a library in that space.



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St. Maarten Philipsburg Jubilee Library

The library had seen the Great Depression, World War II, hurricanes. Through it all, it stood as a place to learn. It offers community resources such as brochures on reading to one's baby, library cards for tourists, valid for three or six months, to borrow books for three weeks at a time. The library card application form is itself a card, smaller than a 3x5 index card. There was even a pamphlet in Spanish - who here speaks Spanish?

In a small Caribbean country belonging to the Kingdom of the Netherlands, where people from around the world converge, the public library plays a valuable role in disseminating information to the community on the power and importance of literacy and knowledge. It's the centennial of the public library - in 1923, during the Roaring Twenties, what was life like on this island?

The lottery booths that I'd seen from the road signified yearning for a more secure economic future, although I'd never seen one that was open. Once, though, a child peered out from within, a symbol of hope yet lack of hope.

The Entrepreneurship section of the library's stacks represented hope in the form of financial independence, of being in control of one's fate.

The clock struck five, closing time, and the man told a child to wait outside for him.

As I walked toward the door, I turned back.

"Your name?"

"Daniel."

"I'm Mandy," I smiled, then stepped into the heat.





FCIL-SIS Member Recent Publications Roundup

Our SIS is fortunate to include in its ranks exceptionally talented and enthusiastic writers. With this feature, we are happy to spread the word of their recent publications.

Spectrum

Andrew Martineau & Loren Turner, Talking Tech: ChatGPT in the legal research classroom: what it is, how to ethically use it, and why it's becoming an essential part of every instructor's, law student's and lawyer's toolkit, 28 AALL: Spectrum, Nov. / Dec. 2023, at 32.

Ryan Metheny, Michelle Trovillo & Scott Vanderlin, Reference Desk: Marketing the law library's value, 28 AALL: Spectrum, Nov. / Dec. 2023, at 42.

Anne Burnett & Szilvia Somodi, Supporting International Students During Challenging Times: Tips and best practices for law libraries working with international students, 28 AALL: Spectrum, Jan. / Feb. 2024, at 30.

Lindsey Carpino, Ryan Metheny & Scott Vanderlin, Reference Desk: Recruiting to build a pipeline to the profession, 28 AALL: Spectrum, Jan. / Feb. 2024, at 42.

Articles

Jootaek Lee, The Human Right to Development: Definitions, Research and Annotated Bibliography, 51 Int'l J Legal Info. 2 (2023).

Blog Posts - IALL

Mark Engsberg, Thank You, Geneva!

Jean Wenger, Getting to "Yes" for Annual Course Attendance

Blog Posts - RIPS Law Librarian Blog

Stephanie Farne, Chatting About Chat: How Are You Starting to Incorporate AI LLMs into Legal Research Classes?

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Recent Publications

Blog Posts -

DipLawMatic Dialogues

CFrancesco Fasano, [Webinar Recap: “Dealing with Trauma from World Events”](#)

Juan-Andrés Fuentes, [A personal experience commemorating Martin Luther King Jr. Day in the fight against discrimination](#)

Juan-Andrés Fuentes, [Who can tell if laws are effective?: Answering the question from a Comparative Perspective](#)

Juan-Andrés Fuentes, [Temporary Laws: Using a Comparative Legal Approach to Solve Pressing Social Issues in the U.S.](#)

Juan-Andrés Fuentes, [Specialization in International law: Areas of law that have significantly evolved in recent years](#)

Caitlin Hunter, [IALL 2023 Recap: Spotlight on Current Doctoral Research at the Geneva Graduate Institute](#)

Caitlin Hunter, [IALL 2023 Recap: The Librarian’s Gateway to International and Comparative Law: Databases from International Organizations](#)

Caitlin Hunter, [IALL 2023 Recap: The New Roles of the World Trade Organization after the Pandemic Crisis](#)

David Isom, [IALL 2023 Recap: The Swiss Legal Order and International Law: Does Direct Democracy Make a Difference?](#)

Sarah Martin, [New FCIL Librarian Series: Straight from the Classroom to the Reference Desk](#)

Mike McArthur, [IALL 2023 Recap: Work of the WIPO Intergovernmental Committee on Intellectual Property and Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore](#)

Mike McArthur, [IALL 2023 Recap: Pre-Conference Workshop - The UN Library’s LONTAD Digitization Project](#)

Lucie Olejnikova, [GlobaLex November/December 2023 Issue is Live](#)

Lucie Olejnikova, [GlobaLex September/October 2023 Issue is Live](#)

Jonathan Pratter, [From the Reference Desk: FCIL Librarians and the Conflict of Laws](#)

Jonathan Pratter, [From the Reference Desk: Researching International Arbitrations](#)

Jonathan Pratter, [From the Reference Desk: Recent Works on Comparative Law as a Field](#)

Marcelo Rodríguez, [Through the FCIL Lens: Venezuela/Guyana, ECOWAS, DRC, Egypt and Tuvalu](#)

Marcelo Rodríguez, [Guadalajara International Book Fair for Law Librarians](#)

Marcelo Rodríguez, [Through the FCIL Lens: Argentina, Sierra Leone, Iraq, Pakistan and South Korea](#)

Marcelo Rodríguez, [Through the FCIL Lens: Mexico, Dominican Republic/Haiti, Brazil, Azerbaijan, India and Australia](#)

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Recent Publications

Book Reviews

Matthew S. Cooper, Book Review, 116 Law Libr. J. 124 (2024) (This Is My Jail: Local Politics and the Rise of Mass Incarceration by Melanie D. Newport)

GlobaLex Articles

Jootaek Lee, UPDATE: Contemporary Land Grabbing. Research, and Bibliography.

Jootaek Lee, UPDATE: Researching the Human Right to Water with an Annotated Bibliography.

Arundhati A. Satkalmi, UPDATE: Research Guide on Transboundary Freshwater Treaties and Other Resources.

Editor's Note: Have you recently published? We would love to highlight it in our Recent Member Publications.
Send your information to Jingwei Zhang for the next issue.

Jumpstart!

The Electronic Resources Interest Group maintains the Jumpstart list, a “list of specialists for Jurisdiction/Region, Language and Topic willing to help answer FCIL research questions”.

If you would like to be included in the list, please contact Noreen at Noreen.farley@law.utah.edu.

[View the list!](#)



FCIL NEWSLETTER

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We welcome submissions!

Send us your conference recaps, member news, and other contributions, such as works in progress or reviews.

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