

AALL
S P E C T R U M

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[F E A T U R E S]

A Plea for Balance <i>by Michael Gorman</i>	4
Technology: Theory versus Reality in a Private Law Library <i>by Beatrice Wise</i>	6
Professional Development Committee Article Series Evaluating Electronic Resources <i>by Bobbie Studwell</i>	10
President's Briefing Citation Reform	Centerfold
Educational Requirements for Law Library Directors <i>by Laurie Langland</i>	24
Pro Bono Legal Advice for Pro Se Clients <i>by Stephen R. Jordan</i>	28

[C O L U M N S]

Presidential Proclamation	8
Chapter News	9
Special Interest Section News	12
Membership News	18

[D E P A R T M E N T S]

Calendar	17
Placement Listings	20
Classifieds	21
Memorials	27

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Washington, D.C.—the Last Annual Meeting of the 20th Century!

Plan **NOW** to be a part of "At the Crossroads: Legal Information Management, Technology, and Policy," the Ninety-Second Annual Meeting of the American Association of Law Libraries, in Washington, D.C., July 17-21, 1999, the last Annual Meeting of the 20th Century. The planning committees for the meeting want your program proposals and your participation to make the Washington, D.C. meeting an exciting and stimulating educational adventure.

At the turn of the century, law librarians and the legal community are at an important crossroads. The consolidation of the publishing industry has left most legal publishing in the hands of a few multinational corporations. Changes in copyright law threaten fair use and the library exemption. Some members of the legal community believe that the World Wide Web enables them to conduct research without the need to engage librarians. Librarians continue to be concerned about downsizing and outsourcing. The increasing costs of print materials, coupled with increasing needs for current technologies, challenge library managers to do more with often static budgets. The 1999 Annual Meeting will offer law librarians an opportunity to gain the skills needed to survive—and even *thrive*—in a new technological world where there are often more questions than answers.

The Annual Meeting planning team is interested in working closely with members, Chapters, SISs, and others to develop and present programs about the issues that concern AALL members the most: management, technology, and information access and policy. We also plan to include tracks dealing with international and foreign law, with technical services issues, and with non-legal (business, medical, statistical, etc.) resources. A new venture for the Washington meeting will be one-day paraprofessional track to be held on Tuesday, July 20, 1999.

The Washington meeting also will feature joint programming between AALL and a number of national legal and information organizations, including the Association of American Law Schools, the American Bar Association Section on Law Practice Management, the ABA's Judicial Division, The Association of Legal Administrators, the American Library Association, the Medical Library Association, the Special Libraries Association, and the Digital Future Coalition. Programming for these joint endeavors might cover topics such as distance education, law school computer and technology management, space planning, electronic journals, the paperless

office, funding law firm libraries, media in the courts, court technology, public trust in the judicial system, outsourcing, lobbying about information policy issues, training the non-law librarian, client libraries, and the library as publisher/creator of information.

To ensure that representatives from the various constituencies within the legal community join us in Washington—and at all future AALL Annual Meetings—the AALL Executive Board has established the Chapter VIP program. This program provides the opportunity for the thirty city, state, and regional Chapters to bring dignitaries from their geographic areas to the Annual Meeting. Guests likely will include judges, judicial administrator, court reporters, lawyers and legal administrators, law school and library school deans and professors, state and federal government officials, legal publishers, and other librarians. AALL will provide complimentary registration for two guests from each Chapter. The planning committees for the D.C. meeting hope that some special guests also will serve on panels at programs.

Mark your calendar now. **Program proposals are due August 17, 1998.** Then plan to be among the thousands of law librarians converging on Washington, D.C., in July 1999 to celebrate our profession and to prepare for the next century. Don't forget those dates—**July 17-July 22, 1999.** Don't forget "**At the Crossroads: Information Management, Technology, and Policy,**" the last Annual Meeting of the 20th Century.

How Do I Propose a Program?

If you are interested in proposing programs for the Washington, D.C. Annual Meeting, look at the Program Planner's Handbook (you can get a copy from AALLNET or by e-mail to Timothy Coggins (coggins@uofrlaw.richmond.edu) or Maggie Kearney (mkearney@aall.org.). The Handbook presents more details about the meeting and includes the necessary forms to submit program and workshop proposals. The deadline for program proposals for the D.C. meeting is Monday, **August 13, 1998.** You also can find out more information about the D.C. meeting by attending the Annual Meeting Program Selection Committee Open Forum at the AALL Annual Meeting in Anaheim. **The open forum is scheduled for Monday, July 13, 1998, 5:30-6:30 p.m.** Join us, hear the exciting plans, and ask your questions.



A PLEA FOR BALANCE

by Michael Gorman

Adapted from a talk given at the RASD/CODES program "To Net or not to Net?" at the ALA Annual Conference, San Francisco, June 29, 1997. A slightly different version appeared in the February 1998 issue of Against the Grain [<http://www.against-the-grain.com>].

As most of us do, I absorb cultural change and view the popular culture landscape through, among other things, advertisements. A recent series of TV ads—for the communications company MediaOne—has been most instructive. The first ad combined flashy graphics, that annoying post-modernist advertising device of turning the words of the ad into a kind of round game with different overlapping voices completing the previous sentence, and vaguely New Age-y music. The message was that "the future has arrived" in the shape of MediaOne laying down broadband cable all over these United States. Over pictures of people playing sports, reading, thinking (signified by doped-up looking people staring into space), enjoying "quality time" with each other, etc., the voices intoned "This is the way you are going to learn. This is the way you are going to work. This is the way you are going to play. This is The Way" (cut to image of glowing cable).

MediaOne's broadband, in short, is going to change society, change our lives, change everything, and *all for the better!* MediaOne is presented as a beneficent, even philanthropic, force. Looking at the images of the radiant broadband cable and listening to the music, one could almost think this is not a commercial firm but something more like a cult. One feels like jumping to one's feet and saying "I believe, I believe!!! Broadband will save me!!!" I even saw a MediaOne van near

my house one day and was so happy that I could hardly stand it. Broadband is coming! All will be well!!!

Then I saw the next two ads. Same vaguely religious music—plain chant meets Enya kind of thing—but this time MediaOne was about to show us the miraculous, life-enhancing, transformational things that Broadband was going to do for us all. And what were they? World Championship Federation Wrestling and the edifying Mike Tyson/Evander Holyfield fight!!!

The MediaOne campaign is techno-hype at its most refined and shows us, more clearly than ever before, the two fallacies deep at the heart of the Cult of Information and Technology. First, there is the concentration on the *medium*, which, despite the much misunderstood Marshall McLuhan, is not the message. Lauding the magic powers of broadband is much like showing images of a real library and saying "paper is going to change your life." It is what is on the paper and the skills one needs to use that content that are important. Anyone who doubts this need only spend an hour or so wading hip-deep in the disorganized rubbish and ephemera that makes up most of the World Wide Web. No one can have that experience without realizing that it is content, not the vehicle of communication, that matters and that the vehicles of communication should be judged on strictly utilitarian lines. What is broadband good at? What is the most cost-effective use of the Internet? Where is print-on-paper to be preferred? The only alternative to asking these questions is the kind of inanity that wants computers to do everything for everybody and is prepared to sell out real libraries in pursuit of "virtual libraries."

The second fallacy illuminated by MediaOne's glowing cable is that everything is information and information is everything. First of all, libraries have never been all about information or even primarily about information. Ordinary people have used a variety of sources to find out the facts and data that they need to know, sometimes in libraries and sometimes not, since long before the so-called "information revolution."

Second, the word *information*, as used by its cultists, is essentially meaningless. The only useful definition of "information" is one that distinguishes it from recorded knowledge. It consists of data, facts,

images, and short texts that are capable of being used out of context (the latter are typical of those found in ready reference materials). Information, seen in that light, is peculiarly amenable to being stored, transmitted, and made available by electronic means.

The flip side of the definition is, of course, that recorded knowledge—those texts and texts and images that are more expansive and cumulative and that must be *studied*—needs to be stored, transmitted, and made available by other means. In short, the library of the future will be similar in essence to the libraries of the past and present in that they will use all means of communication (print-on-paper, videos, sound recordings, electronic resources, etc.) to carry out their historic mission. To believe otherwise is to believe that, for the first time in human history, one form of communication—the electronic—is going to obliterate and supersede all others—a proposition which is, on the face of it, absurd.

Here, then, is my controversial plea. I ask for the following to inform our discussions: balance, rationality, truth in advertising, thrifty stewardship, and service.

PERHAPS "DOWNSIZING," "RIGHTSIZING,"
AND JOB ANXIETY HAVE MADE COWARDS
OF US ALL AND WE FEEL WE HAVE NO
CHOICE BUT TO SWIM WITH THE TIDE.

Balance is about ensuring that libraries apportion their resources equitably in such a way that their collections contain media of communication and preservation that are best suited to their use.

Rationality is about subjecting every plan, program, initiative, collection development policy, cataloguing policy, etc., to rational analysis; it is about being bound neither by nostalgia nor technophilia. It is about understanding, for example, that the World Wide Web is neither a good thing nor a bad thing—it just is, and should be used when and how it is most useful. Making a Web page is not the pinnacle of professional activity but it is not worthless either.

Truth in advertising is about presenting things to our users and constituents as they are and in telling it like it is, not as we wish or want it to be. The Governor of the great state of California is intent on putting the Internet in every classroom as if that would, at one stroke, solve the deep societal and educational problems that we face. The estimable Vice President of this great country called for every schoolchild to “have access to the Library of Congress”—via the Internet. You and I know, and I suspect these towering political figures know, that this is all froth and nonsense and the real problem is that Johnny and Janie can’t or won’t read, not whether they can’t read from a book, print-out or screen. Then the nonsense gets compounded by those (including some in our own profession) who talk of “computer literacy,” “visual literacy,” and “information literacy” as if they are equivalent to real literacy and as if putting some poor little illiterate in front of a screen is going to make her educated, literate, and happy. It ain’t so, and we do a real disservice to education and society when we pretend that it is. Let us see things as they are and present them to the world as they are.

Thrifty stewardship is about taking the taxpayer’s dollar or anyone else’s dollar and using it in the best way possible. The current Technological South Sea Bubble has led to many of us diverting money from valuable library services into whatever technological innovation has taken the fancy of the moment. I asked a public librarian friend of mine why there always seemed to be money for technology and none for books and other services. She replied “that’s where the money is.” So are we all Willie Suttons now, fixated on the short term and giving no heed to the future or present real needs? If you can only get funding for technology, does that mean that technology is all that matters? An odd concept of professionalism and stewardship if that is so. Perhaps “downsizing,” “rightsizing,” and job anxiety have made cowards of us all and we feel we have no choice but to swim with the tide.

Service is the oldest and most important value of librarianship. In this context, I think a dedication to service would lead us to trying to discover what our patrons want—not what we think they should have or ought to want. Always remember that

the “virtual library” is a profoundly elitist concept, dreamed up in the ivory towers of academe, and as far as can be from the desires of most people for real places, real libraries, human contact, and books to read. Why is it so hard for us to understand this when it is so easy for Mr. Barnes and Mr. Noble?

ALWAYS REMEMBER THAT THE “VIRTUAL LIBRARY” IS A PROFOUNDLY ELITIST CONCEPT, DREAMED UP IN THE IVORY TOWERS OF ACADEME, AND AS FAR AS CAN BE FROM THE DESIRES OF MOST PEOPLE FOR REAL PLACES, REAL LIBRARIES, HUMAN CONTACT, AND BOOKS TO READ.

Printing recorded knowledge and information on acid-free paper and making multiple copies has proven to be a wonderful way of carrying out the mission of preserving the cultural record. However, almost all of that print-on-paper is the result of an established filtering process (called the publishing industry). No such thing exists for the electronic world. We are still in what I call the Haight-Ashbury stage of electronic publishing—thousands of flowers are blooming (though it is hard to see them for the weeds); everyone is stoned (on technology, not exotic cheroots this time); all is peace and love and it is all going to go on forever and, hey man!, it is all free! Of course, it has never been all free and we have to get serious at some time and start to worry about how we are going to preserve the minority (probably a tiny minority) of enduringly useful electronic documents.

Let me propose two simple strategies. The first is to ask the question “Would I have added this to my library if it were in print?” If the answer is yes, print it on acid-free paper. This second may seem to lack glamour but, on the other hand, what is the alternative? Does anyone seriously think that the government (for who else

would have the means and the staying power?) is going to create a gigantic electronic archive and maintain it indefinitely in the face of dizzyingly frequent technological change? Again, remember that no group but librarians has the history of preserving the records of humankind and the means and the will to do it well. If not us, who? If not now, when?

Finally, what about something else in which we are uniquely expert—bibliographic control? Just contrast the experience of using a well-ordered library with the World Wide Web swamp. No matter how fancy the strategy or “search engine” (the little engine that couldn’t), the fact is that, in searching the Web, one is using nothing more nor less than contextless keyword searching. The searcher lacks completely the results of careful cataloguing, authority work, and cataloguing standards.

Cataloguing is expensive. Not having cataloguing is expensive. You can either spend the money up front to the benefit of many thousands of users or you can abandon those users to thrashing around in the Web and hoping that the 40,000 results that seem to be par for the course for every search contain something of relevance—a process that costs them money and time. Before we go much further with metadata and other fancy notions, perhaps we should think about taking those electronic documents that we determine are of value and applying regular old cataloguing standards and practices to them?

Librarianship is a profession with enduring values (service, intellectual freedom, etc.) and an enduring mission—to acquire, give access to, organize, disseminate, preserve, and provide assistance and instruction in the use of recorded knowledge and information in all forms. We can and should use our values and continue our mission in incorporating electronic documents and resources into our collections, services, and programs.

Michael Gorman (michael_gorman@csufresno.edu) is Dean of Library Services at California State University at Fresno. He spoke on “Future Libraries: Reality & Law Librarians” and at the Town Meeting on “Redefining the Law Librarian’s Profession” at AALL’s Annual Meeting in Indianapolis, in 1996.

Technology:

Theory Versus Reality

in a Private Law Library

by Beatrice Wise

The changes in technology in the typical law firm library are continuing at a fast and furious pace. Today, the challenge for firm librarians is to sort through these changes, weeding out the bad and implementing the good. This sounds easy, but, in fact, is one of the more challenging aspects of the job. Not only is our time a limited commodity, but, after instituting new technologies and corresponding procedures, we must convince our patrons of the benefits of these new technologies/procedures for their work product and then teach them how best to use the new applications to their advantage. The difficulty of this almost impossible feat is compounded by the fact that we all must deal with at least a few computer-phobic attorneys and staff.

Challenges of a Mac and PC Office

Howrey & Simon is not a typical law firm, however. When I began working here last January, I walked into one of the only Macintosh-based offices in the Washington, D.C., area. Up to then, my experience with Macs had been limited to the Library School computer lab, and even that was a long time ago. I needed to relearn in "Mac" all the software that I was already familiar with in PC format, including LEXIS, WESTLAW, and Dialog. In addition, the reference staff at Howrey & Simon delivers documents electronically to patrons; this added another level to my learning curve. It happened that, as soon as I became comfortable with the Mac

environment, the firm began rolling out PCs to some lawyers, so I had to learn the newer PC-based versions of the old software. The rest of the reference staff had been away from PCs long enough to need to go through this relearning process as well. The reference staff now uses both the Macs and PCs, switching from one to the other as we move from one reference desk in the library to another. To make matters more interesting, some of the reference desks have both a Mac and a PC, so all applications can be used, sometimes at the same time!

At present, approximately 35% of the office is on the PC, while the remainder still uses the Mac. This means that any program that we use must be both Mac and PC compatible (including Microsoft Word, the firm's word processing software). It also means that the reference librarians must be comfortable with both types of software for their personal uses in order to support the attorneys and staff who are working from their desktops.

Moving to a "Virtual Library"

The "powers that be" at Howrey & Simon have fully embraced the "virtual library" concept. While this is a boon for most technology-oriented librarians, it is problematic for the Howrey & Simon reference staff because of the two platforms. For example, we are testing a CD-ROM tower, but it cannot be used by the firm's Mac users at this time. To reduce space, we are looking into the electronic delivery of some of the more popular weekly and daily serial titles, thus reducing paper copies and providing needed shelf space for other storage. We also are investigating more titles on CD-ROM for the future, when the PC/Mac compatibility issue is resolved. The CD titles that we currently own are available in the library on a standalone computer, but not on the desktop/network level.

Delivering Documents by E-mail

After conquering the Mac world, the next challenge that I encountered was the use of e-mail for document delivery. This is the firm's preferred way of delivering any reference products to the attorneys and staff. Although about 90% of the electronically generated work product produced by the reference staff can be delivered in this way, there are, of course, some limitations. For example, PDF documents commonly found on the Internet can only be delivered by e-mail if the

patron has Adobe Acrobat on his or her computer; if not, the documents must be printed out by, and picked up from, the library. Sometimes materials must be printed out for inclusion in filings or other documents as well.

The search results from all commercial online services can be downloaded and converted to Word (or another word processing program) easily and quickly at the librarian's desktop, then e-mailed to the attorney or secretary for various uses. The uses of these documents are endless. For example, the attorney can read the document, then cut and paste the appropriate sections into a brief or memo, or e-mail a client an interesting section. When an attorney calls the library three weeks after a search was done because "I lost the information" and the client is waiting in the conference room, the search can be reconstructed easily (due to our saving of search strategies), and the librarian is viewed as a hero/heroine. This is probably the single best aspect of electronic document delivery for the librarian.

Saving space is always a concern, especially in the world of the "virtual library." The biggest paper files that our library maintains are of speeches from the Federal Trade Commission and the Antitrust Division of the Department of Justice, both dating back to the mid-1950s. There is no other single place that this information can be found; some of the older speeches are no longer available even from the agencies themselves. In the early 1990s, the library staff decided that manually searching through the speeches for specific items or topics was too time-consuming, and came up with the idea of a searchable database of information on the speeches. The database is searchable by author name, title (including what is listed on the title page of the speech), and date. Carrying it one step further, staff decided that *scanning* copies of the speeches into the system would be even better. This guaranteed saving space (except for the last 10 years worth, hard copies of the speeches had been put into offsite storage) while allowing easier access to the information. In addition, for the last two months, the speeches and press releases from the DOJ and the FTC have been electronically gathered from the Internet. The reference staff collects, copies, and codes each speech, then sends it to the litigation support center where it is scanned into the system, which is accessible on everyone's desktop. It is an invaluable resource for the Antitrust group, as well as for the library staff.

The newest topic of discussion in libraries seems to be Intranet pages, and like others, Howrey is moving toward that goal. Our library page is slated for release at the beginning of 1998, and we are working diligently to produce a quality product that meets, if not exceeds, our expectations. The discussion with the MIS department continues about content, maintenance, continuing updates, and improvements to the page. These issues are key in presenting and maintaining a product that will be both used by and useful to the firm. Since any Intranet page is always a work in progress, these issues will be revisited in the months to come.

Appellate Database, Register Notices

The appellate database is a recent development for the firm. It was designed to keep track of the cumulative experience of the attorneys in the Howrey & Simon Supreme Court and Appellate Practice Group. The database includes key information about any appellate cases, state or federal, that have in which the firm was involved, past and present. It is an index of the entire firm docket, searchable by all segments, including: case name, attorney or attorneys, briefs filed (including

notes about the types of documents), court, judges, outcome, if any, and official cites. The library maintains the bibliographical portion of the database, and the practice group continually uses the information to track and share the firm's collective appellate experience. For example, if an attorney is about to go before a new judge, he can search the judge's name in the database and find out who has appeared before that particular judge, thus giving the attorney a source of valuable information that can be very useful in the courtroom.

About a year ago, the reference staff began downloading the Table of Contents, CFR Sections Affected, and Reader Aids, as well as the full text of relevant sections, from the *Federal Register* and then e-mailing these items to interested attorneys. We still receive several hard copies of the *Register* for routing in the traditional manner to those who have chosen this option. The advantages of the electronic version are several: it is available much earlier than the hard copy; there is no waiting for your name to be at the top of the routing list, and attorneys have much more flexibility to manipulate the information received.

Technology is moving forward at a record pace in the library world today. As soon as we think that we have the situation somewhat under control, along comes something new to make us question the status quo. Push technology, new databases, and Internet II are just around the corner. The best we can do is keep up with the literature, investigate new technologies to see how they might best benefit the communities we serve, and continue to educate ourselves and our patrons. One way to accomplish this is by reading the professional literature and using the continuing educational opportunities that are presented to us through the Law Librarian's Society of the District of Columbia and AALL. We must also keep the lines of communication with our colleagues open in order to discuss new issues and ideas, to learn and expand the base of knowledge that we rely on in our profession, and to teach others.

Beatrice Wise (wisheb@howrey.com) is Head of Reference Services at Howrey & Simon in Washington, D.C. This article is reprinted with the kind permission of the Law Librarian's Society of the District of Columbia from its newsletter, *Law Library Lights*, November 1997.

Moody's

Capping Off a Year of AALL Travel

I am writing this message as I prepare for the last lengthy travel commitment of my presidential year. In doing this, I won't have a long Memorial Day weekend in Helena. It is especially beautiful here in the northern Rockies this time of year, which

makes it somewhat difficult to leave at this particular time. AALL Presidents, however, don't always, or even usually, get to select the dates for their appearances around the country!



This foray from home will take me to Philadelphia; Hamilton, Ontario; and Washington, D.C. The first location is the site of the annual meeting of the Medical Libraries Association, which is celebrating its 100th Anniversary this year. In addition to showing our support and friendship for a sister organization, I will be giving a few remarks at one of the events. It will be interesting for me to visit, as the MLA has about the same number of members as does AALL.

Next I will go to Hamilton, Ontario, to attend the annual meeting of the Canadian Association of Law Libraries. This will be a ceremonial visit, which I am very much looking forward to. I think I will be able to enjoy myself as any other registrant, and that I'll have the luxury of observing and learning. Our neighbors to the north have a small organization. In size it is similar to one of our larger chapters. Their officers serve two-year terms; the CALL President, therefore, is on the Board for six years. That's a very big commitment to volunteerism!

The first weekend of June, Jim Heller and I will be in Washington, D.C., to attend the Assembly of Court Associations, sponsored by the National Center for State Courts. Presidents and Vice Presidents from court-related organizations have been invited to congregate in order to explore and identify a "common ground" that could result in a closer working relationship among state

court associations. The stated goal is to strengthen the public's confidence in the court system. Both Jim and I welcomed this invitation. For several years, AALL's Strategic Plan has had a goal of building relationships with other organizations, and obviously judicial-related ones are high on our list.

AALL: Opportunities for Personal Development

I have loved being your President. The opportunity to represent colleagues and the profession of law librarianship in venues such as those described above has been personally motivating and self-satisfying. There are so many benefits to involvement with an organization as a volunteer. Public speaking is the first that comes to mind. I have spoken to dozens of organizations this year, in front of thousands of people. That sounds like a daunting task, but I have found it to be invigorating. I think that I have figured out how to organize my thoughts and point them in a direction that will seem relevant and possibly entertaining to a specific audience. The comfort level in public speaking is something that we build gradually, starting with speaking with committees and other small groups. AALL and our 30 Chapters collectively have hundreds of such opportunities each year.

Meeting management is another talent I have learned through my AALL involvement. It started out as Chapter leadership, then an AALL committee. An SIS followed, then I found myself on the Executive Board as Treasurer. Baptism my fire, some would say, as I have the distinct and dubious honor of having shepherded before the AALL membership two dues increases—both times unsuccessfully, I might add!

Travel details, time management, remote communication skills—none of these is quantifiable, but I know that I have a better handle on them than I did 15, or even five, years ago. These skills were all learned as

a volunteer member of AALL. I will be able to continue to apply them in many ways, both on the job and off.

I'll be happy to be able to return to Helena as more of a full-time resident in August. And I'm not the only one who feels this way. My dear husband has been spotted roaming from restaurant to restaurant at times, where he has been taken in and entertained by the sympathetic hosts who correctly assume that I'm on the road again. I think Bruce will be pleased that he'll have his best friend back home with him again. Maybe if we had a dog, instead of an aging and cranky cat, he wouldn't have been quite so lonely! We will become first-time grandparents a few weeks after the close of the Annual Meeting. Perfect timing, or what?!

My staff probably has mixed emotions about my return as the full-time director here. When in residence I like to start big projects and move the furniture! The staff members have been amazingly supportive, understanding, and interested in my presidency. Our library has benefited from all the ideas I get when visiting the law libraries I see on Chapter visits. I invariably come home with information about another, better way of doing something.

Needless to say, that is not an opportunity that comes easily in Montana!

For the coming year, I'll still be on the AALL Executive Board, as Immediate Past President. It's a gentle way of easing Presidents out of the way. Jim Heller will be a fine President. He not only tells jokes better than I do, but he also plays the guitar—sometimes at the same time! Remember that Board members remain law librarians. We share the same frustrations, challenges, and rewards as our members do. The Executive Board, as well as our professional staff in Chicago, all are committed to making AALL the organization that can support and challenge all who are in (or studying for) the profession of law librarianship that we have chosen.



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Chapter News

by Susan L. Trask

Chapter Election Results (with new and continuing officers)

ALLA (Atlanta)

President Joy Garmon
Vice President/
President-Elect Nancy Westrick
Treasurer Joe C. Morris
Secretary Gail Picard
1998/1999
Member-at-Large Kimberly Snoddy
1998/2000
Member-at-Large Jim Braden
Immediate Past President Pam Deemer

CALL (Chicago)

President Carolyn Hayes
Vice President/
President-Elect Nancy Henry
Treasurer Christina Wagner
Secretary Kay Collins
Director Brian Smith
Director John Klaus
Past President Rebecca Corliss

DALL (Dallas)

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Evaluating Electronic Resources

by Bobbie Studwell

Professional Perspectives—Tools and Techniques of the Trade. *The Professional Development Committee encourages members to continue to explore topics after presentations at the local, regional, and national levels. We welcome your comments and article suggestions. Please contact Mary A. Hotchkiss at 206/553-4475 or hotchma@u.washington.edu.*

In the last few years, many trade and popular computer magazine articles would lead us to believe that the end user is king. Whether you believe this or not, most information professionals realize that the emperor has no clothes if s/he is an uninformed user of digital resources. The sheer amount of electronic information available has become staggering. In addition, the variety of electronic formats available—CD-ROM, DVD, the Internet, and others—is daunting. What, therefore, is the information professional's role in training the end user/king in the intricacies of using electronic information, be s/he lawyer, judge, faculty, student, or someone else?

I don't need to go into detail about the explosion of information everywhere, and in particular on the World Wide Web, with a sophisticated user group. The group of law librarians reading this article knows about it. You face it every day. You guide your user population through it as best you can.

At a recent electronic publishers and law librarians symposium sponsored by AALL, it was recommended that easy-to-use training tools be developed to make our end users more information savvy. This piece deals with steps in a uniform evaluation process that end users should take each time they make the decision to use electronic information; especially information found on the Web. As we all know, end users will take the path of least resistance. The path is easier if the route is well planned from the beginning. The following steps should be ingrained in end users' information-seeking habits long before they reach us.

What's the Point?

Know the purpose of your research. A well planned research strategy saves time, effort, and money in the long run. What exactly are you looking for? Do you want

critical research, facts, opinions, statistics, company background information or something else? Each type of information sought begs for a reliable source of that information. Well known legal publishers continue to put out reliable products, and spend lots of money doing so. What about little known or casual publishers? If you're looking at a source put out by someone unfamiliar to you, then your research purpose becomes even more important as you evaluate the unknown publisher's product.

The Proof is in the Pudding

Only if you've taken the time to determine the purpose of your research can you test your results against your goal. If you're looking for cases to cite in a court brief, you need reliable material. You're more likely to skip the Internet and go directly to a CD-ROM or print product. You need authority, and the only way to get accurate citations is by using products over which some quality control is exercised: CD-ROM and print. As some of us have learned the hard way, even CD-ROM products must be evaluated in terms of the quality control publishers exercise over their content. If you decide to use an Internet site because of convenience or time savings, you will want to be sure the information on which you rely comes from a proven site. Cornell's Legal Information Institute is a site which puts quality control measures in place, but even its case coverage may be insufficient, given your research goal.

Start with What You Know

Over the past hundred years or so, librarians have brought a standard set of criteria to bear in assessing the usefulness of print resources. Many of us may not even realize we have a set of criteria in mind because they are so ingrained and religiously followed. The end user,

however, may need to register the following check points as s/he proceeds down his or her path. These same criteria are as applicable to electronic resources as they are to print resources.

Check the Content

The first step to take in assessing the value of a resource is skimming the contents of the work itself and the indexes. Electronic resources often don't offer an index because so many are full-text searchable, but many offer an outline of their contents. The first evaluation the researcher makes is whether the work is a collection of someone else's material or original text. It's important for the end user to know whose material s/he is relying on.

The end user should then pose a series of questions about the content of the electronic resource. The database, record or Web page should offer several key pieces of information without much end user effort involved in ferreting it out. These questions should be easily answered or should raise red flags about the reliability of the information presented. Who is the author? With what agency or organization is the author affiliated? What is the author's title or position? Did the author provide a place to contact him/her? When was the information created and/or when was it last updated?

Authority

If the electronic source has supplied the information pieces suggested in the contents check above, the next step is relatively easy. These questions will determine the competence of the author and publisher. Who is this author and what makes him/her qualified to write on this subject? If the work is anonymous, who is the publisher, and is it reputable? Is the piece copyrighted?

A Desktop Learning Opportunity

Accuracy

This step takes more end user judgment than the preceding steps. A way to test for quality control measures put in place by the author or publisher of the electronic resource is to check for tell-tale signs of accuracy. Is the resource free of grammatical and spelling errors? Is the data organized in tables, charts or some other way that makes it easy to read? Is the information timely, error-free, detailed, and comprehensive enough for the purpose stated? Is the information retrieved supported by cited sources? Is the source of facts or statistics identified? The end user should also be sure that the information isn't vague and doesn't make erroneous generalizations.

Certain types of legal information change rapidly; others don't. Is the area of interest one that needs regular updating? Has this piece passed that test?

Finally, the end user must learn to question one-sided viewpoints and use them for the information they present, while seeking opposing view points in

other information resources. Otherwise, s/he must be prepared to discard the one-sided information.

Objectivity

Sometimes this step is easy because the author or publisher's lack of objectivity is widely known. The following questions will reveal whether unknown or little known authors or publishers have prejudices. Is the information reasonably and fairly presented with a minimum of bias? Does it acknowledge the other side and is it internally consistent? Is it intended to sway the audience?

Advertising on a page related to the content of the information presented should signal a large red waving flag. However, check the content of the ad against the content of the article first. If that advertising is clearly offset from the content and the topic is unrelated, a different message is sent.

Currency/Coverage

When currency is important, other questions should be asked and answered.

Are Web pages still under construction?
Are electronic sources cited or acknowledged in the document, but not checked by the author or publisher for currency?
Are links back to information in previous editions supplied?

Conclusion

We need to convince our end users that just because information is now readily available in an electronic format, that doesn't make it better. We need to be vigilant in convincing our end users to become good evaluators of the information they locate. I advocate that the checklist provided should become a part of the research process as early as grade school. If the end user is King, should we ask those end users to be more like librarians? Has our role changed? You be the judge.

Bobbie Studwell (studwelr@mlc.lib.mi.us) is Associate Dean of Library & Information Services at the Thomas M. Cooley Law School in Lansing, Michigan.

Checklist

The following checklist is one way to assure that end users follow at least the minimal steps outlined in the accompanying article. Be an advocate and create a handout for students, attorneys, clerks, and others. Post the steps by each workstation, especially those with Web access. Recommend these steps and others to anyone who will listen.

Purpose

- ✓ Know exactly what information is relevant to your research question: facts, opinions, statistics, background, etc.
- ✓ Test the resources located against your purpose.

Content Check

- ✓ Skim the resource for information about the author and the organization publishing or presenting the information.

- ✓ Locate information about the date the original work was first published, and when it was last updated.

Authority

- ✓ Who wrote this document?
- ✓ Is the publisher reputable?
- ✓ Who can be contacted for more information?
- ✓ Is the author qualified to write this?
- ✓ Is the material copyrighted?

Accuracy

- ✓ Is the information timely?
- ✓ Is the information error free (typos, grammar, spelling)?
- ✓ Is the information sufficiently detailed and comprehensive for the stated purpose of the research?
- ✓ Is the information vague?

- ✓ Is the information one-sided?
- ✓ Is the information supported by citations to other sources?
- ✓ Is the information organized for easy reading (charts, graphs, etc.)?

Objectivity

- ✓ Is the information biased?
- ✓ Does it acknowledge the other side's arguments?
- ✓ Is it intended to sway the audience?
- ✓ Is advertising on the page clearly related to the content presented?

Currency/Coverage

- ✓ When was the material last updated?
- ✓ Is it a work in progress?
- ✓ Are cited sources up to date?
- ✓ Are previous editions acknowledged and possibly made available for comparison?

Anybody for Scrabble? Time for the Alphabet Reception!

The **Technical Services, Online Bibliographic Services, Research Instruction & Patron Services,** and **Computing Services** Special Interest Sections request the honor of your presence at the TS/OBS/RIPS/CS Joint Reception during the AALL Annual Meeting. The Joint Reception will take place on Saturday, July 11, 1998, 6:00–7:30 p.m. at the Anaheim Marriott (please check Final Program for room number). There will be an international array of tasty treats, provided through the generous support of Innovative Interfaces Inc., and a cash bar. Please come and meet old friends and make new ones. See you at the Joint Reception!

OBS-SIS Election Results and Convention News

The Online Bibliographic Services SIS has elected Brian D. Striman (Head of Technical Services and Professor of Law Library, University of Nebraska Law School) as its Vice Chair/Chair-Elect. Marla J. Schwartz (Chief, Acquisitions and Serials Dept., American University Law School) was elected to a two-year term as a Board Member-at-Large. Brian and Marla will assume their new offices at the Anaheim meeting.

The Online Bibliographic Services SIS is sponsoring three programs in Anaheim, but they are not from the same old menu. Attention will be focused on digital storage, library desktops, and evaluating Web sites. On Sunday morning, Claire Germain and Rubens Medina will review some serious questions relating to long-term digital storage in "Here Today, Gone Tomorrow? The Archivability of Electronic Records." The next morning, Randy Diamond, Thomas Fleming, and Sarah Wiant will envision "The Desktop of the Future" and address some of the issues that come with it. Immediately following, in "Cobweb Site or Web of Gold? How to Evaluate Sites on the Internet," Jeanne Rebbert, Michele Finerty, Mirela Roznovschi, and Kenneth Rudolf will examine criteria for electronic information acquisitions, and strategies for policy development and implementation. OBS members should also note that the Section's business meeting will be held in a new time slot, on WEDNESDAY, July 15, at 1:30. Check the program for other meeting times.

Private Law Libraries

The PLL SIS continues to add value to its home page. Among the new features are descriptions of the PLL SIS committees and groups and a comparison (by Jennifer Stephens) of CFR products from the West Group and Soft Solutions.

Check PLL's Standards and Guidelines Committee page for a compilation of standards relating to job descriptions for private law librarians. These Standards were originally published in the "AALL Tool Kit: Law Librarians Making Information Work." The AALL Task Force on the Value of Law Libraries in the Information Age has turned over further upkeep of these standards to PLL. Alice McKenzie and June MacLeod are the current co-chairs of this committee and will be responsible for recommending revisions to the standards.

All of the SISs are putting the finishing touches on plans for the Annual Meeting in Anaheim. If you are new to AALL or in a new position with the world of law libraries or if you're just curious, make it a point to take advantage of the opportunities at the annual meeting to look over SIS activities. Mix and mingle, ask questions, make suggestions, volunteer—just get involved!

And don't forget the SPECIAL Special Interest Sections—they'll be back, like a McRib sandwich, for a "limited time only" during the Annual Meeting. Whether it's the baseball, dancing, quilting, or murder mysteries SIS, it's always fun to kick back with old and new friends and enjoy our avocations as well as our vocation. And if your special interest hasn't been exploited in years past, then take the initiative and organize it yourself!

Melinda D. Davis, University of Tennessee Law Library, 1505 W. Cumberland Avenue, Knoxville, TN 37996-1800 423/974-6552 • fax: 423/974-6571
• davis@libra.law.utk.edu

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Lawbook Exchange

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August 16–21: International Federation of Library Associations & Institutions (IFLA), Amsterdam, Netherlands.

September 7–10: AALL, BIALL, CALL Joint Study Institute, Faculty of Law, University of Cambridge, Cambridge, England. The first in a series of biennial study institutes, the 1998 JSI will focus upon the legal systems, law, and practice of law librarianship in the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland. The Institute will be conducted in English. Registration deadline is July 31st. For more information contact: David R. Hart, Librarian, The Law Library, University of Dundee, Dundee DD1 4 HN, United Kingdom. Telephone: +44 (0) 1382 344100; Fax: +44 (0) 1382 228669; e-mail: d.r.hart@dundee.ac.uk.

September 11–14: British and Irish Association of Law Libraries, Portsmouth, England. For more information contact: Loyita Worley, BIALL Chair. Telephone: +44 (0) 171 772 5747; Fax: +44 (0) 171 247 5091; e-mail: lmw@richardsbutler.com.

September 21–24: International Association of Law Libraries, Rome, Italy.

Oct. 8–10, 1998: Midwest Regional Law Library Conference, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Sponsored by LLAW, CALL, MAALL, MALL, and MichALL Chapters of AALL. Program co-chairs: Julia Wentz, Marquette University Law Library, 414/288-1696, and Amy Bingenheimer, Quarles & Brady, 414/277-5849. Web site URL: <http://www.marquette.edu/law/libfest/index.html>.

October 26–29: American Society for Information Science (ASIS), Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

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January 6–10: Association of American Law Schools Annual Meeting, New Orleans, Louisiana.

January 22–28: American Library Association Midwinter Meeting, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

April 8–11: Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL) 9th National Conference, Detroit, Michigan.

April 11–17: National Library Week.

April 13: ALA Legislative Day, Washington, D.C.

April 14–18: SEAALL Annual Meeting, Knoxville, Tennessee.

April 15th: AALL Satellite Teleconference. Topic to be announced.

June 24–July 1: American Library Association Annual Conference, New Orleans, Louisiana.

July 17–22: American Association of Law Libraries Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C.

July 19–22: Black Caucus of ALA Conference, Las Vegas, Nevada.

Continued on page 19

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New Law Librarians

Steven P. Anderson is now the Law Librarian at Gordon Feinblatt Rothman Hoffberger and Hollander in Baltimore, Maryland. He has a JD from the University of Maryland and will receive his MA in Library Science from the University of Arizona, Distance Education Program this year. He had previously worked as the Associate Law Librarian at the Baltimore County Circuit Court Law Library in Towson, Maryland.

Eric W. Kistler is the new Information Technology Librarian at Ohio Northern University Taggart Law Library in Ada, Ohio. Eric recently received his MLIS from the University of Texas. Previously, he was employed as a paralegal in the D.C. area.

Changing Places

A. Michael Beard has been appointed Director of the Law Library and Associate Professor of Law at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, effective July 1, 1998. He was formerly the Deputy Director at St. John's University Law Library, Jamaica, New York.

Ellen Callinan, formerly Manager of Research Services at Crowell and Moring in Washington, D.C., has become the Webmaster/Research Trainer for the firm. This part-time position will allow Ellen to spend time with her new daughter, Maggie, who was born in February.

Stephen L. Nelson, Computer Services Librarian at the Marquette University Law Library, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, has been named Technology Services Manager for the Law School. He will also continue to serve as Computer Services Librarian.

Mary Grace Oakes, formerly a Reference Librarian at Superior Court Law Library, Maricopa County, Mesa, Arizona, is now the Librarian at Bryan Cave in Phoenix, Arizona.

Elizabeth Peterson, formerly Manager of Library Services at Popham Haik Schnobrich and Kaufman, in Minneapolis, Minnesota, is now the Idaho State Law Librarian in Boise.

Ann Shetzer, the Librarian for the U.S. Courts Fourth Circuit satellite library in Charleston, West Virginia, is suffering such a debilitating mid-life crisis that she has lost all reason and is leaving her post to enter law school at Tulane in the fall.

Randy Snyder is the new Law Librarian in the Law Library of the Executive Office of the President, Washington, D.C. He had been the Law Librarian in the Office of the Legal Adviser at the U.S. Department of State, also in Washington.

Professional Activities

James E. Duggan (Director of Information Technology and Professor, Southern Illinois University School of Law Library, Carbondale) served as a panelist on a program titled "Copyright: Point/Counterpoint," held at the first Delyte W. Morris Library Symposium on Information Issues, Carbondale, Illinois, in April. Also on the panel were Jean Hurley Simon (Chair, National Commission on Libraries and Information Science) and Mary E. Jackson (Access and Delivery Services Consultant, Association of Research Libraries).

Genie Tyburski (Research Librarian, Ballard Spahr Andrews and Ingersoll, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania) has been awarded the Chapter Special Achievement Award for Distinguished Service by the Philadelphia Chapter of the Special Libraries Association.

Janet Sinder, Head of Information Services, Duke University School of Law Library, Box 90361, Durham, N.C. 27708-0361 • 919/13-7120 • fax: 919/613-7237 • sinder@law.duke.edu



American Association of Law Libraries

Mission: Recognizing that the availability of legal information to all people is a necessary requirement for a just and democratic society, the American Association of Law Libraries exists to promote and enhance the value of law libraries to the public, the legal community, and the world, to foster the profession of law librarianship, and to provide leadership in the field of legal information and information policy.

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Fax-on-Demand: 908/544-5901

AALLNET Website: <http://www.aallnet.org>

Annual Meeting:

1998 July 11-16 Anaheim Convention Center, Anaheim, California

1999 July 17-22 Washington Convention Center, Washington, D.C.

2000 July 15-20 Pennsylvania Convention Center, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

August 19–28: International Federation of Library Associations Annual Conference, Bangkok, Thailand.

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January 5–9: Association of American Law Schools Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C.

January 14–20: American Library Association Midwinter Meeting, San Antonio, Texas.

April 9–15: National Library Week.

April 11: ALA Legislative Day, Washington, D.C.

July 6–13: American Library Association Annual Conference, Chicago, Illinois.

July 15–20: American Association of Law Libraries Annual Meeting, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

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February 9–15: American Library Association Midwinter Meeting, Washington, D.C.

April 1–7: National Library Week.

April 3: ALA Legislative Day, Washington, D.C.

June 14–21: American Library Association Annual Conference, Atlanta, Georgia.

July 14–19: American Association of Law Libraries Annual Meeting, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

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January 18–24: American Library Association Midwinter Meeting, New Orleans, Louisiana.

April 14–20: National Library Week.

April 16: ALA Legislative Day, Washington, D.C.

June 27–July 4: American Library Association Annual Conference, San Francisco, California.

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January 10–16: American Library Association Midwinter Meeting, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

April 6–12: National Library Week.

April 8: ALA Legislative Day, Washington, D.C.

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January 23–29: American Library Association Midwinter Meeting, San Antonio, Texas.

April 18–24: National Library Week.

Salary Survey ad

Placement Listings

The listings here are edited for space and are provided to keep readers informed of what sorts of jobs have been recently available. Many jobs listed here will have been filled by the time the issue is printed. Full listings of all current placement ads are available through several means: by phone, from the 24-hour Career Hotline, 312/939-7877; by FAX, from the AALL Fax-on-Demand service (call 908/544-5901 and request document 730); on the World Wide Web, at AALLNET (<http://www.aallnet.org>). To place an ad, call Caryn Jones at 312/939-4764.

Head of the Library, Swiss Institute of Comparative Law, Lausanne, Switzerland. Seeking a jurist with university qualifications, (preferentially) academic career, and a solid knowledge of contemporary national and supranational legal systems as well as of international law. Should be receptive to new developments in the field of bibliothecology and communications. Experience in several countries and a (at least passive) command of some important languages in addition to English and the national languages of Switzerland (German, French, Italian) would be most welcome. Will have the support of a legally qualified adviser, a person responsible for administrative matters, and a part-time secretary, along with ten staff librarians (about one third of the Institute's total human resources) working in four specialized service areas (acquisitions, periodicals, cataloguing, and European documentation). **#13439**

Reference/Technical Services Librarian, Bell Boyd & Lloyd, Chicago, Illinois. Staffs the reference desk as needed as well as overseeing acquisitions, serial management, and cataloguing. Requires MLS with three years' experience in law libraries. Knowledge of OCLC, LEXIS, WESTLAW, DIALOG, Dun & Bradstreet, and the Horizon Library system software is desirable. **#13438**

Reference Librarian for Research Technology, Harvard Law School, Cambridge, Massachusetts. New position. Responsibilities include establishing and implementing training initiatives for faculty in technology resources and databases. Requires MLS, JD or substantial expertise with legal materials, minimum of 3-5 years' relevant experience including successful operation of faculty services programs. Knowledge of business and economic resources desirable. **#13437**

Circulation/Reference Librarian, Drake University Law Library, Des Moines, Iowa. New position. Requires MLS; JD preferred. Reference and computer skills essential. Strong service orientation and proficiency in traditional and computer-assisted research. Evening and some Saturday reference. Faculty rank, tenure track. **#13436**

Law Firm Librarian/Researcher, Mid-Atlantic Region. Immediate opening for experienced Law Librarian for ten-office, 140+ lawyer firm. Overall responsibility for all firm library resources including 25,000+ volume collection. Annual budget exceeds \$225,000. Requires MLS and five years' law library experience. JD a plus. **#13435**

Associate Director of the Law Library, Marquette University Law Library, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Manages the day-to-day operations of the law library; supervises both public and technical services; takes a leadership role in developing new library programs and services. Requires JD and MLS; at least 5 years' professional law library experience; at least 2 years' law library administrative experience, preferably in an academic law library. Salary is competitive and commensurate with experience and qualifications. **#13434**

Assistant Reference Librarian, Brobeck Phleger & Harrison LLP, San Francisco, California. Performs in-depth research and has significant contact with all attorneys and administrators. Minimum of 3 years' experience in library or reference position, and at least 3 years' online database/Internet searching experience. Masters Degree in Library or Information Science, or equivalent experience, preferred. Competitive salary and excellent benefits package. Web site at www.brobeck.com. **#13433**

Reference Librarian International/Foreign, The George Washington University Jacob Burns Law Library, Washington, D.C. Provides reference and research assistance, participates in collection development for international and foreign materials. Some scheduled evening and weekend reference hours. MLS and JD required; reading knowledge of one or more foreign languages. **#13432**

Reference Librarian, Ross & Hardies, Chicago, Illinois. Responsible for interlibrary loan and providing reference to 150+ attorneys. Law library experience and knowledge of LEXIS and WESTLAW helpful. Recent library school graduates encouraged to apply. Candidate must have MLS. **#13430**

Electronic Services Librarian, Georgia State University College of Law Library, Atlanta, Georgia. Coordinates computerized legal research services and training for the law school community, supervises library computer lab, oversees library Web site development, provides general reference service one evening per week or as needed. Requires MLS and experience working with electronic legal resources; JD preferred. Salary commensurate with experience. **#13429**

Public Services Librarian, Georgia State University College of Law Library, Atlanta, Georgia. Provides reference service, supervises circulation and stacks maintenance, teaches first-year Legal Bibliography. Requires MLS and JD, supervisory experience, and evidence of ability to meet standards that lead to promotion. Salary commensurate with experience. **#13428**

Electronic Information and Reference Librarian, University of Florida College of Law, Gainesville, Florida. Coordinates electronic information resources in the Legal Information Center and throughout the College of Law. The College of Law has 1180 full time students and 58 full time faculty members; the library has over 550,000 volumes. Must possess both MLS and JD with three years of academic law library experience. This position is a twelve-month, tenure-track line. Salary commensurate with qualifications; generous benefits available. **#13427**

Reference Librarian, Loyola Law School, Los Angeles, California. Provides reference services; may participate as instructor for first-year legal writing/research program through adjunct appointment to the faculty. MLS and JD required. Salary competitive. Excellent benefits. **#13424B**

Assistant/Associate Librarian, Technical Services, University of Michigan Law Library, Ann Arbor, Michigan. Catalog all types of library material for RLIN and ILL system; supervise 3 support staff. Requires MLS and two foreign languages, including a western European language. Salary \$31,000 and up, depending on qualifications. **#13390**

Assistant/Associate Reference Librarian, University of Michigan Law Library, Ann Arbor, Michigan. MLS required, plus organizational and teamwork skills. JD preferred, plus law library and computer experience. Salary \$30,000 and up depending on qualifications; generous benefits worth 22% of salary. **#13184**

Assistant/Associate Reference Librarian, University of Michigan Law Library, Ann Arbor, Michigan. Provides full range of reference service for all parts of the collection to law school community. Responsible for collection development in assigned area of international law and documents. JD and MLS required. Salary: \$34,000 and up depending on qualifications; generous benefits worth 22% of salary. **#13133**

Classified Advertising

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Educational Requirements for Law Library Directors

by Laurie Langland

Is an MLS Necessary for JDs Seeking Library Jobs?

When I started taking library science classes through the University of Arizona, I was not convinced that I needed a Master's degree in Library and Information Science in addition to my law degree to get a professional job at a law library. After all, I was working at the Idaho State Law Library at the time, and no one there had both degrees. The director (who has since retired) had a law degree, as did the succession of people who have held the position of computer-assisted legal research librarian. Two people who held the reference librarian position before it was eliminated had Master's degrees in library science, as does the cataloger/deputy law librarian. Nevertheless, I was not getting anywhere with just my law degree, so I continued with the program.

As part of my degree program, I wanted to do an independent study. With the approval of my major professor, I chose to research the educational requirements for law library directors. It had to be a scholarly work, but I wanted it to be practical as well and reflect the reality of the job market.

First, I read *Reflections on Law Librarianship: A Collection of Interviews*, by Marjorie A. Garson, et al. (AALL Publications Series No. 29, Littleton, CO: Fred B. Rothman & Co., 1988), which contained interviews with prominent and respected law librarians, including Marian G. Gallagher, Robert C. Berring, and Morris L.

Cohen. Those who discussed the merits of the JD versus the MLS generally agreed that the library degree was more essential than the JD but that both were required of academic law librarians so they could have faculty status.

Additional research revealed that the percentage of law librarians with only a JD has decreased while the percentage of those with both a JD and an MLS has increased over the years (Kathleen Carrick, "Silk v. Corduroy: The Status of Men and Women in Law Librarianship," *Law Library Journal* 78 [1986], 428). Nevertheless, I wanted to know specifically which degrees were being required by employers of directors for different types of law libraries.

AALL Job Listings Provide Core Data

For an overview of the job market for law library directors, I examined the job listings in the 72 issues of *American Association of Law Libraries Newsletter* (May 1989 through July 1996) that were available to me. (When the newsletter became *AALL Spectrum* in September 1996, policies on job postings changed, so I did not include those listings in my study.)

First, I tallied the number of jobs in each issue, then the number of director jobs. I categorized each director job listing as *academic*, *corporate*, *court*, *government*, *law firm*, or *other* and noted the educational requirements for each director position: *JD required*, *MLS required*, *both JD and MLS required*, or whatever accurately described the educational requirements.

I disregarded salaries because the American Association of Law Libraries' policy on job listings for the time studied included a minimum salary requirement for jobs to be posted in the *Newsletter*. I also disregarded geographic location and the size of the library and the population served.

I watched for duplicate listings of a given job but did not eliminate them for the following reasons:

- duplicate listings of non-director jobs would have had to be eliminated, which would have been very time-consuming;
- if a job was posted in consecutive issues, it tended to be repeated only once or twice;
- occasional older issues of the *Newsletter* were missing, thus reducing the possibility of duplicate postings;
- a job may have been re-opened, necessitating a subsequent job listing.

Requirements Vary with Library Type, Position

In the 72 issues of the *Newsletter* examined, there were 1208 jobs listed. Of that total, 261 (21.6%) were for law library directors. The rest were for public services librarians, technical services librarians, computer systems managers, consultants, and associate or assistant directors.

The results of this analysis are summarized in the table on the next page.

The JD/MLS combination was the overwhelming requirement for academic law library directors. Three listings required "relevant academic credentials" but did not specify what those would be.

The MLS was the main degree requirement for directors of corporate law libraries. Only one job listing even mentioned the JD.

The requirements for directors of court and government law libraries were not so heavily weighted in favor of either degree. The variation among the types of government law libraries was interesting—listings were for city, county, state, and federal law libraries and included a municipal law office, a county law library, several state law libraries, a federal agency, a territorial law library, a public defender's office, a county jail law library, and a law library for the Navajo Nation.

Law firm listings emphasized the MLS degree. Two listings did not specify educational requirements.



Educational Degree(s) Required/Preferred

Type of Law Library	JD and MLS	JD or MLS	JD only	MLS only	Not Specified	Total
Academic	86	0	1	0	3	90
Corporate	1	0	0	10	0	11
Court	7	5	0	6	0	18
Government	12	2	1	15	0	30
Law Firm	9	1	0	92	2	104
Other	1	0	0	7	0	8
Total	116	8	2	130	5	261

Unfortunately, eight listings for directors had to be placed in the *Other* category because they did not fit into any of the five specified categories. Four listings were for bar associations; two were for the American Association of Law Libraries (one was a repeat posting in a consecutive issue); and one was for the New England Law Library Consortium. One listing was so vague that the type of law library could not be discerned. The MLS degree was the primary educational requirement for these *Other* listings.

This analysis did not indicate the educational backgrounds of the successful applicants, who may have possessed degrees and qualifications beyond those stated in the job listings or who may have lacked the degrees required but were chosen as the most qualified among the applicants.

Based on the results of this study, an applicant with only a JD would meet the educational requirements of 10 (3.8%) listings, and an applicant with only an MLS would meet the educational requirements of 138 (52.9%) listings. However, an applicant with both a JD and an MLS would meet or exceed the educational requirements of at least 256 (98.1%) of the 261 jobs listed. (Five listings did not specify any educational degrees.) Clearly it is ideal—at least from a job applicant’s perspective—to have both degrees, particularly so for directors of academic law libraries. This is also true for directors of court and government law libraries to a lesser degree.

However, if one is to possess just one of the degrees, the MLS is preferred overwhelmingly to the JD. This is particularly true for corporate and law firm libraries.

Law Firms Choose MLS

It is interesting that law firms and corporations are more likely to require just an MLS rather than both an MLS and a JD. From the employer’s perspective, the JD degree should represent additional skills and knowledge advantageous to the law firm or corporation and its library users. Perhaps there is a concern that such skills and knowledge will cost more than the employers are willing to spend and that the library users are capable of fending for themselves. Nevertheless, from the librarian’s perspective, possession of a law degree, in addition to the MLS, would put him or her on equal footing with the law firm’s attorneys and the corporation’s attorneys and professional staff.

In *Reflections on Law Librarianship* (cited above), Morris L. Cohen, a respected academic law librarian, noted the strengths and weaknesses of academic law librarians versus private sector law librarians:

Law librarians in the private sector are very skilled in the use of new technology. But they are less skilled, perhaps, in the scholarly and humanistic side of law, which has been the strength of the academic law librarian. To the extent that law firm and private sector librarians lack that training in the subject matter of their work, they become just technicians of information, and that would be a loss.

The new generation of leaders in academic law librarianship are also more skilled in the managerial and technological aspects of librarianship than their predecessors, and that strengthens the profession. The academics, however, can still learn from their private sector colleagues about efficiency, dealing with time pressure, and how the new technology can help us supply information more efficiently, more effectively. On the other hand, the private section can get from us a concern with the research process; that is, how is this material being used? What do the lawyers do with it? What is law all about? What changes are going on within the legal system? I think that knowledge is more likely to come from the academic sector. (p. 49–50)

Court and governmental law libraries vary greatly in many respects—the level of government (city, county, state, or federal), the size of the library, the size of the jurisdiction, the governmental entity’s budget, and whether they are open to the public. A comparison of the Los Angeles County Law Library with the Ada County Courthouse collection of legal materials in Boise, Idaho, illustrates the contrast. Laura N. Gasaway and Michael G. Chiorazzi describe the Los Angeles County Law Library in *Law Librarianship: Historical Perspectives* (AALL Publications Series No. 52, Littleton, CO: Fred B. Rothman & Co., 1996):

Continued on page 27

AALL Resource Guides

Help Law Librarians Attract Legal Administrators' Attention

The first three of eight AALL Resource Guides for law firm managers were among the AALL materials attracting attention at the April convention of the Association of Legal Administrators (ALA) in Boston.

Resource Guide #2: Expanding Roles for Law Librarians, and Resource Guide #3: Space Planning for Law Libraries, were completed in April, just in time to be displayed at the ALA trade show exhibit sponsored by AALL's Private Law Libraries Special Interest Section (PLL-SIS). The Resource Guide series is made possible by a contribution from LEXIS-NEXIS.

The PLL-SIS exhibit booth was staffed by local law librarian volunteers, from private law firms in Boston, and coordinated by Jane Huston of Hale and Dorr. Two law librarians also gave well-attended presentations at the meeting: Holley Marker Thompson (formerly Moyer), from LEXIS-NEXIS, spoke on "The Electronic Library: Strategies for Law Firm Information Management," and Joan Axelroth, Axelroth and Associates, spoke on "Designing the Electronic Library: Where Virtual and Physical Reality Meet." Each librarian presenter had more than 100 legal administrators in the audience, and reported enthusiastic response from the attendees.

Individuals staffing the AALL booth saw heavy traffic after each law library session, and noted particular interest from administrators of smaller firms without law librarians. "People were very interested in the Resource Guides, especially after they heard our presentations and realized the value of having someone with professional knowledge on staff," Holley Thompson says. LEXIS-NEXIS also is promoting the Resource Guide series at other trade shows and through its librarian newsletter.

Valuable Information to Share

The series of eight Resource Guides is designed to educate decision-makers on critical information issues affecting law libraries. Written from a management perspective, they are an excellent tool for law librarians to share with law firm administrators and managers to help them understand the law librarian's work, says Resource Guide editor Michael Saint-Onge, librarian for Coudert Brothers' Northern California offices.

"One of a private law librarian's biggest challenges is keeping management apprised of changes in legal information, including technological advances, and how they impact the law firm," he says. "The Resource Guides provide an attractive, concise, and fact-filled executive summary of the information that managers need to know, and helping them understand the information benefits them and the firm's librarian."

Content for each Resource Guide is provided by AALL members who are experts on the topics, which range from basics such as "How to Hire a Law Librarian" to specifics on important areas such as "The Internet and Legal Research" and "Rebalancing the Law Library."

Resource Guide #1: How to Hire a Law Librarian helps law firm managers make decisions about a law librarian's role in the quality and profitability of a modern legal services organization. It explains the contribution a professional law librarian can make to a firm, provides a detailed needs assessment and real-world examples for firms considering the position, and discusses qualifications, compensation, and recruitment.

Resource Guide #2: Expanding Roles for Law Librarians covers the many capabilities law librarians can contribute to firms, including non-legal research, records management, conflicts checking, continuing legal education, knowledge management, marketing, and Management Information Systems (MIS).

Resource Guide #3: Space Planning for Law Libraries focuses on space planning for law firm managers, including design considerations such as functionality and integration of technology into library work space.

Resource Guide #4: The Internet and Legal Research is now in progress and expected to be completed by August 1998.

Subscriptions now available

Subscriptions are now available for the Resource Guide series, priced at \$60 for AALL members and \$80 for non-members. Individual copies may be purchased for \$11.25 for AALL members and \$12.50 for non-members. To order or inquire about the series, please contact the AALL Headquarters at orders@aall.org or call Steve Serpas at 312/939-4764.

The Los Angeles County Law Library is the largest law library west of the Mississippi River, the largest public law library in the world, and among the seven largest law libraries in the United States....[T]he library and its branches serve the judiciary, state and county officials, members of the state bar, and all county residents....Nine professional staff members have Master's degrees in library science, while five have both a law degree and an MLS. (p. 163-164, 178, footnotes omitted)

In comparison, the collection of legal materials in the Ada County Courthouse in Boise, Idaho, is used primarily by judges and their law clerks. The remote location of the collection prevents most public access. Furthermore, no one is employed to take care of the collection; shelving and looseleaf filing is done by the users—i.e., the law clerks, who have law degrees but not library degrees.

"The greatest challenge facing a law library that serves the judiciary, the bar, and the public is to satisfy three diverse constituencies with wide-ranging information needs." (Patrick E. Kehoe, et al., *Law Librarianship: A Handbook for the Electronic Age*, AALL Publications Series No. 47, Littleton, CO: Fred B. Rothman & Co., 1995, 553.) A related issue of particular concern for law librarians who work directly with the public is the dilemma of where to draw the line between appropriate guidance and unauthorized practice of law. (Ibid., p. 558) Perhaps these concerns are why 66.7% of the job listings for court law library directors and 50% of the listings for governmental law library directors mentioned the JD, although it may not have been required. Certainly a JD would be useful, in addition to the MLS, in distinguishing between what constitutes guidance versus the practice of law.

Canada Law

Conclusion

Based on the results of this study and the relevant literature, it appears that a law library director should have an MLS to be considered qualified to run any type of law library. Possession of a JD, in addition to the MLS, is essential for directors of academic law libraries and many court and government law libraries. Law firms and corporations are less likely to require a JD in addition to an MLS; nevertheless, a JD provides a library school graduate with skills and knowledge which will make him or her an asset to any type of law library.

Laurie Langland (llanglnd@isl.state.id.us) is Librarian at the Idaho State Library in Boise.

Advertiser Index

AALL Salary Survey	19
BNA	21
Canada Law Book	27
CCH	inside back cover
Hofstra University	12
Lawbook Exchange	12
LEXIS-NEXIS	back cover
Moody's Investors Service	7
Oceana	17
West Group	3, 22, inside front cover

Pro Bono Legal Advice for Pro Se Clients

by Stephen R. Jordan

A woman enters the State Law Library of Montana. Her body language is uneasy. She has a bewildered look as she stands before rows and rows of books. I approach her and ask if I can help.

With a mixture of hope and frustration in her eyes and voice, she tells me her story. "I need a divorce. I want to keep my daughter and have my husband pay child support. I want to know what the law is. I can't afford an attorney, and I haven't a clue how to go about any of this." "Well," I say, "let me show you some sources that might be useful." After showing her the Montana Code Annotated, the rudiments of how statutory law and case law operate, pointing out Black's Law Dictionary, and handing her a large notebook full of family law forms tailored for Montana law, I walk away, muttering to myself, "She's probably more confused now than when she came in."

The significant rise in self-representation ... the urgings and exhortations from the American Bar Association and state bar associations for increased pro bono service—rare is the law library that is not affected to some degree by these symbiotic issues. We certainly are. As a result, we have developed a program to address them: the Law Library Legal Advice Clinic.

Around a year ago, Judy Meadows, our director, was in a conversation with an assistant attorney general who was co-chair of the Access to Justice Committee of the State Bar of Montana. In the course of the conversation, Judy explained the restrictions placed on her staff in providing reference assistance, and the assistant AG spoke about how he was looking for a new project for his committee. The thought arose of seeking the participation of state attorneys in pro bono service for the self-represented individuals who use our library. A task force was then created to explore the idea. In addition to Judy, the assistant AG, and myself, other members included representatives from the governor's office, the state bar, the local district court clerk's office, and the Montana Legal Services Association.

Over the next several months, many questions arose. Which legal subjects will the clinic cover? Are there any administrative concerns involved in state attorneys assisting self-represented individuals in state buildings? How will the attorneys receive clinical training? What about logistics? How is interest among the attorneys built? What are the eligibility requirements for someone to receive assistance from the clinic? Will the attorney appear in court with the lay person? What about malpractice insurance?

Without question, the predominant topic that lay people seek information on is family law. Although we get a healthy number of questions on topics such as bankruptcy, consumer law, employment law, and landlord/tenant law, it was decided for the clinic to initially concentrate solely on family law with the hope that other areas can be addressed in the future.

State policy prohibits state attorneys from performing pro bono service in their offices; however, the law library is not affected by this prohibition. Given this, and coupled with its convenient location in the capitol complex, the library is a natural site for the clinic. Another state policy mandates that state attorneys cannot provide pro bono service on state time. They must use either vacation time, compensatory time, their lunch hour, or come in on Saturdays.

State attorneys were invited to a noon-hour information session with a question and answer period following. The importance of the clinic was symbolized by the presence of two justices of the supreme court, the attorney general, and a district court judge.

Since state attorneys do not practice family law, clinical training is essential. The training, which is conducted by Montana Legal Services, provides both substantive family law and forms. In addition, it stresses that the clinic is an advice-only clinic—i.e., the attorneys will not appear in court. In this regard, a limited retainer agreement is signed by the attorney and the self-represented individual.

Federal poverty guidelines serve as the basis for determining whether one is eligible for assistance. And the concern over malpractice coverage is met by the umbrella policy of Montana Legal Services.

The process works as follows. I conduct the intake interview. I begin by explaining the nature of the clinic, its parameters, and that financial means determine eligibility for one to receive advice. Then, I ask questions about the person's finances. If the guidelines are clearly exceeded, I wrap up the interview and provide normal reference assistance. If the person is clearly eligible, or if I am uncertain about this (determination is made by Montana Legal Services), I continue with the interview by asking questions concerning what the person is seeking, the current domestic situation, children, debt, life insurance, personal property, real property, whether any court papers have been served, whether the opposing party has retained an attorney, and the like. This information is placed in a file for the attorney.

I close the interview by informing the person that once eligibility is determined, I will notify her or him of the decision. If eligibility is met, I schedule an appointment for our conference room where the attorney and the self-represented individual will be assured of privacy. When children are present, we have children's books and toys to occupy them.

The self-represented individual can learn of the clinic in a number of ways: the district court clerk's office, Montana Legal Services, word of mouth, the public library, and by simply entering the law library. Also, an article in the local newspaper on pro bono service has publicized the clinic.

The clinic has been a rewarding experience for me. To be the point of contact for interviewing and for scheduling appointments, to see the benefits for both the attorney and the self-represented individual, and to receive their feedback, is all very satisfying. And on a broader plane, to be part of a process involving our library and representatives from the legal community working together to achieve a common goal is enhancing for us all.

Stephen R. Jordan (sjordan@mt.gov) is Reference Librarian at the State Law Library of Montana in Helena.

The Path to Citation Reform

By the spring of 1994, it was apparent to some librarians, attorneys, and judges that legal citation was "broke" and needed "fixing." As more and more case law was published in electronic form, and the electronic forms began to proliferate, legal writers began to desire a simpler way to cite cases: one citation, good from the beginning, and good across both paper and electronic forms. Since the 1980s, West Publishing Company, the sole print publisher of the opinions of many jurisdictions, had claimed copyright to the actual citation form of cases it published. The Bible of legal citation, the Harvard *Bluebook*, simply did not instruct writers on how to cite statutes or legal periodical articles that they found in an electronic source, without print dates or page numbers.

In January 1994, Louisiana's Supreme Court adopted a vendor-neutral citation form for its decisions, to enable increased competition for publication of the decisions. Meanwhile, a committee of the bar in Wisconsin was debating the idea of a vendor- and medium-neutral citation form and the establishment of an electronic archive of opinions. In March, concerned about the "Balkanization" of legal citation form, and convinced of the potential leadership that law librarians could display in this area, American Association of Law Libraries President Kay Todd (Paul Hastings et al., Atlanta, Georgia) appointed a Task Force on Citation Formats, chaired by Lynn Foster (University of Arkansas at Little Rock). Todd's concerns were proved justified in

June when the Wisconsin bar committee recommended a new citation form completely different from that of Louisiana.

AALL Takes the First Step

Following months of study and debate, the AALL Task Force—comprised of law librarians, publishers' representatives, and a reporter of decisions—issued its recommendations in March 1995. The most important were:

- Those jurisdictions considering change to a medium-neutral form should use case name, year of decision, court, opinion number, and, where a pinpoint citation is needed, paragraph number.
- Jurisdictions should begin to number all paragraphs within their decisions.

After open discussion within the membership, the AALL Executive Board adopted these recommendations, resolving that the Association would embrace the citation reform issue and support the adoption of vendor- and medium-neutral citations. The Board agreed to continue the dialog with legal publishers and the bench and bar, and to work toward the goal of better citation forms. Since the Task Force had completed its charge, the Board established the standing Committee on Citation Formats (the Committee).

The ABA Acts

Shortly after the AALL Executive Board formally adopted the recommendations

continued on page 15

"The seemingly insignificant legal citation is a linchpin of the law," reads the introduction to the *Universal Citation Guide*. A tentative draft of the *Guide*, to be distributed by AALL for review by law librarians and legal community leaders this summer, is the culmination of more than three years' work by AALL's Committee on Citation Formats. In 1995, the Committee took up the important challenge of creating a new system of legal citation that would effectively bridge the gap between the print-based citation forms of yesterday and the technology-based future of legal information.

It is most fitting that law librarians and the American Association of Law Libraries introduce and pursue citation reform for the legal profession. Law librarians deal most closely with people seeking legal information in any format or medium. We work every day to navigate and manage the vast frontier of electronic legal information. And as managers of the legal information budgets of countless institutions, we understand the importance and cost-effectiveness of vendor-neutral and medium-neutral citation.

On behalf of the AALL Executive Board and the entire profession, I extend heartfelt thanks and congratulations to Committee members Carol Bannen, Carol Billings, Lynn Foster, Paul George, James Hambleton, Bruce Kennedy, Kent McKeever, Mary Persyn, and Frank Houdek—under the capable leadership of Chair Marcia Koslov and previous Chair Rita Reusch—on a job well done.

They have demonstrated how law librarians serve and lead the legal profession, and have enabled AALL to lead the way with a tool that will help us all.

Gudy Meadows

AALL's Universal* Citation

Smith v Jones, 1998 WI 453 ¶82

- Case Name _____ ↑
- Year of Decision _____ ↑
- Court Designator _____ ↑
- Opinion Number _____ ↑
- Paragraph Number _____ ↑

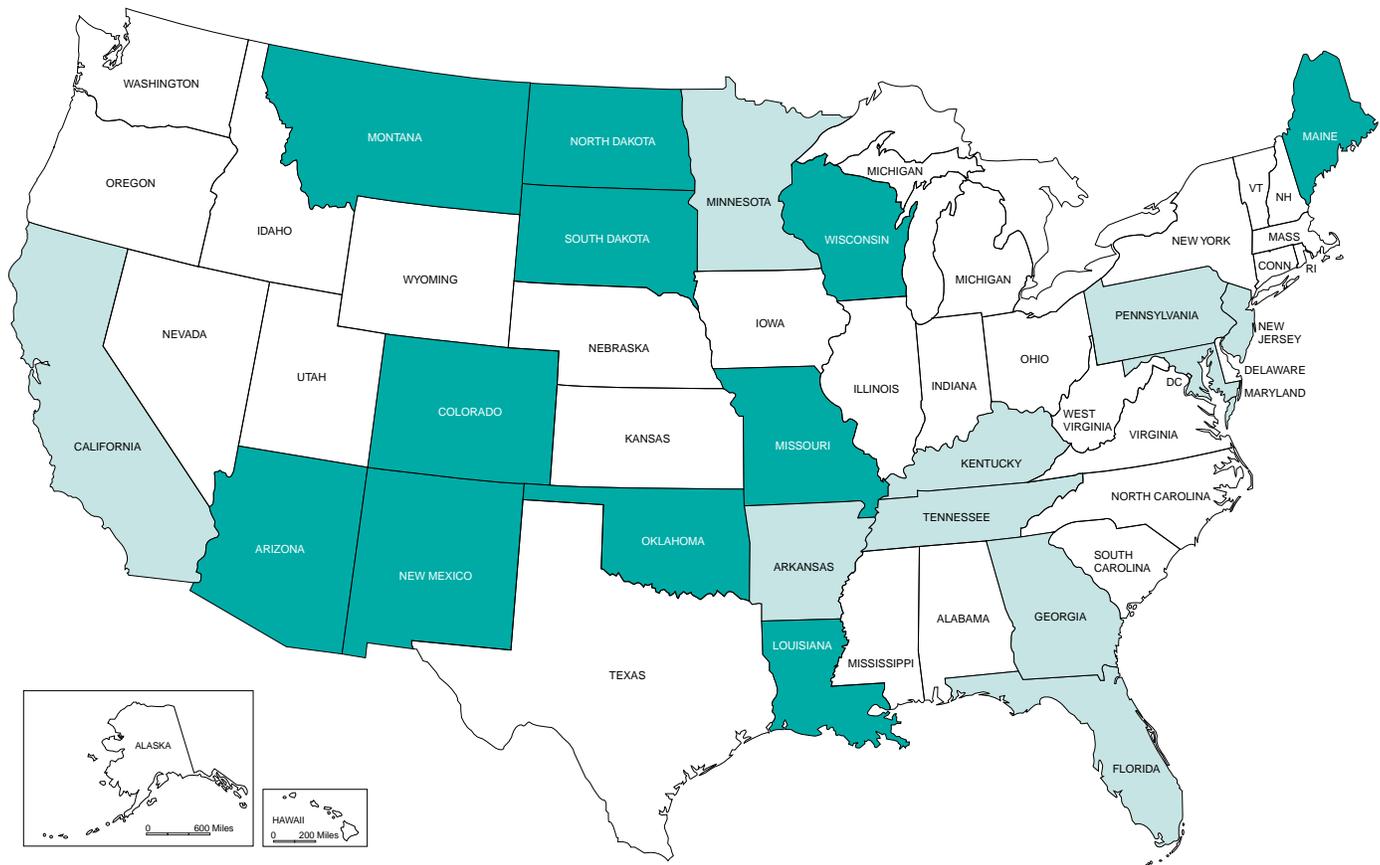
* *Universal* refers to a citation that is medium-neutral (applicable to book or electronic form), vendor-neutral (contains no vendor-specific information), and in the public domain (usable by any publisher without reference to products of any other publisher).

inside:



AALL's Universal Citation Guide..... 14

Case in Point: Oklahoma..... 15



States that have adopted universal citation or allowed citation change

- Arizona
- Colorado
- Louisiana
- Maine
- Missouri
- Montana
- New Mexico
- North Dakota
- Oklahoma
- South Dakota
- Wisconsin

States considering change

- Arkansas
- California
- Florida
- Georgia
- Kentucky
- Maryland
- Minnesota
- New Jersey
- Pennsylvania
- Tennessee

AALL's Universal Citation Guide

The AALL Committee on Citation Formats has completed the tentative draft of the *Universal Citation Guide*, after three years of intense research, discussion, and debate of all aspects of citation reform. The draft *Guide*, which contains AALL's recommendations for universal citation rules for case law, statutory law, and administrative law, will be distributed in summer 1998 to selected members of the legal and law library communities for review.

In the words of the Committee, "The *Guide* provides a roadmap for constructing actual citations for those jurisdictions which have adopted the

universal citation form. For those jurisdictions that are still debating the issue of citation reform, it serves as a model for adoption."

The Committee on Citation Formats anticipates that the first edition of the *Universal Citation Guide* will be published in early 1999. This edition will incorporate comments on the tentative draft, as well as suggestions from law librarians and others who have reviewed sections of the *Guide* published in the *Law Library Journal*.

"The AALL *Guide* is designed to complement the Harvard *Bluebook*,

the legal community's main resource for legal citation," says Marcia Koslov, Committee on Citation Formats Chair and State Law Librarian of Wisconsin. "Our *Guide* includes model universal citations for each state based on their current primary source materials. The members of the Committee on Citation Formats—law librarians representing all areas of the profession—have contributed an enormous number of hours of expertise and careful analysis to produce what we think will be an indispensable tool for all those involved with legal information."

The Path to Citation Reform continued from page 13

of the Task Force, the American Bar Association (ABA) established its own task force in 1995. Rita Reusch (University of Utah College of Law in Salt Lake City), a member of both the AALL Task Force and the new Committee on Citation Formats, assisted the ABA Task Force in its deliberations. After a year of study, the ABA Task Force presented its recommendations to the House of Delegates, which adopted a resolution recommending that all jurisdictions adopt a citation form similar to the Wisconsin and AALL forms.

Since the ABA's resolution, the AALL Committee on Citation Formats has incorporated suggestions found in the ABA report and renamed the vendor- and medium-neutral form the *Universal Citation*. It has drafted rules for the universal citation of case law, statutory law, and administrative law and published these drafts in the *Law Library Journal* for comment. Under AALL's authorization, these rules are being published as the *Universal Citation Guide*. The *Guide* is intended as the latest word in citation reform, an aid to jurisdictions which have already changed their citation form, and a blueprint for those jurisdictions which are considering change. The *Guide* also takes reform beyond case law into other areas of primary authority.

The Current Status of Citation Reform

Today, only four years after AALL initiated its study of citation reform, courts at all levels appear to be moving in the direction of a citation form that will work equally well for electronic and print sources. As of June 1, 1998, 11 states have adopted or allowed some form of vendor- and medium-neutral citation form:

- ARIZONA has begun numbering paragraphs.
- COLORADO has allowed vendors to number paragraphs.

- LOUISIANA has changed its citation form to require docket numbers and slip opinion page numbers.
- MAINE has begun numbering decisions and paragraphs.
- MISSOURI has allowed vendors to number paragraphs.
- MONTANA has begun numbering decisions and paragraphs.
- NEW MEXICO has begun numbering decisions and paragraphs.
- NORTH DAKOTA has begun numbering decisions and paragraphs.
- OKLAHOMA has begun numbering decisions and paragraphs, retroactively, and has placed them on the Web (see box at right).
- SOUTH DAKOTA has begun numbering decisions and paragraphs.
- WISCONSIN has begun numbering paragraphs in Supreme Court decisions.

Additionally, 10 states are in the process of considering citation reform. Both the federal Judicial Conference and the Conference of Chief Justices have appointed internal committees to study the issue of citation reform.

Opposition to Change

Today it is easy to forget the debate that raged on law-lib during the life of the Task Force, and the media attention devoted to this question between 1994 and 1996. The Task Force Report itself was not unanimous, but contained dissenting opinions written by the two West Publishing Company representatives, and by New York's Reporter of Decisions.

In general, those who opposed changing current legal citation form raised two arguments: cost to courts and decreased access to law. Those arguing for change

continued on page 16

Case In Point: Oklahoma Shows the Way of the Future

Oklahoma's Supreme Court, under the leadership of Chief Justice Yvonne Kauger, has pioneered in creating a system which will expand electronic access to Oklahoma's law throughout the world.

The first step in Oklahoma's quick rise to the top tier of electronic publishing was to hire attorney Kevin King (who also has an MBA degree in Management Information Systems) as MIS director in January, 1997. The court adopted public domain citation on April 29, 1997; its Web site went live May 1, 1997; it's been full steam ahead ever since.

Oklahoma now requires use of public domain citation for all decisions posted after May 1, 1997. The goal, King says, is to have available electronically all of the state's case law from 1890 to present, including Oklahoma and Indian Territory cases, as well as all statutes and administrative codes, on the Web site by mid 1999. Formerly with the state's Court of Criminal Appeals, King says the most important factor in the success of such a project, "past the commitments and the thick skin that are required," is good Web site and database development.

Hundreds of hours of intern time have gone into building the database of more than 130,000 documents, and eight full-time law students currently are on staff to add to the current body of case law that is online.

Just 13 months after adopting citation reform, Oklahoma has:

- a search engine patterned after the online services that makes information searchable by free word, judge, case name and citation;
- a citation converter online that provides full text of cases based on input of either *Pacific Reporter* or public domain citations;
- cases from 1959 to present currently online;
- hyperlinks between cases, and to US Supreme Court decisions online; and
- citation checking for Oklahoma cases.

For more information, contact kingk@oscn.net or visit <http://oscn.net>

Statutory and Administrative Law

Until now, public attention has focused on case law. Meanwhile, following the original Task Force recommendations, the AALL Committee on Citation Formats moved to develop accurate, clear universal citations for statutory and administrative law. The tentative draft of the *Universal Citation Guide*, published in July 1998, contains its recommendations for universal citation rules for statutory and administrative law.

The Path to Citation Reform *continued from page 15*

countered with the arguments of reduced costs to researchers, and increased access due to the citation form being once and for all in the public domain.

Cost

Those opposed to change cited the cost courts would have to pay to change their systems, since they would now be responsible for numbering decisions and paragraphs. However, all of the jurisdictions that have changed their citation form seem to have done so without incurring any of the enormous costs predicted by critics. Even Oklahoma, which has invested in additional staff in order to put the entire body of its case and statutory law on the Internet, saved significant amounts that it was paying book publishers to buy multiple sets of Oklahoma law for county collections. It should be noted that no jurisdictions that have changed their citation form have changed back.

Moreover, prices paid by researchers have dropped significantly. For example, before Louisiana changed its citation form, researchers paid \$3500 as a one-time cost for the only available CD-ROM version of Louisiana law. Quarterly updates cost \$720 per year. Once the court changed its citation form, other publishers were able to produce competing CD-ROM products, and the basic cost of Louisiana law on CD-ROM dropped to zero, with only an updating cost of \$720 per year.

Access

Opponents to citation change argued that the vendor- and medium-neutral citation for case law limited access to the law. They claimed that it was a "nowhere" citation, and that since it was not anchored to a specific source, researchers would not be able to find it. The issue of source specificity has generated the most debate on the Task Force and subsequently on the Committee. The Committee has tried to make citations to primary authority as "virtual" as the nature of the material and current publishing practices will allow.

Today, in those six jurisdictions that have adopted full universal citations, the legal system works much as it always has. Judges, law clerks and attorneys find the law much as they always have, but with the added benefits of new technology. This supports the contention that access to the law would actually be improved by moving citation form into the public domain.

Another issue involving access is copyright. Case law is not clear whether some legal citations are in the public domain, even though, paradoxically, the text of the law is. Beginning in the 1980s, West Publishing began to raise the claim of copyright for citations to case law, and in some jurisdictions, statutory codes that it published. A pivotal case was decided in favor of West by the Eighth Circuit. Mead Data Central, the defendant and then-publisher of LEXIS, settled rather than appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court. This result left other publishers in the position of either using West citations and defending litigation, paying West licensing fees to use its internal page numbers, or pressing for a new type of citation form.

After West Publishing was purchased by Thomson Corporation, some in the library world hoped for a change in West policy. However, West Group still asks for payment of licensing fees by other publishers, and currently another lawsuit, originally involving Matthew Bender, Hyperlaw, and West, is before the Second Circuit. AALL has participated in this case as an *amicus curiae*.

AALL, of course, strongly supports maximum access to the law. Retaining public ownership of the text of the law is not enough. The public must also own the method of citing the law. In fact, public domain search engines are also desirable, as implied by the 1994 AALL Executive Board resolution urging the formation of public domain databases of law.

The Next Step

While concerns remain in some jurisdictions, it is clear that institutions are moving in the direction of access to the law in an electronic form that is no longer dependent on any form in print. Nevertheless, questions remain. Some courts issue initial electronic versions of opinions that are later changed, and thus must wrestle with how to clearly label their electronic opinions so that their readers know whether or not they are final. Other courts, which issue opinions from many locations, are concerned about the centrality of electronic distribution. Another concern is the security of electronic opinions. However, the trend is clear: toward the universal citation.

In the words of the Committee,

Successive layers of information technology are amassing an electronic legal record which remains tied to

the citation of printed materials. As information managers, law librarians have a great professional stake in the success of citation reform. With the law librarian's patience, interest, and expertise to craft and test endless iterations of citations for the varied legal materials issued by American jurisdictions, it is only natural that law librarians assume a leadership role in framing a new set of citation standards for the American legal community.

The American Association of Law Libraries is proud of its leadership role in the area of citation reform. While we can't claim to have predicted the future, we can be certain that the *Universal Citation Guide* will ease the transition to it, not only for law librarians, but also for jurisdictions, attorneys, and all other users of legal information.

Resources

AALL Committee on Citation Formats Home Page

<http://www.aallnet.org/committee/citation/>
Page includes:

- drafts of user guides for case law, statutory law, and administrative law
- Task Force Report: link to ABA Special Committee on Citation Issues Web page; links to states that have changed their citation forms.

The Universal Citation Guide: A Tentative Draft (American Association of Law Libraries, 1998) published in cooperation with the State Bar of Wisconsin (copies available on the Committee Web site. Single copies will be made available to individuals willing to review and provide comments by October 1, 1998).

Reports:

- The Universal Legal Citation Project: A Draft User Guide to the AALL Universal Case Citation [89 L. Libr. J. 7 (1997)]
- The Universal Legal Citation Project: A Draft User Guide to the AALL Universal Statutory Citation [90 L. Libr. J. 91 (1998)]
- The Universal Legal Citation Project: A Draft User Guide to the AALL Universal Regulatory Citation [90 L. Libr. J. (summer 1998)(forthcoming)]
- AALL Task Force on Citation Formats Report [87 L. Libr. J. 581 (1995)]



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