



Law Library Lights

Career Pivots and How to Make Them

Christine Ciambella

Assistant Librarian, Miller & Chevalier
cciambella@milchev.com

Working in the Washington, D.C. area holds appeal for countless reasons, but for librarians it's a smorgasbord of opportunities. In addition to public library systems, there are university/college libraries, school libraries, government libraries, private libraries, and some only-in-DC libraries such as the Library of Congress and the Supreme Court Library. In a small sample of librarians I know personally, there are at least a dozen who have changed their career path from one type of library to another, sometimes dramatically so.

If you're thinking about making a move, read on.

**"I've always believed that D.C. is a law librarian's dream location: so many types of law libraries with so many opportunities for both new and career librarians."
— Steve Margeton**

Table of Contents

Career Pivots	1
<i>Christine Ciambella</i>	
Editor's Column	5
<i>Andrew W. Lang</i>	
President's Column	7
<i>Elizabeth Schiller</i>	
Bridging the Gap	9
<i>Kristina J. Alayan</i>	
Eyes On Exhibits	12
Big Switch from Academia	13
<i>Jessica Perovich</i>	
Library Career Pivots	15
<i>Karen Botkin</i>	
Member Spotlight	18
Becoming a Library of One	20
<i>Sara Gras</i>	
A Kabul Career Change	22
<i>Andrea Muto</i>	
Tech Talk	25
<i>Matt Zimmerman</i>	
Book Review	27
<i>Khelani Clay</i>	



Making the Move

Reasons for changing jobs or roles varied among the librarians I spoke with, but there were some common themes. Some librarians thought they were getting too specialized, or that their skills weren't as broad as they would like. Others felt they had outgrown their job, or were concerned about lack of opportunities to advance. Others wanted to work with a different group of patrons

"I've moved between different career paths, and now different types of libraries. The things that made the transition into new opportunities easier were being open to learn new things, finding people who were willing to mentor me, and knowing how to transition my previous skills to my new environment."

— Abby Dos Santos

"As academic law librarians we collect valuable information and teach people how to use it. As a Knowledge Management attorney I'm doing the same work but on a different scale. The strategic and functional implementation of technology is how a knowledge management professional works with information. We customize human resource data, financial databases, timekeeping systems, and document management systems to collect the right information and to display the data in a meaningful way."

— Kumar Jayasuriya

(students or lawyers or vice-versa). Finally, some librarians moved to a different job for lifestyle reasons, such as a shorter commute or tuition benefits for themselves or their family.

Several of them pointed out that with all the upheaval in our profession and the information industry it's wise to challenge yourself and embrace changes. These librarians encouraged themselves to be open to opportunities.

Expect the Unexpected

Change can be uncomfortable, particularly if you're an experienced librarian who becomes the newbie in your new job. These librarians stressed the need to be comfortable with that kind of discomfort, and to be willing to learn from all of your colleagues, not just the more senior ones.

In making the move from academic law libraries to undergraduate libraries, or from a much larger organization to a smaller one, several mentioned that the breadth of projects and activities was so much greater than they were used to. They needed time to learn about new sources, vendors, professional organizations, and to understand how their role fit into the larger institution.

"I also have been given the opportunity to learn about agile project management and am now a certified scrum master! I hadn't even heard of agile before I went to GW, and now I implement its principles every day."

— Morgan Stoddard

Another point to consider when moving into or among academic positions is that librarians are tenure-track at some schools but not at others.



Starting a portfolio of activities to support a tenure bid can be a job in itself.

What's New?

The librarians agreed that they found many similarities among their current and former roles. They pointed out that all libraries have similar challenges, such as doing more with less, keeping up with changing technology, recruiting employees, keeping skills current, balancing competing demands, and understanding users and their needs.

"Every skill can be applied to a new role or setting. For example, a lawyer's skill at negotiating with opposing counsel can be applied to dealing with an unhappy patron."

— David Mao

"The fundamental practice of librarianship is consistent between types of libraries but the resources are different."

— Christine Dulaney

Librarians have found that their lack of knowledge or skills in a new role is more than made up for with their legal research background. Legal research is a mystery to non-law librarians, and colleagues really appreciate having a resource for those kinds of questions. Legal background is also really helpful when it comes to reading your library's contracts, employment policies, and other legal documents.

What's Missing?

While these librarians were able to draw on

their skill and experience to succeed in a new role, they were aware of the gaps in their knowledge. Examples include unfamiliarity with the subject specialty, vendors, and professional organizations that are essential in the new job. They emphasized the importance of asking questions and seeking guidance from their coworkers. They also recommended learning as much as possible about the institution, the other departments in the organization, and how they fit in.

Management skills are always a challenge, particularly for first-time managers. Try to get as much management experience as possible by attending management programs through professional organizations or through your employer. Seek out opportunities to get management and leadership experience by supervising student workers, being a team leader on a project, or through volunteer work.

Advice

Librarians are a naturally helpful group so they had lots of suggestions for anyone considering a career pivot. Of course, much of this career advice is helpful even if you stay right where you are.

- ▶ Say yes to every opportunity that comes your way.
- ▶ Get a mentor; or better yet, more than one.
- ▶ Do informational interviews.
- ▶ Be interested in the organization as a whole and understand the role you play. Be aware that your actions affect everyone around you.
- ▶ Remember that despite the large number of librarians in the DC area, it's a well-connected community. Be mindful of your reputation.
- ▶ Volunteer! Get involved in your professional community, and consider branching out into related professional organizations. For example,



the International Legal Technology Association or the Legal Writing Institute.

- ▶ Don't be afraid to approach new opportunities, and explore them even if your qualifications aren't an exact match.
- ▶ Prepare ahead of time for the "why do you want to make this change" question. You need a solid answer at the ready.
- ▶ Many employers value a varied background in an employee, so a gap in your knowledge isn't necessarily a negative—as long as you are willing to learn.

Thank You

Change is possible, and it's both easier and harder than you think. No matter how well you prepare, there will always be some surprises. Regardless, these librarians were satisfied with their decisions. I count myself among them, as I've practiced administrative law, worked in academic libraries, and recently returned to one of my former law firms. Sometimes, the grass really is greener.

Many thanks to all of the librarians who graciously shared their experiences and insights.

Abby Dos Santos is the Reference Librarian at Caplin & Drysdale. She has a background in international development and international legal reform. Abby has worked at Georgetown University's Wolff Law Library, the Department of Commerce, the IMF, and briefly practiced law before becoming a librarian.

Christine Dulaney is Associate Librarian and Director of Technical Services at American University Library. Her background is in humanities, and she trained in archives and special collections but her first Washington, DC, job was in technical

services for a law firm. Christine has also worked at George Washington University Law Library, Catholic University Law Library, the Congressional Research Service, and the Pence Law Library at American University's Washington College of Law.

Betsy Jayasuriya is the Chief Librarian at the U.S. Department of Justice. She dreamed of being a medical librarian, but found herself working in science, legislative, and law libraries. Betsy has also worked at the Texas Legislative Reference Library, the Catholic University of America and University of Texas libraries, as well as the Pentagon Library.

Kumar Jayasuriya is KM Attorney at Baker Donelson. He worked at several academic law libraries, including the University of Texas and Georgetown before moving to a law firm. Kumar practiced maritime law before becoming a librarian.

Steve Margeton is Professor Emeritus at The Columbus School of Law of The Catholic University of America. He was the Director at Catholic University's Judge Kathryn J. DuFour Law Library. He is the former Librarian of the United States Supreme Court, and former library director at Steptoe & Johnson. Steve began his career at the American-British Division of the Library of Congress.

David Mao is Associate Vice President for Administration and Chief Operating Officer at the Georgetown Law Center. He was the Acting Librarian of Congress, and Law Librarian of Congress. He also worked at CRS and was a law firm librarian after practicing for several years.

Morgan Stoddard is Director of Research Services at the George Washington University Gelman Library. Previously, she was a research services librarian and reference librarian at the Georgetown Law Library. ■



From the Editor

The Pivotal Moment

Andrew W. Lang

Reference Librarian, Georgetown Law Library

awl20@georgetown.edu



Last summer, when we were developing the themes for this year's volume of *Lights*, I have a very distinct memory of waiting for the Red Line up at the Van Ness station in that sort of early morning mental fog that (for me) typically indicates a lack of caffeine. In general, the selection of themes was driven by two major considerations:

1. What would be valuable to the LLSDC membership as readers? and
2. What expertise do many of our members have that would make them interested in contributing?

While pondering these criteria, glancing for the train, and fumbling with my iPod, I was suddenly struck by the opening track of David Bowie's *Hunky Dory*. And while the lyrics themselves weren't particularly on point, I realized that Ch-ch-ch-ch-Changes were something we could all relate to. Not only are we all riding the waves of a profession undergoing dramatic transformations, but because the concentration and variety of law libraries in the D.C. area is unparalleled, our members routinely



Submission Information

If you would like to write for *Law Library Lights*, contact Andrew Lang at awl20@georgetown.edu. For information regarding submission deadlines and issue themes, visit the LLSDC website at www.llsdc.org.



From the Editor, Continued

seek opportunities to shift across institutions, transferring their skills across academic, law firm, court, agency, and business library settings.

We sought to tap into this wealth of expertise and our member-authors did not disappoint. We are very grateful to have seen so much interest in this issue, as evidenced by the fact that it's significantly longer than our last! Given enough space, I have no doubt that every LLSDC member would have had valuable insight to share.

Though my own experiences in pivoting pale in comparison to many of my colleagues—I spent a year working at the Wisconsin State Law Library and a semester interning in the library at a Madison law firm—even this brief exposure to government and firm librarianship enhanced my appreciation for the unique responsibilities that the different settings have. Yet these experiences also helped me see our profession's commonalities and some of the skills that are valuable regardless of your specific employer.

All of our authors have made significant pivots and were generously willing to share their reflections with us. These include transitions across library settings, major changes in responsibilities, and other dramatic career transformations (a move to Kabul, anyone?). We're also excited to feature our regular columns: in Tech Talk, Matt Zimmerman talks about resources for librarians interested in learning to code; Book Review columnist Khelani Clay reviews *Law's Picture Books: The Yale Law Library Collection*; and we have a new Eyes on Exhibits describing an interactive exhibit at the Renwick Gallery.

Whether it's ourselves, our institutions, our profession, or our world, change is constant. Often the first step in preparing to tackle a change is taking stock of where we are, perceiving strengths and recognizing areas for growth. Our hope is that this issue — which should roughly coincide with the beginning of 2018 — will encourage our members to consider their strengths and the skills that will allow them to adapt and thrive in the New Year and beyond.

Finally, here's a shameless plug: for those of you who just can't get enough of hearing about your colleagues' successful career pivots, Anne and I will be moderating a panel based on this theme at the annual meeting in Baltimore this summer. We hope to see you there! ■



President's Column

Paths, Journeys, and Jungle Gyms

Elizabeth Schiller

*Reference & Research Services Librarian, University of Richmond
School of Law, president@llsdc.org*



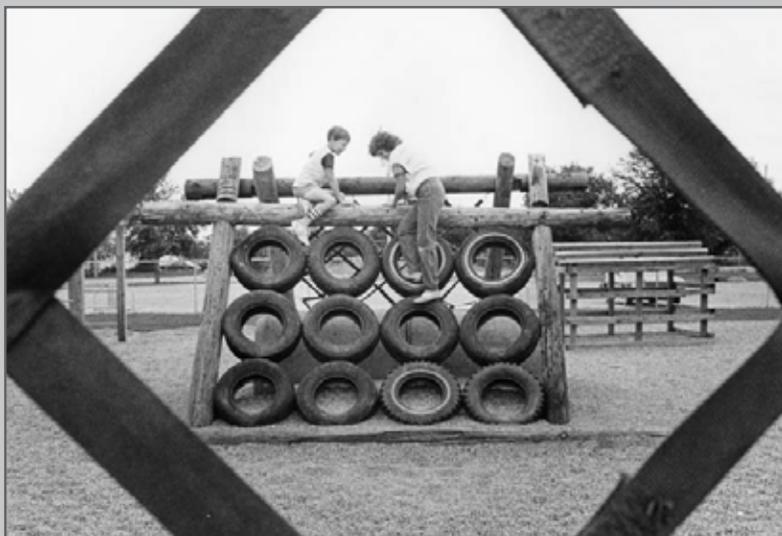
My favorite "ice breaker" when I meet another librarian is to ask them about how they ended up in their current job situation. Whether they talk about what led them to the field or their particular position, everyone I've discussed this with has had a unique story that is so much more interesting and nuanced than I would ever realize from looking at a resume.

Librarians' diverse perspectives and experiences come in handy in so many ways with the variety of roles we fill in so many different types of organizations. Even those among us who stay in the same position or institution for any length of time find that our roles and institutions change around us, whether this is formally recognized in a job title or not. The variety of work librarians get to do and the many opportunities to keep learning were a significant part of why this field appealed to me. I am glad the realities of being in the field have, so far, met my expectations in this regard—with some unexpected twists thrown in for good measure!

I am writing this column in the midst of my first major job change as a law librarian. By the time this issue is published, I will have settled into a new position as a Reference & Research Services Librarian at the University of Richmond. After three and a half exciting years at the Congressional Research Service (CRS), I am looking forward to new responsibilities and challenges. Since I was working in an academic law library when I decided to pursue law librarianship, a career path metaphor would suggest that I am zig-zagging back after a detour. As much as I am looking forward to realizing a goal set early in my career, I don't see my experiences in the meantime as a diversion. Working at CRS and the Library of Congress was an incredible experience and the privilege of a lifetime. The skills I developed and the relationships I made there will always be part of the foundation upon which everything else I do in this field builds.



President's Column, Continued



© Neenah Historical Society, used with permission

Perhaps because of my own priorities and experiences, the imagery of a path, as applied to career progression, is a bit of a mystery to me. While I can see broad trends in hindsight, my experience has been far less predictable, even when moving towards a fixed goal. Alternative metaphors of experiences as stepping stones, viewing a career as a ship's voyage or climbing a mountain, or going through an obstacle course or jungle gym seem to more readily map onto my experience with law librarianship.

What about your experiences? What metaphors do you think best describe your career experience as a law librarian? Have you always viewed your career that way, or has it changed over time? If you'd like share your thoughts on this topic, send an email with "Paths, Journeys, and Jungle Gyms" in the subject line to president@llsdc.org. If I get enough responses, I'll compile them in a follow-up article for a future issue. ■

LLSDC Leadership Transition

In January of 2018, Elizabeth Schiller started her new job at the University of Richmond School of Law and retired from her position as LLSDC President. LLSDC Vice President Emily Florio assumed the responsibilities of the LLSDC President and will serve out the remainder of the term in this role. The Law Library Lights Editorial Board would like to thank Liz for her service and leadership in LLSDC and wishes her the best in Richmond.

Bridging the Gap: Public Services & Collection Services

Kristina J. Alayan

Head of Reference, Georgetown Law Library

kja41@georgetown.edu

What does it mean to take a risk? Our definitions vary as much as our life experiences. I thought pursuing librarianship after completing a law degree was unconventional. And then my sister became an elephant keeper.

Many of us found our way to this profession because we love learning. We want to be challenged, even if it's uncomfortable or frustrating. Put another way: we're allergic to being bored. I am no different. My curiosity has led me to take advantage of opportunities in the interest of personal and professional growth. The most recent, and arguably most unconventional, was a move from a position as Foreign and International Law Librarian in North Carolina to Head of Content and Acquisitions Management (HCAM) in DC.

Before starting at Georgetown, I had exposure to managing a collection as the only foreign and international law selector at Duke. I was also able to draw from my training and work as a library intern in technical services while completing my MLIS degree. But ultimately, there is no better training than hitting the ground running. In my

“Many of us found our way to this profession because we love learning. We want to be challenged, even if it’s uncomfortable or frustrating. Put another way: we’re allergic to being bored.”

new position, I was responsible for managing the collection, negotiating with vendors, reviewing licensing agreements, and cultivating relationships with colleagues—as well as overseeing the team responsible for all acquisitions, serials, and filing for the library.

Though I may be more comfortable jumping into unfamiliar territory than some, there were a number of assurances during the interview and hiring process that made it clear to me this would be a risk worth taking. First, training was outlined



explicitly to help get me up to speed (e.g., ALCTS, Sierra, conferences). Second, the interim head was not only still a member of the library team, but she was also an integral part of my orientation and training. Third, I spoke informally to several colleagues who currently worked at Georgetown or who had recently worked there to find out more about the position and whether they thought it was a good move. (They did.)

But how did I actually get up to speed? I found the collection management piece to be a natural expansion of work I was already managing. Instead of focusing on the foreign and international law collection, I was now concerned with the collection more generally as the Chair of the Collection Development Committee. Negotiating with vendors, reviewing licensing agreements, and collaborating with peers were new responsibilities, but built upon existing training and skills. Understanding the day-to-day operations of the department was the most daunting undertaking. I credit the interim head for facilitating a smooth transition which combined exposure to documented internal policies and regular meetings with individuals across the department. I found working with individuals and asking questions to be the most valuable as it provided context and the opportunity to engage more meaningfully with team members. Reading policies before I had sufficient context made them difficult to conceptualize, however, when a problem presented itself and documentation on point was available, they were a welcome resource.

Our library has more documentation (for better or worse) than most.¹ This is a valuable resource for new hires, but can be a challenge to manage and maintain—even for librarians. Libraries without sufficient documentation about policies, procedures, and institutional knowledge should

consider drafting these materials if they don't already exist and making them generally available through a shared platform. Moreover, as these materials are drafted or maintained, authors should not assume common or institutional knowledge. Define technical terms that aren't familiar to individuals outside a specific department. The intended audience should be someone unfamiliar with a policy or procedure and should provide them with sufficient guidance to navigate it independently.²

I was hired not only because I had sufficiently demonstrated the aptitude required to learn and hit the ground running, but also to provide a fresh perspective. Ideally, one that would bridge the gap between public and collection services. This charge gave me the freedom to focus my energy less on the past and more on the future. While I sought out institutional knowledge in order to understand a

“I found working with individuals and asking questions to be the most valuable as it provided context and the opportunity to engage more meaningfully with team members.”

policy or procedure, I was comfortable identifying opportunities to eliminate inefficiencies, streamline workflows, and create new opportunities to add value to both the department and library more generally.



Not all opportunities are created equal. As important as it is to know what your employer is committed to offering to help you transition into an unfamiliar position, being self-aware may be even more important to recognizing whether an opportunity is a good match. I thrive in chaos. I would rather be challenged and stressed than bored and comfortable. I could think of nothing better than the opportunity to gain a more sophisticated understanding of how libraries operate. Moreover, I was confident that my employer had a nuanced understanding of what I had to offer (e.g., aptitude, optimism) as well as areas I would need to develop due to having limited formal experience in collection services.

My role was clear to me, but how I would navigate these new responsibilities was not. If you find ambiguity frustrating and prefer more predictable environments, a professional shift like this will likely lead to dissatisfaction. Alternatively, if you are willing to cut yourself some slack when you inevitably stumble, are as comfortable making judgment calls as you are asking for help, and love learning even when it's messy, you may find yourself drawn to less conventional professional trajectories.

I have since transitioned back into public services as Head of Reference. Whether I am navigating terminology and records that were once foreign to me or thinking more creatively about how to leverage the expertise of different departments and individuals to solve problems, my time in collection services continues to inform the work I do. Moreover, I have a more nuanced appreciation for the challenges facing departments whose work is not always well understood by faculty or

“Not all opportunities are created equal. As important as it is to know what your employer is committed to offering to help you transition into an unfamiliar position, being self-aware may be even more important to recognizing whether an opportunity is a good match.”

librarians as they navigate attrition and adapt to new technology. I didn't know it at the time, but becoming the Head of Content and Acquisitions Management at Georgetown was the best decision I could have made for myself professionally. As a direct result of this unconventional professional pivot, I learned more about libraries, management, and myself during that time than any other period in my career. ■

Notes

¹ We are in the process of developing a proposal to redesign how our internal documentation is stored and managed.

² It may be challenging for individuals who have amassed decades of expertise to distill their knowledge into digestible content, especially if they are concerned about reinforcing their value to the library. However, the more open and collaborative we can be with one another—within and across departments—the greater chance we have of identifying inefficiencies, eliminating duplication, and streamlining the work we do.



Eyes On Exhibits

Murder Is Her Hobby: Frances Glessner Lee and The Nutshell Studies of Unexplained Death

Renwick Gallery, Smithsonian American Art Museum, Oct. 20, 2017 – Jan. 28, 2018



Since the Renwick's reopening in 2015, the gallery has featured some of the most intriguing exhibitions in the D.C. area. *Murder Is Her Hobby: Frances Glessner Lee and The Nutshell Studies of Unexplained Death*, which remains on display until January 28th, is no exception. The Nutshell Studies are individual dollhouse-sized crime scenes created by Frances Glessner Lee in the early twentieth century as a tool for students of forensic science. The pieces are currently on loan from the Harvard Medical School via the Maryland Office of the Chief Medical Examiner and are actually still used as teaching tool.

The Nutshells occupy a unique intersection of history, forensic science, and artistry. Each vignette is crafted with mind-bogglingly intricate detail: Lee wrote the miniature letters with a single-hair paintbrush, knit doll-sized socks with straight pins, and rejected a model rocking chair because it did not rock in the same way as its life-sized counterpart.

Each scene is presented with a basic set of facts—the same “reports” that Lee wrote to set the stage for each crime scene—and visitors are encouraged to explore each diorama with the use of small hand-held flashlights to try to reconstruct exactly what happened. While the subject matter is macabre, it's difficult to not become fully engrossed in “solving” each case. Other panels throughout the exhibit talk about Lee, her journey to becoming the first female police captain in the U.S., and how she “co-opted traditionally feminine crafts to advance the male-dominated field of police investigation.”

The exhibit features all 18 original Nutshells plus the “lost nutshell.” If you can't make it out before January 28th, they do have a VR version of the exhibit available online. More information is available on the [Renwick's Website](#). ■

The Big Switch from Academia to the Court System

Jessica Perovich

*Assistant Librarian, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit
perovicj@cafc.uscourts.gov*

When I decided to become a law librarian, the biggest decision I had to make was what type of law librarian to become. Not only are there different types of positions in a library, there are also many different kinds of libraries. Did I want to be a cataloger in a public library or a reference librarian in an academic library? The choices seemed endless. I went with my strengths, my comfort level, and, of course, what jobs were available at the time.

Just coming out of law school, I decided that an academic library was for me. I had worked in academic libraries all through college and law school and I knew what to expect. I also had prior experience in circulation and with supervising student workers, so becoming the Public Services Supervisor at Pepperdine's Law Library was a perfect fit. My supervisor at Pepperdine knew I wanted to grow in the position and let me do so.

The best thing I did was take on as many tasks as possible. Just because I was in charge of the circulation desk did not mean that I could not take on some reference hours, learn how to process invoices, run the interlibrary loan process, do group faculty research projects, mentor the Research Assistants, become educated in how to design webpages, or even to learn how to effectively break down rows and rows of shelving. Each of

these additional tasks helped me to grow as a librarian, to learn how a library operates, and to prepare for future opportunities.

Librarians need to realize that no task is beneath us. Yes, we have multiple degrees and are highly educated. That does not mean that we should not grab a cart of books and start shelving. By doing these chores, we learn our collection better. We see where there are gaps in the subject matter that we did not realize existed; we notice which materials are being used more than others by the layers of dust covering them; we realize which collections must be culled; or that it's time to do some shifting. Take an hour of your day and stand at the circulation desk and help your customers. You will learn what they need; develop relationships and build trust with your users. Each task serves a purpose and will help you grow in the profession. By performing a wide variety of tasks, I learned the value of customer service as well as the importance of having an organized library.

After seven years at Pepperdine, I decided it was time for a change. I started looking for jobs knowing I wanted to be in the Washington, D.C. area; however, I did not narrow my search to just academic law libraries. It was time to break out of my comfort zone and I am so glad I did. The posting for Assistant Librarian at the U.S. Court of Appeals



“Each task serves a purpose and will help you grow in the profession. By performing a wide variety of tasks, I learned the value of customer service as well as the importance of having an organized library.”

for the Federal Circuit looked like the perfect challenge. Some of the position tasks delineated in the post included: providing research assistance, managing the library website, promoting library services, processing interlibrary loan requests, and collection development. Because I had taken on so many responsibilities at my previous job, I had experience in these areas and I was comfortable enough with them to know that I could meet these requirements.

The challenge I faced was the environment. I had no idea how working in a court setting would differ from working in an academic environment. Would the judges’ research needs be more than I could handle? Were law clerks like law students or would their needs be different? Would the network of librarians that I so relied upon in an academic environment be as robust? Instead of worrying, I did what I always do . . . I researched and took on more tasks. I met with the full-time reference librarians and asked them to give me in-depth legislative history training; I spoke with other librarians who had worked in a court library to get their perspectives; and I learned what I could about the court that had hired me. Once I got to the court, I learned that the judges are much like professors; law clerks are much like law students; and there are always librarians ready and willing to help.

The one challenge I did have was discovering how to communicate with other court librarians.

In academics, AALL listservs are very active and librarians are constantly interacting with each other for ILLs, research help, etc. They also seem to transition from one academic library to the next so your network is always growing and you are able to learn new ways of how libraries work. In court libraries, I quickly learned the importance of joining committees and groups to build those relationships. Joining LLSDC, AALL’s special interest section for government librarians, Administrative Office of the Courts groups, and any other similar group is essential for information sharing and support. It enables you to access a network of librarians across the country, all involved in similar projects and tasks. You can learn tips and tricks from those who have worked in the field for many years as well as gain a new perspective from those just joining the court.

“Once I got to the court, I learned that the judges are much like professors; law clerks are much like law students; and there are always librarians ready and willing to help.”

If you are in a library field and you are considering a switch, start looking at job postings for positions that interest you. See what their job requirements are and what skills they prefer. Just because they want someone who can make minor changes to the website and you have never done so, does not mean that you cannot apply. Take a free course on web design. Talk to your IT department about how to pick up those skills. Switching positions opens you up to learning new skills and to expanding your marketability as a librarian. Do not be afraid to step out of your comfort zone and to take on that new challenge. ■



Library Career Pivots from a Satellite Member

Karen Botkin

Law Librarian, Verizon

karen.botkin@verizon.com

Like Washington, D.C., New York City—where I started my library experience—contained a myriad of different libraries. Based out of New Jersey now, I'm a long distance member of LLSDC. Before moving to our Basking Ridge, NJ, location, Verizon's Law Library was based in Arlington, VA, where we still maintain a small law library in Verizon's legal office.

When I started on my path to becoming a librarian, entering law librarianship was not on my radar. The graduate assistantship position into

which I was placed by the on-campus job center pushed me into my first law library experience. The Columbia University Law Library, specifically the Technical Services Department, offered a chance to be in on the ground floor as the Research Libraries Group (RLG) was still in its infancy after its formation by the Columbia University Libraries joining with the university libraries of Harvard and Yale and the New York Public Library. RLG was then combined with Stanford University's BALLOTS to become the Research Libraries Information Network (RLIN).

"Hours of copy cataloging, filing cards into the shelf list and the main catalog, and later doing original cataloging on the newly acquired Indonesian law book collection amongst a group of highly educated catalogers from all over Eastern Europe demonstrated the impact that technical services could have on a major academic law library."

Hours of copy cataloging, filing cards into the shelf list and the main catalog, and later doing original cataloging on the newly acquired Indonesian law book collection¹ among a group of highly educated catalogers from all over Eastern Europe demonstrated the impact that technical services could have on a major academic law library. Working with materials in a multitude of languages and helping the reference librarians to gather materials from the collection for the professors and students let me know I was in the right profession.

My more experienced colleagues supported the education the Library Science program offered



in the classroom by providing advice on how to shape a career for the long term. "Do some stints in Reference and some in Technical Services, not just to become a well-rounded librarian but to also understand how your work in one area impacts the other side of the house." This advice, more than any legal subject knowledge, was my takeaway from my first law library.

"Do some stints in Reference and some in Technical Services, not just to become a well-rounded librarian but to also understand how your work in one area impacts the other side of the house.' This advice, more than any legal subject knowledge, was my takeaway from my first law library."

I did not experience another law library until my post-graduation temp job at the New Jersey State Library in Trenton. Half of my day was spent doing ILL using the OCLC terminals and half was learning reference from the library's Head of Reference and Legal Reference. The librarian's patient tutoring let me learn reference from gathering books in the stacks under her direction and marking starting points for her patrons to do their research from the resulting piles we constructed on the long tables. Six months of shadowing this expert was better than sitting in a class on legal reference.

Nine years intervened before the next law library was added to my resume. These years

were consumed by reference and my first LAN administrator experience for a broadcasting news library, as well as my first management experience in a public relations business library.

A major NYC law firm library director hired me to run the large Technical Services library. Suddenly a very large book budget, a staff of thirteen people to manage, an evolved RLIN (now available through a desktop set-up), and a directive to make the newly purchased ILS functional for the whole library staff consumed my professional life. Since a lot of this was new to me, I joined LLAGNY (the NYC chapter of AALL) and the NYC chapter of SLA for help, advice, and networking.

The staff had already been trained on the new ILS system when I arrived so, with a printout of the mapping from the RLIN MARC fields to the fields in the ILS spread all over my living room floor one weekend, I discovered the ins and outs of the program behind the new system. The IT guys were ready to dismiss the young upstart, but I proved that I was comfortable in their domain, at least enough to give directions as to which fields were the target for the incoming data.

I also discovered the existence of something called "The Internet." RLIN interacted with catalogers all over the world through email on their system. If it could work for catalogers sharing professional information, there had to be other uses for this toy. The Head of Reference and I joined NYC SLA's first Internet group and we spent some weekends in her office teaching ourselves how to use Gopher, Archie, and Veronica. We needed something to search for so we spent these weekends looking for beer recipes. We were far from expert searchers, but the experience was mind-expanding.



The usual functions of a law firm's technical services department became familiar and the head of the library suggested that I start a roundtable of other law firm technical services librarians so we could exchange ideas on the methodology each of us used for various functions. The group was still in existence when I checked a few years ago. This law firm was also where I learned to manage people; the staff's assessment of "tough but fair" is one that I still appreciate.

A winter of horrible snows convinced me to start a job search in New Jersey, where I live. The first experiment, director of a suburban/urban public library, was not quite a success and I returned to the law—tax law to be specific—for over a decade, in a pension and benefit consulting firm. As I used to tell people, I lived in Title 26. The reference work at the company was the first time I'd been expected to do real legal reference using those books I'd previously only experienced from the outside and while updating in the law firm's technical services post. That and the ever-evolving Internet, now with the World Wide Web and Google, contributed to my own evolution. I really felt like a law librarian.

I continued to catalog; being part of a very small staff offers opportunities to do a little bit of everything. I sent myself to HTML classes at night and became involved in the company intranet. The library moved twice, once to a basement location. Moving a library is an experience to have once; twice was overkill. And then the company was acquired, by a company that already had a library.

Verizon's Law Library is now my professional home. All the experiences from the past are in play: technical services, research and reference, database management, resource allocation. My

current boss decided to add negotiation of the new contracts for various electronic resources to my bag of tricks. I'm becoming embedded in various practice groups by way of our new flat table arrangement. Working on a couple of projects outside of the Legal Department is adding to my skills and reputation. Working remotely with staff in other offices lets me teach non-librarians how the satellite libraries should work to serve the legal staff outside of the headquarters location.

"I continued to catalog; being part of a very small staff offers opportunities to do a little bit of everything."

My networking is through the New Jersey Law Librarians Association (NJLLA), the local chapter of AALL, and the NJ Chapter of SLA. I offer my town the point of view of a librarian by my service on the town's Library Board and by assisting the Friends of the Library. Each past experience improves the expertise I can offer. Constantly learning, I never expected to be where I am today. Continuing to learn, I'm always looking forward to the next challenge. ■

Notes

¹ No, Indonesian is not a language that I speak or read. I was handed a list of relevant terms—I still remember *Undang-undang*, *Constitution*, to this day—and told if I found any of them in the title, subtitle, or table of contents, add the term as a subject heading.



Member Spotlight

Have you recently changed positions? Received a promotion? Participated in any professional events, conferences, or symposiums? Retired? Published? Been elected to serve in a professional organization? Anything else? Let LLSDC know by submitting your news and announcements to our editorial team. Photos are always welcome!

Elizabeth Schiller

In December, Elizabeth Schiller started a new position as a Reference & Research Services Librarian at the University of Richmond Muse Law Library.

Pamela Lipscomb

Pamela Lipscomb, Director of Library & Research Services at Arent Fox LLP, published an article, "Creating the Affordable Law Firm," in the November/December 2017 issue of AALL Spectrum. It is available at: <https://www.aallnet.org/mm/Publications/spectrum> (login required).

Meg Lulofs Kuhagen

Meg Lulofs Kuhagen has moved from her position as Research Librarian, then Communications Analyst, at Latham & Watkins LLP to a new position as a Reference Librarian at the U.S. Senate Library.

Lesliediana Jones

On October 4, 2017, Lesliediana Jones presented a paper at the International Interlending and Document Supply Conference held in Paris, France. The conference brought together resource sharing professionals from all over the world to discuss the theme: No-Library Left Behind: Cross-Border Resource Sharing. Ms. Jones' paper, titled "Open Access and Hidden Factors: Interlibrary Loan of Open Access Documents May Not Be As Simple As It Seems," discussed the overlooked factors that should be evaluated and considered when sharing open access documents. The paper will be published as a part of the conference proceedings at a later date. Ms. Jones is appreciative of LLSDC for providing her with the funding to cover conference registration.



Member Spotlight, Continued

Announcing the LLSDC Social Responsibility Committee

Elizabeth Schiller

Reference & Research Services Librarian, University of Richmond School of Law, president@llsdc.org

The efforts leading to the creation of the Social Responsibility Committee (SRC) originally came from our involved members. During the 2016-17 year, several members, including Committee Chair Cameron Gowan, expressed interest in establishing a group committed to promoting diversity and inclusion efforts. While the board and many members supported this idea, we needed to articulate its relevance to LLSDC's mission and decide how these efforts would be organized before moving forward. I kept Cameron's suggestion on my list of issues to address during my presidential year and put it on the agenda for the August 15th Executive Board meeting. At that meeting, the Board discussed the value and purpose behind what would become the SRC. As it relates to LLSDC's mission as a professional association, we considered our profession's role supporting a constitutional democracy as well as then-recent events demonstrating the disruption that expressions of discrimination cause in the communities we work in.

We agreed these efforts deserve the "continuous attention of the Society," per the Bylaws' criteria for establishing a standing committee. Membership Secretary Jeff Berns, who is involved with the AALL Social Responsibilities SIS, suggested we adopt their model of an umbrella group that could be organized into subgroups as the committee deemed necessary. We voted to establish the Social Responsibility Committee, which Jeff generously took responsibility for overseeing while we worked on appointing leadership and staffing the committee. From my perspective as President, suggesting the board establish a new committee was not something to take lightly. Each committee creates a need for more volunteer time and resources, and contributes to the Executive Board's workload. I am extremely proud of the Executive Board's decisive support and I continue to be delighted and impressed by how generous LLSDC members are with their valuable time and talents. My sincere thanks to everyone involved!

The committee held its inaugural meeting on October 23rd, at the Groom Law Group, and has met twice since to discuss objectives and plan longer term projects including creating a pathfinder for free legal resources and holding a book drive for prisoners. During the spring, we will also be hosting a symposium on diversity and inclusion topics—expect additional details to follow. We are actively seeking additional committee members; interested parties should contact Committee Secretary Amy Latalladi-Fulton at alatalladi-fulton@groom.com. ■



Becoming a Library of One

Sara Gras

Law Librarian and Training Coordinator, U.S. Department of Agriculture-Office of the General Counsel
sara.gras@ogc.usda.gov

Disclaimer: the views expressed herein are those of the author and do not represent the views of the US Department of Agriculture or the United States.

Some people have career paths that resemble well-lit sidewalks down straight, clearly marked roads. I've always considered mine more of a scramble up a rocky hill in the woods. When I started my first professional librarian job as a Reference Librarian at Brooklyn Law School in 2011, I was confident my career had peaked. After six years as a Westlaw Account Representative in large law firms, I was finally doing something I loved: helping students, teaching classes, interacting with smart, interesting colleagues, and exploring professional development opportunities.

But just two-and-a-half years later, a job change for my husband meant I was back on the hunt, applying for jobs in the D.C.-metro area. I set my sights on academia and was fortunate enough to be offered a position with the reference staff at the Georgetown University Law Center Library (GULC). My position at GULC offered many of the same opportunities but also presented new challenges, not the least of which was a significant salary decrease and a schedule that required night and weekend work. I found myself casually looking at postings as they came to my email via listservs and job sites, just curious to know what other opportunities might be available.

When I saw my current job posted, I was intrigued by the description and requirements. While traditional law librarian duties were included, there was also a heavy emphasis on training, budgeting, and mentoring activities. It was also a full-time position in a staff office serving one of the largest federal departments. On a bit of a whim, I slogged through the arduous USAJOBS application process, and then . . . nothing. I had almost forgotten about the position when I received an email months later from the Executive Assistant to the Deputy General Counsel requesting I come in for an interview.

As the Law Librarian and Training Coordinator for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Office of the General Counsel, I am a staff of one, responsible for the information and professional development needs of over 250 attorneys and legal support staff in thirteen locations across the country. This includes managing all aspects of our online and print resources, from trial to proposal to negotiation to procurement to payment, as well as answering general reference questions and conducting training related to legal research.



“As the Law Librarian and Training Coordinator for the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Office of the General Counsel, I am a staff of one, responsible for the information and professional development needs of over 250 attorneys and legal support staff in thirteen locations across the country.”

While these are pretty standard tasks for a law librarian, other aspects of my position are not—including coordinating attorney and staff mentoring relationships and supporting the recruitment, onboarding, and training of legal interns.

I’m not going to pretend I don’t have days where I feel like a machine is launching tennis balls at my head by the dozen. Flying solo can be hard—there’s no one close to share ideas with, no one to give you a reality check when a momentary crisis feels like the end of the world, and no one to help you divide and conquer a difficult task.

But it also means I am free to direct my own work and take on new projects that interest me when time permits, like a recent partnership with the Government Information Specialist who manages our FOIA, records, and privacy programs to conduct an information inventory. I also report to the Deputy General Counsel, which has given me

an opportunity to learn so much about the inner workings of federal agencies and offices.

This role is not one that anyone could plan or train to get. However, I credit my ability to do all the many diverse aspects of my job well to the rocky climb that brought me here. Part-time jobs in retail and food service gave me an appreciation for the value of delivering friendly and prompt customer service, while the bureaucracy of academia prepared me to be patient in the even-more bureaucratic federal government.

Years of teaching legal research and discussing research projects with high-profile faculty minimized any anxiety I might have once felt about presenting in monthly management team meetings or coordinating a new employee orientation. I have also been fortunate to have found colleagues and mentors, particularly at the beginning of my library career, who taught me both substantive skills and professional resilience. Without them, I might never have found the confidence to take on such an unusual position.

After two years, I still feel like I have so much to learn and do in this position. While I sometimes miss the calm of the ivory tower, I would make the same decision again if given the choice. ■

“This role is not one that anyone could plan or train to get. However, I credit my ability to do all the many diverse aspects of my job well to the rocky climb that brought me here.”



A Kabul Career Change and More

Andrea Muto

Research Services Librarian, Georgetown Law Library
amm574@georgetown.edu

My colleague was convinced the road to Bamiyan was safe—or at least safe enough. The conversation went something like this:

“It’s a world heritage site, almost totally secure,” she said, a bit unconvincingly. “Plus Laura Bush was just there. And it’s only about 100 miles from Kabul.”

“And only about a 100-mile bone-jarring ride over a mostly unpaved, potholed road, possibly questionable security checkpoints, and no bathrooms,” I replied. “And I’m thinking the First Lady probably traveled there with half the U.S. military in Afghanistan. We’re not.”

“Yes, but the Bamiyan buddhas! Still a stunning sight even after they were blown up. I can’t image when you’ll have another chance to see what’s left of them.”¹

Turns out, I didn’t make the trip to Bamiyan, but I have followed a few other risky routes along my changing career path. It’s a journey that continues from journalism to law to librarianship, and from Akron to Afghanistan to Washington, DC.

Ever since slinging pizzas during high school, I haven’t exactly calculated a career trajectory. Three or five or ten-year plans aren’t my thing, even if they should have been. I’ve often wondered where I would be today if I had stuck it out as a reporter, or practicing law, or in sales, or in international

development. My parachute’s been many colors—interesting colors I think—although I admit I’ve never read the book.²

In the late 80s, just out of undergrad, I took a first step toward my dream job as a Paris-based international news correspondent by joining the Willoughby News-Herald, a small Northeast Ohio daily whose sports section was larger than the rest of the entire newspaper. I was a reporter back in the day when newspapers were still paper and you could get away with smoking in the newsroom. After a couple of years covering utility board meetings, fires, and an occasional criminal trial, and having realized a Pulitzer was probably out of reach, I was ready for law school. Fast forward through a district court externship and a brief dip into working for a small bankruptcy firm, and library school seemed like a great career move.

Around the mid-90s, the internet was exploding and Kent State University’s school of library and information science was growing with the booming dot-com times. Plus, I had joined Ernst & Young’s national library in Cleveland, and E&Y’s

“My parachute’s been many colors—interesting colors I think—although I admit I’ve never read the book.”



world-wide, virtual reference service then was an exciting concept serving tax, audit, and consulting professionals—until I learned that our training consultant for LexisNexis was leaving the firm. I threw my hat into online legal publishing.

The LexisNexis Librarian Relations Group in 1997 was about 12 information professionals strong, serving law firm and law school librarian customers throughout the country. Living in Cleveland, my region included Detroit, Indianapolis and Cincinnati, to name a few Midwest garden spots (my colleagues during team meetings would lament the challenges covering their territories, claiming that “flying 8 hours to Honolulu every other quarter is a drag” and “I’m not sure what I think about management adding the Caribbean to my region”). Those were interesting years, as LexisNexis moved from software and dot commands to a web-based research product. It certainly sounds quaint now to think about technology headaches then— that for an online presentation, I once ran about 50 feet of phone cord from a paralegal’s fax machine to the conference room for a dial-up analog connection. Run a search and wait, hoping the catered lunch was enough to distract librarian customers while results slowly loaded on the screen.

I left Cleveland in 2001 for Washington, DC, still working with LexisNexis, but this time as an account manager. By 2007, though, I felt that my career path had become something of a career roundabout. I was comfortably circling, working with great colleagues and federal government customers, but I had a feeling maybe it was time to change—and I have AALL’s career center to thank for the off-ramp.

Skimming through postings one day, I spied one for a consultant with a library and legal background and experience in legal publishing. Check, check, check—but the position location was

Kabul, Afghanistan. Career change, country change and change the world—all in one. I applied on a Friday and the contracting company implementing the USAID rule of law project in Kabul hired me on Monday—recruiting staff then and now is a pretty difficult sell for Afghanistan.

Two weeks later I boarded the plane at Dulles, about as panicked and scared as I’ve ever been. I nearly lost it when the United Nations charter plane I had connected to in Dubai landed in Kabul. I wrapped a scarf around my head, and took a leap of faith into the unknown, and into an airport and city under bomb threats that morning.³ About two years later, we hosted a ribbon cutting ceremony for USAID and Kabul University staff celebrating the opening of a new law library I had developed with Afghan staff that would serve judicial training programs as well as professors and students from the university’s secular and Shari’a law faculties.⁴

The literature is replete with career change advice: how to do it in 12 steps, or at midlife, or how to propel your work life from good to great. Then there’s constructing a new professional identity after a layoff, supercharging your career with things like coding, or shifting gears completely from say law to hospitality. Much of this guidance discusses taking ownership of your

“I nearly lost it when the United Nations charter plane I had connected to in Dubai landed in Kabul. I wrapped a scarf around my head, and took a leap of faith into the unknown, and into an airport and city under bomb threats that morning.”



career and focusing on your passion. All great counsel, some of it I probably should have taken.

For me, career change meant the convergence of the right personal circumstances, and willingness to consider some risk as opportunity. I've been fortunate that nearly every time I've considered career change, the right circumstances with family, friends, and finances, were all in some kind of order. And, especially considering Kabul, it was easier for me to jump into international development being single without kids. Even though my time in Afghanistan was nerve-racking for my parents, sister, and close friends, they cheered me on, and with that support I continued working on overseas assignments for about 10 years for USAID rule of law projects in Kabul and Kosovo, and on short-term assignments in Liberia and Mali.⁵ That risk came with many rewards, although I'll admit transitioning back to DC was more difficult personally and professionally than I'd thought. The world I'd known here in 2007 had moved on, and I found myself playing catch-up.

Last year, I was fortunate to embark on a new career change—this time at the Georgetown University Law Library. Turning back to librarianship seemed just right, and while I hadn't thought I was academic law library material, I'm grateful that the Research Services department took a chance on me, coming from such a diverse career background. It's a brand-new world, with new and savvy colleagues, high-intensity faculty research projects, and students I'll support as they're making their way into their own promising legal careers.

That day in Kabul, after a few more 'is-it-safe-or-not' conversations, my colleague headed out to Bamiyan with two security guards. They were armed to the teeth and toured the ancient buddha statue site and its caves and carvings. She returned

the next day, and everything was fine, save for a stomachache from some undercooked goat from a roadside grill. Maybe I should have made the trek to Bamiyan; it's unlikely I'll ever see what's left of the buddhas. I'm following a new path now though, pouring myself into the challenges the information profession and academic libraries bring—and marking this time by again relishing a career change. ■

Notes

¹ The Taliban destroyed the 4th and 5th century Buddhas of Bamiyan in 2001. NBC News recently reported the story of an Afghan who was one of several prisoners forced at the time by the Taliban to plant explosives decimating the statues. Even though the entire Bamiyan valley in Afghanistan is a UNESCO heritage site, restoration efforts are hampered by lack of funding, and other competing concerns. Kiko Itaska, *Should Afghanistan's Bamiyan Buddhas Be Rebuilt?* NBC News (Nov. 29, 2017, 7:42 AM), <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/should-afghanistan-s-bamiyan-buddhas-be-rebuilt-n822781>.

² The seminal job-hunting/career changing title *What Color is Your Parachute?: A Practical Manual for Job-Hunters and Career-Changers* by Richard Nelson-Bolles has been on my reading list for my entire professional career. I plan to get to it eventually.

³ Later, security threats in Kabul would become routine and even bordered on the absurd. One in particular—and I'm not making this up—was an Embassy-issued threat that warned 'be on the alert for a one-legged man riding a bicycle wearing an IED in the vicinity of the Ministry of Justice.' Having occasionally worn a flak jacket, how a one-legged man could possibly load himself with explosives AND ride a bike was beyond me—I could never quite figure out how to make use of that kind of information.

⁴ In October 2016, I had the good fortune of delivering a TEDx Talk hosted by Cleveland State University. I told the story of developing the law library in Kabul, Afghanistan for USAID in 2008. If you'd like to see my 15:28 minutes of fame, here's my talk: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KdtbEO4ccJg>. The more views I have, the big main-stage TED may pick me up—wish me luck!

⁵ If you'd like to hear more about Afghanistan, Kosovo, Liberia, or Mali, let's go to happy hour. I promise I'll keep it short.



Like Technology? Hate Repetitive Tasks? Think about Learning to Code

Matt Zimmerman

*Electronic Resources Librarian, Georgetown Law Library
mlz4@law.georgetown.edu*



A few months ago, a colleague of mine needed to get some data out of a website. The site didn't offer any way to export search results to a spreadsheet, it didn't present the data in a table that could be easily copied and pasted, and it couldn't return all the results my colleague needed in a single search. She had to run repeated searches and then laboriously select, copy, and paste just the bits of info she needed. Oh, and my colleague had to repeat this process multiple times each year.

Annoying, right? I thought so, anyway. I scrambled back to my desk and cooked up a JavaScript program that doesn't replace the whole process, but automates the most tedious part of it.

It uses the structure of the rows in the search results to sniff out the information that my colleague needed and stick it in a tidy table at the top of the page. That way she can just copy-and-paste it into Excel. It's far from a perfect solution, but it saves her lots of time and annoyance. Plus, she can run it straight from Chrome without any special software or tools.

The power to reduce or eliminate boring, tedious, time-consuming work is a major benefit of learning to code. You can do really cool, useful stuff with simple tools and basic knowledge.

There are downsides, of course. It's easy to come to rely on hastily-written code written by a specific person for a specific purpose, but such code can be a nightmare to maintain. It's also easy to get in over

Tech Talk, Continued

your head. Security, data integrity, scalability, and accessibility are big issues that must be addressed for applications that need to reach beyond your laptop. Talk to your IT team when you get to that stage.

Nevertheless, I'm a big believer in saving myself work and having fun while I'm at it. Plus, demonstrated technical skill is always nice to have.

There are a number of useful programming languages and platforms, and the exact skills that might benefit you depend on your work and interests. Take a look around your environment and consider what you use and what your workplace can support. I used JavaScript in the example above because I wanted to manipulate stuff on a web page. That's what JS was born to do, although these days it can do a whole lot more. Make sure you have a solid understanding of HTML and CSS as well for working in this arena.

Common, general purpose languages for people just learning to program include Python and Ruby. There's lots of support online for these. I got my start with PHP, which is useful when working with PHP-based content

management systems like WordPress and Drupal.

Application suites like Microsoft Office and Google's G Suite also have possibilities for tweaking through coding. Macros in Visual Basic can automate tasks in Excel, Access, and Word. Google Apps Script (based on JavaScript) lets you manipulate Google Sheets, Docs, and Forms.

A great way to get started with any of these is to find a decent online tutorial, like the ones on CodeAcademy or Lynda.com. Oh, and don't forget to pick up a code editor such as Atom for Mac or Notepad++ for Windows. These free tools have a number of features for programmers that you won't find in MS Word.

Finally, be patient. The learning curve with online tutorials usually starts you off gently. There's a big distance to cross from displaying "Hello world" in a window to doing anything actually useful. Take your time, ask for help and remember that these skills have value for a reason. It's not always easy. ■

Questions? Comments? Advice to share?
Please let me know at matt.zimmerman@georgetown.edu

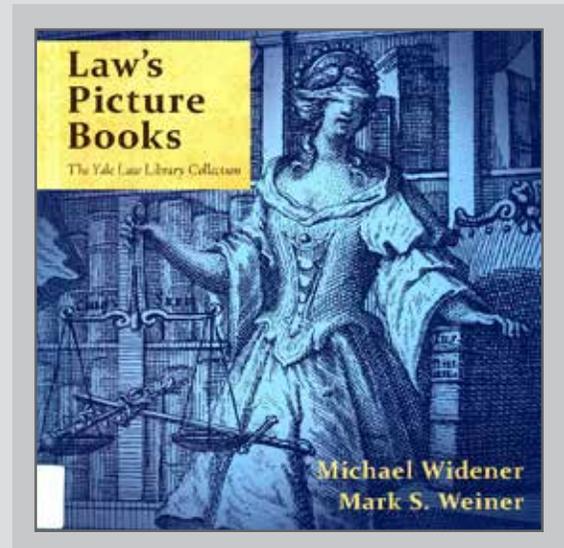


Book Review

Michael Widener & Mark S. Weiner, *Law's Picture Books: The Yale Law Library Collection*, Yale Law Library (2017)

Khelani Clay

Assistant Law Librarian, American University Washington
College of Law, kclay@wcl.american.edu



Law's Picture Books is a beautiful catalog of illustrations from materials in the rare books collection at Yale Law School's law library. Yale Law School's rare book librarian Michael Widener and Mark S. Weiner, a professor at Rutgers Law School, co-curated the volume and its physical exhibits at the Yale Law Library itself and the Grolier Club in New York City. The impetus behind the collection is to showcase the law library's rare book collection and explore the intersection between law and visual culture.

The collection ultimately is an attempt to maintain cultural artifacts, but also to bolster the "growing field of legal iconography" and illuminate how the law is visually manifested. In a field known for its wordiness, a collection that explores the use of visual media in the law is a relief. This collection was carefully curated and different illustrations available in various law texts are distinguished. Widener and Weiner have categorized the collection into ten categories including, among others, depicting, symbolizing, diagramming, arguing, and laughing at the law.

Going through the essays and pictures included in *Law's Picture Books* it is clear that the illustrations in law books are used for many purposes from aesthetics to summaries. Divided into ten sections, it contains various illustrations included or manifested in law books. When thinking about legal illustration one of the first things that come to mind is courtroom renderings or lawyer jokes and legal cartoons, but as the authors and curators clarify, these illustrations run a gamut of different mediums and purposes. Many were originally included in the tomes as supplemental material that either summarized, depicted, or analyzed the text in the book. Each section is a different type of legal illustration with at least nine examples of images from each category. There is a quick explanation of the section and its context, and each image contains a citation to the original work and a short description.

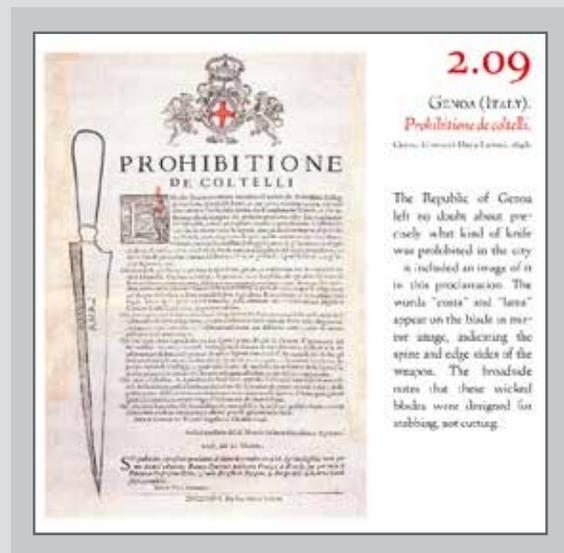
The book itself is beautiful; it is divided into sections with beautiful typeface and color schemes that complement the full-color images from the collection. The pictures and descriptions are put

Book Review, Continued

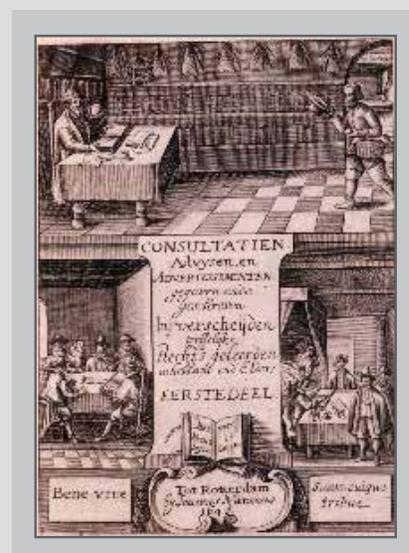
into context by several essays by scholars and rare book specialists. Widener begins with a discussion of his own interest in these illustrations and legal texts and the considerations that went into the exhibit's curation. The first essay gives a qualification of what constitutes a "book," "law book," and "illustration" for this exhibit. He explains that, while some law books might contain pictures or other visual aids, the collection contains illustrations with some "legal content", which can range from treatises and scholarly works to parodies and comic books.

Based on the collection, using visual aids to depict the law and legal knowledge predates medieval times. Some illustrations in these materials are a "pictorial transcript" or "visual interpretation" of the law according to the third essay by Jolande E. Goldberg, of the Law Library of Congress. The first section of *Law's Picture Books* is "symbolic" depictions of the law. Historical texts would often include illustrations depicting the principles of the substantive legal text. Lady Justice and other cultural symbols for justice, such as the Judgment of Solomon, are overarching themes in legal text illustrations and are the subject of the first set of pictures in the section "symbolizing the law".

Going further, some illustrations are meant to concretely and literally illustrate the law. Rather than Lady Justice as a symbol for law and justice, these drawings give a picture of things such as criminal acts or the act of fornication in the thirteenth century as featured in the second section on "depicting the law." For instance, the drawing in 2.09 is a rendering of a knife prohibited in 17th century Genoa, it gives a clear



idea of what kind of knife was illegal. The images featured in the "arguing the law" section are also literal depictions, they are the illustrations and media used in courtroom settings as evidence or were actual depictions of crime scenes, infliction of punishment, or mapping an incident. While the section "staging the law" is a collection of materials that portray legal settings such as courtrooms, specific trials, and, in at least one instance, law offices (see 5.06).



The illustrations can also include portrayals of "inflicting" the law, including gruesome pictures of executions and other events where justice is effectuated.



Book Review, Continued

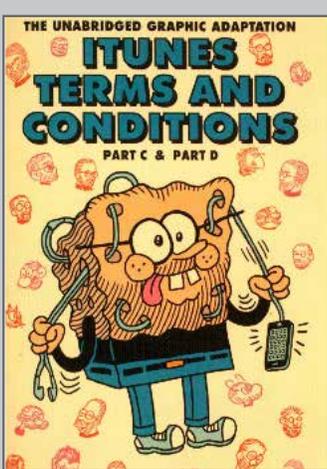
These images were included in law books either for storytelling purposes or for instruction, such as item 6.03 (p. 116), an image in “the standard handbook of criminal law in northern Europe” in the sixteenth century.¹ This image depicts torture as a method for getting “facts” from a person. While modern society can no longer stomach such gruesome images, they were regularly included in historical texts either as a deterrent or for historical depiction. Cesare Beccaria, the father of criminal justice, similarly

used imagery showing Lady Justice turning away from the infliction of torture and the death penalty as a representation of his views on the practice (see item 6.09, p. 122). While the collection is of rare books, it is not just a historical collection. Some of the selected materials presented in *Law’s Picture Books* are modern depictions such as the graphic

depiction of the iTunes terms in section nine, which is dedicated to figurative illustrations of legal concepts such as parodies and comical depictions of the law.

Getting away from symbols and depictions, the book also features illustrations that serve a functional purpose in learning or understanding the law. Specifically, there is a range of diagrams and charts that range from canonical arbores that depict various relationships, to sketches and diagrams with mnemonic functions. These diagrams are included in the section “diagramming the law,” which contains images depicting various legal relationships, such as family trees that depict family structure and consanguinity for marriage and inheritance purposes, such as the diagram in section 3.02 which according to the authors might be one of the first illustrations in a legal text. There are also other types of examples in the section “Teaching the Law” that either depict fledgling law scholars or are modern approaches to imparting the law and legal concepts. For instance, this section includes renderings of comic books and other materials aimed at synthesizing legal concepts such as the cover of *Bound by Law* on page 156. *Bound by Law* is an attempt by three law professors to graphically explain copyright law.

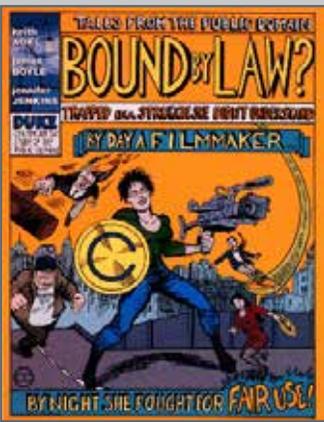
In the last essay, Erin C. Blake of the Folger Shakespeare Library discusses the actual printing processes for these books and illustrations. The evolution of the printing techniques afforded various ways to integrate illustrations into legal texts. As these printing techniques evolved,



Notes

¹ Mike Widener, Damhoudere’s illustrated law books, Yale Law School Lillian Goldman Law Library Blog (November 2, 2010), <http://library.law.yale.edu/news/damhouderes-illustrated-law-books>.

Book Review, Continued



it became easier to put them into the text themselves. By allowing for visual depictions of very complex topics, students can better learn and interpret the law. During the medieval

centuries, both the printing techniques and emerging ideas of symbolism and mnemonics were introduced, assisting students and scholars with taking in and disseminating massive amounts of information and to helping them memorize these complex concepts. This is reminiscent of newly published materials that juxtapose visual aids with text.

Current services, like Quimbee for law students, similarly incorporate summaries, outlines, and videos to teach legal concepts. Legal texts also have incorporated various visual media into their format. Just as the *memoria* era, which, according to Jolande Goldberg's essay, evolved during medieval times, publishers are finding ways to incorporate new and innovative forms of media into the text, to achieve the same mnemonic functions. Recently, Robert C. Berring and West introduced the *Legal Research Survival Manual [with Video Modules]* a legal research course that incorporates video learning, a textbook and other media, and earlier this year, Lexis published *The Wagstaffe Group Practice Guide: Federal Civil Procedure Before Trial*, a practice guide that incorporates videos, a first of its kind.²

As technology, the human psyche, and the law evolve, these new mediums will continue to flourish, but they still harken back to the same concepts that existed in medieval times whereby visual media can bolster published legal materials and provide an avenue to contextualize and present the very complex and nuanced topics of law. Legal illustrations also represent an evolution of the depiction and interpretation of the law. From plates cast as illustrations depicting text to graphical renditions of online terms of service contracts, there is a place for the intersection between graphics and the law. ■

Notes

² See *Legal Research Survival Manual with Video Modules*, 2d, WEST ACADEMIC (last visited September 18, 2017), http://store.westacademic.com/Berring_and_Levys_The_Legal_Research_Survival_Manual_with_Video_Modules_2d_9781683284659.html; and see Robert Ambrogi, In Possible First, New Lexis Advance CivPro Practice Guide Includes Embedded Videos, LAW SITES BLOG (May 24, 2017), <https://www.lawsitesblog.com/2017/05/possible-first-new-lexis-advance-civpro-practice-guide-includes-embedded-videos.html>.



Law Librarians' Society of Washington, D.C.

A Chapter of the American Association of Law Libraries

EXECUTIVE BOARD

President

Elizabeth Schiller
202/707-1680
president@llsdc.org

Vice President/President-Elect

Emily Florio
202/216-5374
president@llsdc.org

Corresponding Secretary

Pam Lipscomb
202/857-6269
correspondingsecretary@llsdc.org

Recording Secretary

Jennifer Dollar
202/220-1530
recordingsecretary@llsdc.org

Treasurer

Amy Taylor
202/508-8721
treasurer@llsdc.org

Assistant Treasurer

Tom Koldziej
202/508-8721
asst.treasurer@llsdc.org

Immediate Past President

Andrew Martin
202/273-3724
president@llsdc.org

Membership Secretary

Jeff Berns
202/879-4055
membership@llsdc.org

BOARD MEMBERS

John Moore
202/275-8403
boardmember@llsdc.org

Anne M. Guha
202/662-9180
boardmember@llsdc.org

COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

Access to Justice

Kris Roth, Chair
202/626-6752
kris.roth@squirepb.com

Archives

Alicia Pappas, Chair
202/533-4943
apappas@kpmg.com

Arrangements

Alicia Pappas, Chair
202/533-4943
apappas@kpmg.com

Bylaws Revisions

Jeff Berns, Chair
202/879-4055
jeff.berns@spiegelmc.com

Education

Pamela Lipscomb, Co-Chair
202/857-6269
pamela.lipscomb@arentfox.com

Mary Kate Hunter, Co-Chair

202/994-5914
mhunter@law.gwu.edu

Elections

Nancy Ciliberti, Chair
202/521-4586
nciliberti@ustaxcourt.gov

Law Library Managers' Group

Ann Green, Chair
202/408-4706
ann.green@hugheshubbard.com

Mentoring & Volunteering

Alicia Pappas, Chair
202/533-4943
apappas@kpmg.com

Nominations

Steve Mellin, Chair
202/639-6012
smellin@jenner.com

Placement

Dawn Sobol, Chair
202/319-5956
sobol@law.edu

Public Relations

Thomas Kolodziej, Chair
202/508-8721
pr@llsdc.org

Scholarships & Grants

Edward O'Rourke, Chair
202/637-7967
edward.orourke@bakerbotts.com

Website

Pamela Lipscomb, Chair
202/857-6269
webmaster@llsdc.org

GENERAL LEGAL PUBLICATIONS

Union List

Keith Gabel, Chair
202/466-1267
kgabel@stewartlaw.com

Law Library Lights

Andrew Lang
202/662-9141
awl20@georgetown.edu

SPECIAL INTEREST SECTIONS

Academic Law Libraries

Rachel Jorgensen, President
202/662-9139
roj2@law.georgetown.edu

Federal Law Librarians

Jasmine Chmiel, President
202/353-8892
jasminechmiel@gmail.com

Foreign & International Law

Heather Casey, President
202/661-6573
hec29@law.georgetown.edu

Interlibrary Loan

Steven Shearer, President
202/429-6249
sshearer@steptoe.com

Legislative Research

Jeff Bird, President
202/350-5186
jeffrey.bird@lw.com

Private Law Libraries

Arlene Fletcher, President
202/508-8950
afletcher@crowell.com

LAW LIBRARY LIGHTS

Editor

Andrew Lang
202/662-9141
awl20@law.georgetown.edu

Assistant Editor

Anne M. Guha
202/662-9180
amg300@georgetown.edu

Book Review

Khelani Clay
202/274-4441
kclay@wcl.american.edu

Tech Talk

Matt Zimmerman
202/662-9179
mlz4@law.georgetown.edu

Law Library Lights is published quarterly by the Law Librarians' Society of Washington, D.C., Inc. 20009, ISSN 0546-2483. Beginning with Vol. 50, #1 (Fall 2006), Law Library Lights is now published in PDF format on the LLSDC website: www.llsdc.org. Notification of availability of each new issue will be sent to the LLSDC listserv.

If you would like to receive individual e-mail notification when new issues are published, please send an e-mail to Andrew Lang, awl20@georgetown.edu. LLSDC does not assume any responsibility for the statements advanced by contributors to Law Library Lights. The views expressed herein are those of the individual authors and do not constitute an endorsement by LLSDC.

