

FREE LEGAL RESEARCH TOOLS ON THE INTERNET. NOCALL SPRING INSTITUTE 2011, Pre-Institute Roundtable, Carolina Rose, moderator. Time and date: Friday, April 8, 10:30-11:30am. Location: Chart Room, Sir Frances Drake Hotel, San Francisco

Contributors: Sharon Lahey, Ramona Martinez, Ellen Platt, Terry Richards, Lee Ryan, Carolina Rose

FINDLAW: <http://www.findlaw.com/>

A NOCALL member asked: "Does anyone have any experience with Findlaw.com? We continue to find ways to spend less money in this tight economy. Our Lexis bill continues to be a large expense and Westlaw is close to the same. Findlaw seems to be a much less expensive alternative. Any thoughts would be appreciated." A MEMBER REPLIED: "I think Findlaw.com is great. I use it a lot for cases and codes, all states and federal. It's a good idea to keep your Westlaw and LexisNexis use down by accessing alternative free sources whenever possible since they renegotiate their contracts based on time/usage. So the less you are on it, the more you save on your next contract."

CALIFORNIA JUDICIARY, REGULATORY, LEGISLATIVE, CONSTITUTIONAL

Case Related

- Official California cases published by LexisNexis, 1850 - present:
<http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/opinions/continue.htm>
- Supreme Court goodies (opinions, briefs, documents, news, etc.) 1934 – present¹
<http://sccal.stanford.edu/>
- Findlaw: <http://www.findlaw.com/casecode/>

Regulatory

- Official California Administrative Code published by Westlaw²:
<http://www.calregs.com/linkedslice/default.asp?SP=CCR-1000&Action=Welcome>
- Wage Orders, Language Evolution & Statement of Basis, 1980 - current
 - Use this data base to track how the language has evolved from 1980 to current and to obtain some (not all) "Statement of Basis"
<http://www.dir.ca.gov/iwc/wageorderindustriesprior.htm>
 - Or the alternative web site which also tracks them from 1980 <http://www.apartment-manager-law.com/iwc-wage-orders.htm>

Codes & Statutes

- California Codes published by the California Legislature:³
<http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/calaw.html>
- Findlaw: <http://www.findlaw.com/casecode/>
- California Session / Chaptered Laws published by the California Assembly.⁴

¹ "SCOCAL is a joint project between Justia and Stanford Law School Library. With annotations written by the Advanced Legal Research class at Stanford Law School, SCOCAL is where readers can locate free opinions from 1934 to the present, annotations, briefs, documents and news relating to California Supreme Court opinions." (Thanks to Lee Ryan for this link!)

² Search options: Search for a Specific Regulatory Section; Search for Words; List of CCR Titles; Agency List for CCR. (Lee especially noted the Agency List.)

³ It offers to be current through the 2010 Statutes. (Updated annually.)

- 1850-2008 <http://192.234.213.35/clerkarchive/>
- 1993-current <http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/statute.html>
- California 1872 Code Enactments (Civil Code, Code of Civil Procedure, Penal Code, Political Code)⁵ posted by Carolina Rose/LRI.
<http://www.Irihistory.com/clients/1872.htm>

Legislative and Constitutional History

- Statewide Ballot Materials, 911 forward, posted by Hastings Law School
<http://library.uchastings.edu/library/california-research/ca-ballot-pamphlets.html>
- California Legislative History Materials published by the Legislature: 1992 – current.
<http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/bilinfo.html>
- Law Revision Commission: <http://www.clrc.ca.gov/>
- A GOOGLE BOOK favorite of Carolina Rose: The 3 volume set of 1878 CA Constitutional debates⁶ are word searchable on Google online books. You can download them, but you lose word searchability. Volume 3 has a terrific index.⁷

FEDERAL

Codes, Statutes, Legislative History

- Cornell University for annotated federal codes, etc.
<http://www.law.cornell.edu/statutes.html>
- United States Code, 1994-2006 editions <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/uscode/>
- Searchable Statutes at Large, 1789-2007 <http://www.constitution.org/uslaw/sal/sal.htm>
- Thomas, Library of Congress for federal legislative history <http://thomas.loc.gov/>
- GPO Congressional Committee Reports, 1995 – current
<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/browse/collection.action?collectionCode=CRPT>
- GPO Congressional Record, 1994-current (by year/month/day)
<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/browse/collection.action?collectionCode=CREC>
- Law Librarian Society of Washington D.C., Legislative History helps <http://www.llsdc.org/>
- Gallagher Law Library, Univ. of Washington School of Law, legislative history helps
<http://lib.law.washington.edu/ref/fedlegishist.html>

Regulatory

- Code of Federal Regulations, 1996-current: <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/cfr/index.html>
- Federal Registers, 1994 to current <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/index.html>
- SEC rules & regulations - <http://www.aspenpublishers.com/SecureRedbox/>

BUSINESS & PERSONAL SEARCHES

TERRY RICHARDS SUGGESTS: www.Veromi.com⁸

⁴ Westlaw & LexisNexis cover this under their Legislative Service, 1980's to current I believe. It's a really good idea to show how a CA statute has evolved over time. Sometimes slam dunk arguments jump right out at you. (E.g., the other side is reading words into a statute that used to be there but were later stricken.)

⁵ These 1872 Code Enactments are published separately. They do not appear in the online Assembly Archives of session laws, 1850 forward. LRI copied them from the State Library for free public access.

⁶ *Debates and Proceedings of the Constitutional Convention of the State of California*, Sept. 28, 1878, by E. B. Willis, P. K. Stockton, California Constitutional Convention – 1881,

⁷ Other tips: (1) Use italics for fixed phrases. E.g., if you type in “illegal voting” without italics you get all of “illegal “and all of “voting.” With italics, you only get “illegal voting.” (2) Word searches do not substitute for using the index in vol. 3. (3) Don't try to scroll to the pages online. It will make you crazy. Just click to the listed linked pages.

⁸ Terry Richards wrote: “It is not ranked highly by this People ranking service below, but I use it often because it is like a free mini-Accurint search. Without paying for their full reports, I can quickly verify very basic information

SOME OF SHARON LAHEY'S FAVORITES IN THIS AREA:

- CA Business Search - <http://kepler.sos.ca.gov/cbs.aspx>
- DE Business Search - <https://delecorp.delaware.gov/tin/GINameSearch.jsp>
- Domain Name Search - <http://www.networksolutions.com/whois/index.jsp>
- CA State Bar attorney search - <http://www.calbar.ca.gov/>
- Martindale-Hubbell Directory search (I use this to search the digests) - <http://www.martindale.com/legal-library/advanced-search.aspx>
- PriceWaterhouseCoopers Money Tree (great for venture capital information) - <https://www.pwcmoneytree.com/MTPublic/ns/index.jsp>
- SEC rules & Regulations - <http://www.aspenpublishers.com/SecureRedbox/>

GOOGLE SCHOLAR. <http://scholar.google.com/intl/en/scholar/about.html>

TERRY RICHARDS SAYS: "I like how they enable you to choose whether you want patents or case law or journal in your search results, etc." More:

- ABA Journal:
http://www.abajournal.com/news/article/google_offers_legal_research_for_the_average_citizenand_lawyers_too
- This person previously has reviewed Google Scholar, but here he talks about the "how Cited" feature. Google Scholar – Powerful Free Legal Research Tool
http://lawprofessors.typepad.com/legal_skills/2011/03/google-scholar-powerful-free-legal-research-tool.html
- Testing Google Scholar for Legal Research
http://lawprofessors.typepad.com/law_librarian_blog/2009/11/testing-google-scholar-for-legal-research.html

RAMONA MARTINEZ' BUNDLE OF FREE SOURCES. bit.ly/frkROO

Ramona Martinez wrote: "I recently did a presentation on free legal research stuff on the web and I put together a "bundle" of links on bit.ly. You can find it at bit.ly/frkROO ."

SOLUTIONS FOR "LINK ROT" FROM ELLEN PLATT. Here are items that Ellen Platt gleaned from "The Internet Guide for the Legal Researcher."⁹ She writes: "There are a few sites that you should keep bookmarked for those times you need to find dead, rotten, or defunct web sites."

- **CyberCemetery:** <http://govinfo.library.unt.edu/search.htm>. It is a joint project between the University of North Texas Libraries and the U.S. Government Printing Office that attempts to provide permanent public access to the web sites and publications of defunct U.S. government agencies and commissions. The URL above will take you to the search page.
- **Internet Archive** at <http://www.archive.org/index.php>, along with a resource that can be accessed from that page, the Wayback Machine. This service allows you to browse through 150 billion web pages (up from 85 billion when I first conducted this linkrot research) archived from 1996 to "a few months ago." When I checked the advanced search page for the Wayback Machine, however, the date restrictors only went back to 2005, although there are documents in their database with dates later than 2005.. To start surfing the Wayback, type in the web address of a site or page where you would like to start, and press enter.

about people just by knowing a city in which they have lived or trying city names where they likely live now. Guessing can frequently narrow the results enough responses to figure out which person in the list is the one you are seeking." "If it is appropriate, next I may go to other subscriptions that the firm does have for a formal inquiry, but I begin with better information by starting with a quick, free, check-in search in Veromi." "People Search Services Review <http://people-search-services-review.toptenreviews.com/> "

⁹ Helps when you lose your phone <http://www.icantfindmyphone.com>

- **Archive-It** (<http://www.archive-it.org/>), a subscription service from the Internet Archive. Institutions can harvest and preserve collections of digital content and create Digital Archives. Archive-It partners can catalog, manage, and browse their archived collections. Collections are hosted at the Internet Archive data center and are accessible to the public with full-text search. As of March 9, 2011, Archive-It has collected 2,520,344,228 URLs for 1,352 public collections.
For some general knowledge about the problem of linkrot, check out Wikipedia's

MOBILE APPS FOR LAW FROM ELLEN PLATT

- <http://www.mobileappsforlaw.com>
- <http://libguides.law.ucla.edu/content.php?pid=112286&sid=845584>.

AALL'S 2011 TEACH-IN KIT: <http://www.aallnet.org/sis/ripssis/TeachIn/2011/index.html>
Ellen also points out: "And, how about the RIPS-SIS Teach In kits? Here's the message about this year's release (and a link to past kits available online):"

RIPS Teach-In Kit Now Available

The Research Instruction and Patron Services SIS is proud to announce the release of the 19th Annual National Legal Research Teach-In Kit. Each year in conjunction with National Library Week, RIPS creates a Teach-In Kit containing fresh materials for use in your institution's promotional and instructional activities. This year's kit includes PowerPoint presentations, research assignments, lesson plans, syllabi, and more on a variety of topics including health law, animal law, and Google Scholar.

The 2011 Teach-In Kit is available now on the RIPS-SIS web page. A kit overview and previous Teach-In Kits are also available at that location.