

# NOCALL News

Northern California Association of Law Libraries  
A chapter of the American Association of Law Libraries

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Delia Montesinos, Ropes & Gray LLP

Folks, I'll be honest, I have NO clue how I got here. By here, I mean writing this column as NOCALL's president. Had you told me two years ago I'd find myself in this position today I would have laughed. Because, you see, I very successfully spent 10 years in stealth mode, attending conferences and events but ignoring most meetings and, ashamed to say, calls for volunteers. My best guess is that I popped up on someone's radar when I presented a session on competitive intelligence. Or perhaps it was penning the tech column that brought my name to someone's attention. How those two seemingly small events parlayed into becoming your president remains a mystery to me. But, it has turned out to be the most wonderful, serendipitous experience: I have gained a bunch of new skills, I have faces to go along with the names that come through the listserv, I have felt less lonely during COVID, and my firm is tickled pink I'm raising its profile within the law librarian community.

Why did I shy away from actively participating in NOCALL for so many years? My excuses are many ... and they are all wrong, wrong, and more wrong. I'll deconstruct the top three for you:

1. I only joined because wanted access to the listserv. That's a good one; can't argue with it. Or, can I? Because, you see, I now know who has what and I can reach out to them directly. And each time I do so, I further develop my relationship with them. I get to know them better, which somehow makes me feel less alone as my firm's solo west coast librarian.
2. It felt ... cliquish. That one is 1000% on me. If I felt like an outsider looking in, it's because at events I glued myself to my co-workers and didn't interact much. Even when folks came over to say hello, I barely engaged with them. That I remained on the sidelines and didn't take advantage of those wonderful opportunities is entirely my fault. I am an introvert and don my extrovert garb very reluctantly but in retrospect, seeing how much effort everyone put into getting to know me, I should have tried harder. A (big, big) loss that I'm trying to rectify.
3. They don't need me. Why did I think this? Because I kept seeing the same names popping up when calls for volunteers/nominations went out. Instead of thinking about joining their ranks, I assumed they would continue to take care of things, as they always had, or that others would volunteer to take their place. Either way, I considered myself to be off the hook. I mean,



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who has time for this, right? Between work/family/other the last thing I needed were more meetings, more items on my never-ending to-do list. Look, I'm not going to lie to you: it is more work. But a) it's far less work than you think, b) it's a welcome break from what is often a numbing routine, and c) not only does it look darn good on a resume but it ticks off many boxes on job performance reviews.

So, this is my call for more involvement on your part: join/chair a committee (we have a few [posts open](#)); nominate yourself for a board position (call for nominations just went out to the listserv!); make sure your coworkers are [members](#); attend a meeting or event (next Business Meeting will be January 26th).

Simply stated, don't be me. Better stated, be me now: fully engaged with an amazing community of people who not only share my profession but who are truly interested in me as a person, warts and all. Even better: aim to be more. Be Diane Rodriguez, whose involvement in NOCALL has led to her current post as President of AALL—in case you missed it, here's her very inspiring [Spring Institute chat](#).

And if I still haven't convinced you, please send me your suggestions on how we can make NOCALL work better for you.

## NOCALL News

The NOCALL News is published five times a year by the Northern California Association of Law Libraries, a chapter of the American Association of Law Libraries, and is a benefit of membership.

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## LEGAL TECH RECAP

Kristie Chamorro, UC Berkeley Law Library

A lot has happened on the legal tech front since the last newsletter. I'm continuing with a survey of updates and new tools. If there is a tech issue or resource that you think is worth taking a deep dive into, please let me know!

### BLOOMBERG LAW

In September, Bloomberg Law introduced the [Return-to-Office Toolkit](#), which it describes as “an invaluable resource for in-house and employment attorneys navigating the complex issues and legal pitfalls related to bringing employees back to the office.” The new toolkit is available on both the [In Focus: Remote Work](#) and the [Practical Guidance](#) pages (links require subscription).

The September CRIV blog's [Bloomberg Law Bi-Annual Call Summary](#) lists other new tools and updates.

### GAVELYTICS

In August, Gavelytics [announced](#) a “massive upgrade” to their [litigation analytics platform](#), including “new functionality, analytics, data categories, and platform infrastructure enhancements.” In a recent [Dewey B Strategic](#) post, Jean O'Grady summarizes these enhancements, including an API that can directly deliver litigation analytics into workflows, a new user interface design, and expanded motion practice analytics.

### GOOGLE

This summer, Google introduced a newly enhanced [About This Result](#) panel (the three dots next to most search results) that provides additional search result information, including matching keywords, related terms, and local relevance. In a recent [Musings About Librarianship](#) post, Aaron Tay demonstrates how this update can save a great deal of search frustration by showing what Google was “thinking” for each individual result.

### HEINONLINE

HeinOnline recently introduced [PathFinder](#), a suite of multidisciplinary browse and search tools for subject specific research. The HeinOnline

team [explains](#) how they have organized the growing number of research concepts in their multidisciplinary content into a “multi-level taxonomy. The [August 26 Wisblawg post](#) notes that PathFinder “still has a few bumps,” but that it offers “more robust subject searching.”

In August, HeinOnline also [announced](#) a new collection of free materials, the [Open Society Justice Initiative](#), the fourth database added to its [Social Justice Suite](#). This database contains handbooks, reports, briefing papers, and other resources “exploring and advocating on issues of human rights and justice.”

### JSTOR

This summer JSTOR announced an updated beta version of [Text Analyzer](#), which processes text from an uploaded document, such as an article or draft paper, to generate a list of related articles and subject terms. A recent Pritzker School of Law [Resource Spotlight](#) points out that Westlaw and Lexis use similar artificial intelligence technology in their brief checking tools, but that TextAnalyzer is the first tool to apply this type of AI in a scholarly setting. For more detail on how to use Text Analyzer, take a look at JSTOR's [Search with Text Analyzer](#) guide and video.

### JUSTICETEXT

[JusticeText](#) is an exciting new platform that uses machine learning algorithms to transcribe video footage and create searchable transcription, helping overburdened public defenders quickly sift through video evidence. Devshi Mehrotra and Leslie Jones-Dove, who co-founded JusticeText after developing the idea through their University of Chicago capstone project, [explain](#) that JusticeText “allows us to combine our identity of computer scientists and people who want to make change through activism and advocacy.” A recent [Legal Rebels podcast](#) episode features an interview with Mehrotra, who explains that their goal is to “continue putting JusticeText in the hands of more people who can utilize it.”

### LAW LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

In June, the Law Library of Congress [refreshed](#) its website, [Law.gov](#). The new, cleaner Law.gov homepage highlights the most used Law Library

services and has an updated search bar. A popular new website feature is the [Researcher Resources](#) page, which includes links to research guides, the [Guide to Law Online](#), and other useful research starting points.

## LEXIS+

A new enhancement to the Lexis+ ecosystem is the [Legal News Hub](#), which allows users to access content from Law360 and Law360 Pulse without having to leave Lexis+. The new features of Legal News Hub include sections on top and trending stories, 76 practice areas, and a single click search feature (this [short video](#) gives an overview). Jean O'Grady gives a [review](#) and notes her personal reservations about keeping current awareness content behind a paywall.

For an in-depth look at other Lexis updates and news, check out the CRIV blog's June [LexisNexis Semiannual Call Summary](#).

## LEX MACHINA

[Lex Machina](#) recently introduced a new "fetch" functionality that allows users to request and retrieve specific documents from state court dockets in the 22 state courts covered by Lex Machina's analytics. In his [August 31 post](#), Bob Ambrogi gives a rundown of the new functionality and explains that it "is designed to enable users to dig into the details of analytics research they perform on Lex Machina, obtaining specific motions, orders or other documents that can provide details beyond what is revealed through docket entries."

## OCLC

This summer, OCLC [announced](#) its new Open Access Content database on the [OCLC FirstSearch](#) service. This new database enables researchers to easily find open access content from well-known content providers.

## WESTLAW

In July, Thomson Reuters [announced](#) the launch of the [Practical Law Dynamic Tool Set](#), which uses "next-generation, technology-driven features in Practical Law that use AI and dynamic graphical navigation," including: Dynamic Search, Knowledge Maps, Quick Compare, Interactive Matter Maps and What's Market Analytics. O'Grady

gives a helpful overview of the new features in her [July 12 post](#).

Earlier in the summer, Westlaw [announced](#) the release of Contrary Authority, a new feature of Quick Check, Westlaw's brief analyzer. This new feature "jumpstarts" the drafting of a response brief by identifying cases that are contrary to your opponents' arguments.

## WOLTERS KLUWER

This summer, Wolters Kluwer Legal & Regulatory U.S. announced an expanded version of its [COVID-19 State & Federal Compare Smart Chart](#). The new areas of coverage include "a wide range of back to office content and caselaw related to the pandemic."

The CRIV blog's July [Wolter Kluwer Bi-annual Call Summary](#) lists other new Wolter Kluwer content and updates.

## THINGS TO YOU SHOULD CHECK OUT

[Law Technology Today](#), the ABA Legal Technology Resource Center's blog, published "Law Technology Today Top 10" reports for [June](#) and [July](#). The listings include helpful legal tech tips and updates, including [The Top Three Tools When Comparing Documents with a Mac and Microsoft Excel for Legal Professionals](#).

Speaking of Microsoft, Eugene Volokh's July 26 post, [Word Processing for Lawyers](#), discusses why word processing is a crucial legal technology tool and reviews the basic principles of effective document design. A recent [Legal Technology Today](#) post also emphasizes the importance of being able to effectively use Microsoft Word, and links to the recent ABA/Affinity Consulting Group's [Microsoft Word for Legal Professionals](#) manual.

The [August 26 Above the Law post](#) summarizes the legal technology trends identified in the 2021 ABA Profile of the Legal Profession report. Some of the most interesting statistics in this year's report relate to social media use, legal research, and the hardware and software choices of lawyers.

Finally, a September Law Technology Today article, [A Law Clerk's Advice for Communicating During the Pandemic](#), has great tips for advocating and communicating in a digital world.

## PROFESSIONAL READING IN REVIEW

Elisabeth McKechnie and Kristin Brandt  
U.C. Davis Law Library

**“Citing Slavery,”** by Justin Simard, 72 Stan. L. Rev. 79, 2020, available at <https://review.law.stanford.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2020/01/Simard-72-Stan.-L.-Rev.-79.pdf>

Law Professor Justin Simard’s article prompted a rare post-printing Bluebook revision. In the article, Simard documents the ways courts routinely cite cases involving enslaved persons as precedent. Judges do not acknowledge the cases’ origins in slavery or question whether such cases remain good law. Bluebook editors responded by revising Rule 10.7.1. The revision is only available in the online edition.

According to the Bluebook’s Noteworthy **Changes to the 2021 Printing:**

**Rule 10.7.1(d)** now covers slave cases. For cases involving an enslaved person as a party, use the parenthetical “(enslaved party).” For cases involving an enslaved person as the subject of a property or other legal dispute but named as a party to the suit, use the parenthetical “(enslaved person at issue).” For other cases involving enslaved persons, use an adequately-descriptive parenthetical.

- Dred Scott v. Sanford, 60 U.S. (19 How.) 393 (1857) (enslaved party), *superseded by constitutional amendment*, U.S. Const. amend. XIV.
- Wall v. Wall, 30 Miss. 91 (1855) (enslaved person at issue).

See <https://www.legalbluebook.com/preface-to-the-twenty-first-edition>.

**“Emergency Remote Library Instruction and Tech Tools: A Matter of Equity During the Pandemic,”** by Kathia Ibacache, Amanda Rybin Koob, and Eric Vance, Information Technology and Libraries, June 2021.

COVID has required many of us to pivot to tech tools to deliver instruction and library services. In this study, the authors explored what technology tools librarians used during the pandemic and equity issues related to reliance on tools. Not

surprisingly, Libguides and Zoom topped the list for content delivery. For student engagement, the most popular tool was Google Forms, followed by Poll Everywhere, Padlet, Kahoot, Mentimeter, Zoom polls, and Springshare Libwizard. The authors raise important issues about vetting applications for ADA accessibility and addressing external digital barriers students may have in accessing remote library sessions and instruction. One of the interesting points made by the authors was the lack of involvement by IT departments in suggesting new tools and providing training and assistance to users. IT departments could also play a role in addressing accessibility issues, as well as barriers to digital access.

### **“Representing Law Faculty Scholarly Impact: Strategies for Improving Citation Metrics Accuracy and Promoting Scholarly Visibility”**

by Bonnie Shucha, University of Wisconsin Law School Legal Studies Research Paper Series Paper No. 1692, rev. May 2021, available at <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3808250>

Law faculty are as anxious as any other researchers to get their work recognized and to improve their scholarly impact. This can prove difficult for legal researchers whose work embraces multidisciplinary scholarship. Shucha’s paper goes in depth to discuss citation metrics, how to increase citations to a scholar’s work, and methods for promoting scholarly visibility. She discusses the necessity for legal faculty to adopt ORCID identities as a means of making their writings universally available to others. Best of all, this paper includes appendices with checklists for librarians and faculty trying to build scholar visibility.

**“Comrade Detective, Information Silos, and the Danger of Shared Belief,”** by William Badke, Online Searcher, September/October 2021, pp 36-38.

This opinion piece begins with a description of a “lost video” from a “Romanian” television series depicting Romania as the West understood it in the 1980’s. Produced in 2017 by actor/producer Channing Tatum, the film is a spoof, a fraud. Yet it is eminently believable because it portrays the stereotypes an American viewer expects. This leads to a discussion of information silos, where the user inhabits an information bubble that agrees with

his preconceptions, denying the possibility that any other belief could be right. The author encourages readers to move outside the bubbles formed by their personal belief system to listen and consider that other groups' beliefs may not be completely wrong. Rather than trying to break down the other

guy's beliefs, recognize that those who disagree aren't monsters, just people who disagree with us. We need to be sure we understand their thinking. We can find a path to ongoing dialogue if we respect the reality of other silos.

## Leslie Hesdorfer

Hanson Bridgett

### *How did you choose law librarianship as a career?*

Like many people, I fell into it accidentally. I worked for the public library in high school and then my college library. I was NOT going to be a librarian, but when I graduated with a BA in English and needed a job, libraries were where my experience was. I ended up working as a library assistant for a law firm and found that I really liked the work, so went on to pursue my MLIS. I feel lucky that I found something I was able to make a good career out of.

### *Who or what has had the greatest impact on you as a law librarian?*

Probably my boss at the first law firm I worked for, who was truly a mentor. In addition to teaching me a lot, she made the job fun and interesting.

### *What have you enjoyed the most from being involved with NOCALL?*

Definitely the connections I've made over the years. NOCALL has so many great members, who I always enjoy seeing and from whom I've learned a lot.

### *What is the last book that you read that you really enjoyed and why?*

I'm embarrassed to admit that I have not read a lot of books during Covid lockdown, but I recently finished *The Henna Artist* by Alka Joshi. It was a nice escape to a different place and time, and I liked all the descriptions of foods, plants, and her curative concoctions. And these days, I'm always grateful for a hopeful ending (spoiler alert).

### *What's your idea of the perfect meal?*

It could be any of a number of foods - Indian, Italian, Thai, California cuisine, or even pizza. The important thing is that it is eaten in good company, not rushed, and preferably enjoyed with a glass of wine or a cold beer.

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