Legal Research and Writing Resources: Recent Publications

Compiled by Donald J. Dunn

Donald J. Dunn is Dean and Professor of Law at Western New England College in Springfield, Mass. He is a member of the Perspectives Editorial Board. This bibliography includes references to books, articles, bibliographies, and research guides that could potentially prove useful to both instructors and students and includes sources noted since the previous issue of Perspectives.


This research tool guides the user to various sources of information relating to notaries public. It covers federal and state legislation, case law, administrative rules and regulations, books, law reviews, associations, and human experts.


Prepared by the Association of Legal Writing Directors and Darby Dickerson of Stetson University College of Law, this extensive manual is designed as an alternative to The Bluebook. Its design, clarity, and flexibility position it to be a major competitor to the long-enduring Harvard citation standard.


“Provides citations and abstracts for selected books, papers, reports, and articles relating to the topics of judicial independence and judicial accountability” over the 40-year period from 1958 through November 30, 1998. Id. at 724. Prepared in conjunction with a symposium held at the University of Southern California.


“Provides a short list of practical questions and answers to guide junior lawyers who take up their first cite-checking tasks.” Id.


An updated version of one of the standards in the field of legal research. An appendix includes a reprint of a case in both print and electronic format to illustrate points made in the text. A Web-based update is provided at <www.law.berkeley.edu/faculty/berringr /findingthelaw/menu.html>.


Reports the results of a survey of Harvard Law School faculty that was designed to assess and improve current awareness tools and produce a new tool that fills gaps in faculty needs for information.


Gives the results of a two-and-a-half-year survey designed to identify schools with academic support programs; the criteria, conditions, and components of the program; and whether it targets minorities.


Discusses how legal research and writing courses may be “the ideal forum to begin instilling...[civility and professionalism] in prospective attorneys.” Id. at 896.


One of the standard works in the field has been revised and updated and now contains more than 300 Web site addresses. Internet resources are fully integrated into the text. Secondary sources are now introduced before primary materials. Includes new exhibits.

“[L]ists contemporary scholarship by or about federal admiralty judges and courts.” Id. Unannotated.

Richard A. Danner, Focus on Information Literacy, Nat'l L.J. July 17, 2000, at 1. Discusses the challenges that law schools face as a result of students’ reliance on online materials for legal research.

Diana Roberto Donahoe, Writing Clinic—Analyzing the Writer’s Analysis Will It Be Clear to the Reader?, N.Y. St. B.J., Apr. 2000, at 46. Provides 10 tips for developing a critical eye for rereading drafts.


Shu Huang, Researching Periodical Literature on the Web, 24 Can. L. Libr. 198 (1999). Discusses the major Web sites that provide listings and links to legal periodicals and those sources with searchable databases.


Bruce M. Kennedy, Design Principles for Universal Legal Citations, 30 U. Tol. L. Rev. 531 (1999). Universal citations are intended to allow researchers to find law published in both print and electronic format. The universal system is still developing. “This essay explores design principles implicit in a mature system of universal citations.” Id. at 532.

Christina L. Kunz et al., The Process of Legal Research (5th ed. 2000). [New York, N.Y: Aspen Law & Business, 530 p.] A revision of one of the standard works in the field of legal research, with new material regarding the ongoing debate about whether to use paper or electronic research. Includes all new fact situations in the problem sets.


Jan M. Levine, Leveling the Hill of Sisyphus: Becoming a Professor of Legal Writing, 26 Fla. St. U. L. Rev. 1067 (1999). This article is intended for two types of audiences. The first is those “[l]awyers considering their first jobs as a professor of legal writing. . . .” The secondary audience is “writing professors who are seeking a teaching appointment at another law school, or perhaps even a directorship of a legal writing program.” Id.
Antoinette Sedillo Lopez, Translating Legal Terms in Context, 17 Legal Reference Services Q., No. 4, 1999, at 105. Evaluates the relative merits of a number of Spanish/English legal dictionaries, with a particular focus on the author's or editor's understanding of cultural and language differences.


Kellen McClendon, The Convergence of Thinking, Talking, and Writing: A Theory for Improving Writing, 38 Duq. L. Rev. 21 (1999). The author discusses his theory of developing good legal writing, which is “Write the way you think. Write the way you talk. Talk the way you think. Talk the way you write. Think the way you write. Think the way you talk.” Id. at 22.


Suzanne E. Rowe, Legal Research, Legal Writing, and Legal Analysis: Putting Law School into Practice, 29 Stetson L. Rev. 1193 (2000). Stresses that research, writing, and analysis are complex and interwoven and that these are part of a process that needs to be developed and fine-tuned. Also discusses the value of upper-level writing opportunities, such as law review and moot court.

Virginia Rutledge, Defining Fair Use in Visual Art: Research Sources and Strategies, Legal Reference Services Q., No. 4, 1999, at 7. Intended for attorneys, museum administrators, art collectors, art dealers, and artists handling copyright litigation, this guide provides information about the “resources on the intersection of intellectual property law and contemporary visual art and on the application of the doctrine of fair use within this context.” Id.

Terry Jean Seligmann, Beyond “Bingo!”: Educating Legal Researchers As Problem Solvers, 26 Wm. Mitchell L. Rev. 179 (2000). The author argues that the “Ah ha, I got it” notion should take place during legal research training, not afterward. Thus, the researcher will be “equipped to blaze trails toward an answer.” Id. at 180.
A concise volume that focuses exclusively on essential legal research skills using a building-block approach. Includes a teacher’s manual.

“The goal of this article is to formulate an objective standard for the measurement and evaluation of law library Web sites.” Id. at 10.

Sally Ginsberg Waters, A Selected Bibliography [in Maximizing the Law School Experience], 29 Stetson L. Rev. 1323 (2000).
This brief, annotated bibliography focuses on legal education from the perspective of the law student.

Command Papers are one of five main types of parliamentary papers in the United Kingdom, but are often overlooked by researchers. These Papers, which can provide insights into governmental policymaking and thinking, are described and the sources for locating them are discussed.

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