

ORALL NEWSLETTER

OHIO REGIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LAW LIBRARIES

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President's Column – Lisa Wernke

Everything Changes

For many of us a new year has started - a new academic year - and most things are up in the air for us, too. I guess that is one thing we can depend on at this point in our lives, nothing is certain. A year ago, we were so excited about the possibility of having an in person meeting and Sarah Starnes at the University of Akron and Ashley Ahlbrand at the University of Indiana were so hopeful to welcome all of us in person for this year's annual meeting. It is with much regret, though, that I'm passing along to our membership that our Annual Meeting is going virtual again this year. The mounting concerns about rising COVID cases has led the executive board to make this decision after the results from our survey came back with the majority of our membership saying that they would not attend in person or were unsure/concerned about meeting in person. I must admit that this article started out completely different a couple weeks ago. I was hopeful and excited to welcome everyone back to an in-person meeting. I was looking forward to seeing Akron and going to the Stan Hywet house and gardens and seeing

those superb grounds. As most of you know, I'm a glass half full type of person and I look for the good in most situations. If we can "see" more of our colleagues at a virtual meeting rather than an in person then that is what we will do.

I would like to take this time to give a heartfelt thank you to Sarah Starnes, the Local Arrangement's Committee Chair this year for all the time and effort that she put into planning the opening reception, annual meeting facilities, and all the entertainment for this year. Having served on and chaired a couple LACs, I know how much goes into the planning and it is immense. So, thank you, Sarah.

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ORALL

Ohio Regional Association of Law Libraries

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Newsletter

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Profile

ORALL is a 3-state chapter of the American Association of Law Libraries [Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky]. It was formed in 1949 "to further the development and usefulness of law libraries and to stimulate a spirit of mutual helpfulness among law libraries of this region." An annual conference is held each fall. ORALL publishes or sponsors the following publications: *Core Legal Collection* [bibliographies for Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan], ORALL Membership Directory, ORALL Newsletter, Ohio Legal Resources Annotated Bibliography & Guide 3rd.

President's Column *continued*

I'd like to also thank Ashley Ahlbrand, the VP/Pres-Elect and Education Committee Chair and her committee for rounding up some fantastic programs this year. We'll still get to see almost all of them, I'm sure. Our membership is fantastic and those who can, will switch their programs to a virtual session so that we can still offer quality professional development to our chapter. While switching to a virtual meeting is not without hiccups, our Education Committee will not disappoint us!

Changes and adapting are the theme for this past year, and it looks like this year is shaping up to be the same. I'm writing this article while working from home. I'm not a huge fan of working from home because I'm a people person, but there are a couple of benefits. One is that I'm able to look out a window and see the sunshine from my home office (I don't have this luxury at work) and the second is that my breaks involve walking our dog, who loves having me home to give her treats. In our little world at the University of Cincinnati we have big changes coming our way. Next year we are moving from one corner of the campus to pretty much the opposite corner in the summer of 2022. We are elbow deep in our collection making some tough (and not so tough) decisions of what to take with us and what to remove from the collection. We're getting rid of so many books that we had to coordinate with our grounds and moving department on campus to take large bins of books from us to the recycling center on campus. There have been several moments over the past year that I've thought about the programs I've attended at AALL and ORALL that have to do with weeding your library's collection and going through a move or remodel. I'm so thankful for some of the truly great pieces of advice that I remember from those programs.

Another change to note is the transition from the current ORALL website to our new online home on Wild Apricot. Jennifer Mart-Rice, the chair of our Internet and Social Media Committee, and the rest of her team have been hard at work on the transition to our new website and it will look fantastic! So thank you to that committee for all the behind the scenes work that they have been doing for our online presence. As I'm sure you are all aware this was no small feat on their part.

As this is my last article as ORALL president, I would like to take a moment to thank and acknowledge the other members of the Executive Board for their hard work and thoughtful advice as we waded through quite a bit of changes this past year. Thank you, too, to our committee chairs and members for all of your help this past year. Volunteering for our Chapter is an invaluable experience. It has been my pleasure to serve the membership as president. I hope that everyone will join us in October for our virtual meeting and I'd like to say how much I

appreciate the Education Committee for changing course and flipping our programming to an online format.

Until we meet again, take care of yourselves and each other.

* * *

Social Media Use in Academic Law Libraries
by Brian E. Cassidy, Cleveland-Marshall College of Law

I currently work as the Student Services Librarian at Cleveland-Marshall College of Law. Part of my duties including managing the library's social media offerings. As such, I thought it would be an interesting project to find out how other academic law libraries use social media if at all.

At Cleveland-Marshall we currently have a Twitter, Facebook, and blog presence. In the past we have also had a Pinterest account that we deactivated several years ago. We also briefly considered Instagram but decided against using it for various reasons.

The goal of this project was to see what other academic law libraries were doing in the realm of social media in 2020. When contacting a school I asked if they had their own law library blog, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or other social media accounts.

The first part of the project entailed visiting each ABA accredited law school libraries websites to see if I could tell what their social media offerings were. Those that I could not tell, I followed up with an email (or emails) to reference staff. Unfortunately the pandemic threw a monkey wrench into the project. As such, we did not receive responses from all. With a lot of us working at home and/or furloughed and other issues related to the unique pandemic situation, I felt it best to write about what information we did gather rather than adding on to the information making the project a multi-year project. It is my hope that either myself or another librarian can replicate this in the future and build upon what I started.

A total of 139 academic law libraries are part of my answer set. Of these, 78 had social media offerings readily available within two clicks on their homepage and 61 we received direct responses on their social media or lack thereof. I have further broken down the numbers below:

- 21 of the 139 schools had no social media offerings (15%)
- 118 of the 139 schools had at least one social media offering (85%)
- 38 out of the 139 schools had one social media offering (27%)
- 80 out of the 139 schools had more than one social media offering (58%)
- 70 have a Facebook page (50%)
- 27 have a blog (19%)

- 69 have twitter accounts (50%)
- 34 have Instagram (24%)
- 12 have YouTube channels (9%)
- 3 have Pinterest (2%)
- 2 have Flickr (1%)
- 2 have LinkedIn (1%)
- 2 have Google+ (1%)

Conclusion

It appears that most academic law libraries have at least one social media offering. Among those it is probably no surprise that Facebook and Twitter were the most used social media sites by academic law libraries. The 24% of respondents having Instagram accounts was the most surprising to me because this was a platform that my institution had considered and rejected.

I believe the work begun here may be useful to researchers in the future as a reference point but also as something to build on. A future look at academic law library social media offerings may want to add more questions or ask for explanations as to why or why they do not have social media, why they chose social media platforms, etc. I believe this type of study may be of use to a librarian who is looking for a topic for an academic journal to publish in as well.

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ORALL 2021 PROGRAM REVIEWS

Diversifying the Law Library Collection with Intentionality **by Jeanmarie Byrge, Jefferson County Law Library**

This program was EXCELLENT!

I have attended dozens of conferences on a wide variety of topics during my career, this program ranks in my top two.

The presenters of this program are several of the most intelligent and interesting that I have ever had the privilege of “being in a room” with. And, although the entire event was virtual (and in my case On-Demand), their presentation style was fresh, interactive and engaging.

Ann Russell’s opening remarks were, “I want to start by saying one of the things that we want to just say at the outset is that not actively diversifying your collection will result in a continued whiteness and maleness of the law.” This certainly grabbed my attention, kind of a “You had me at Hello” moment for fans of the “Jerry McGuire” film.

The session was jam packed with practical information.

Topics of Discussion:

- How the monopolization of digital research vendors is not only leading to increased costs, but also denial of access to legal materials from other, smaller publishers.
- Current trend away from diversity in legal publishing itself requires increased reliance on academic law libraries and non-legal sources for guidance on seminal treatises and looking beyond Thomson, Reuters, et cetera.
- Know the community you service. One presenter did a program on Native American right to intellectual property.
- Law school libraries are now challenged with increasing collections of Diversity related materials in order to comply with recent proposed changes to ABA Standards.

New in May 2021, ABA announces proposed changes to Standard 303, which addresses curriculum, to require “training and education to law students on bias, cross-cultural competency and racism.” Also, the council approved a proposal to add language that directs schools to provide students with opportunities for “the development of a professional identity.”

- Problems faced by Academic versus Government Law Libraries, especially regarding procurement processes can impact your collection.
- Creating Community Days where folks could take part in a variety of activities around these social and diversity issues and soliciting suggestions there for addition to the collection.
- Creating a tag to put in the cataloging record of **RPD, Race Privilege and Diversity Collection**

It gave me a lot to consider for my library’s future. I’m also looking forward to reading the upcoming book (Spring 2021): Integrating Doctrine and Diversity: Inclusion in the First Year Law School Classroom along with Nicole Dyszlewski, Suzanne Harrington-Steppen, Anna Russell and Genevieve Tung.

About the program presenters

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Raquel J. Gabriel is a Professor of Law and Director of the Law Library at CUNY School of Law where she teaches Legal Research and Advanced Legal Research. Her scholarly interests include integrating issues involving diversity into the pedagogy of teaching legal research as well as into legal education and law librarianship.

She is one of the co-editors of the upcoming book (Spring 2021): Integrating Doctrine and Diversity: Inclusion in the First Year Law School Classroom along with Nicole Dyszlewski, Suzanne Harrington-Steppen, Anna Russell and Genevieve Tung. The book is a collection of essays with practical advice,

guidance, and reflections on ways to integrate diversity, equity and inclusion into the law school curriculum. Chapters are on subjects traditionally taught in the first-year curriculum and includes a stand-alone chapter on Legal Research. Each chapter also includes a short bibliography curated by a law librarian.

Anna Russell

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Anna Russell is the US Court Librarian for Alaska. She provides legal research support for court staff. Prior to her career as a law librarian, she worked as an intelligence analyst for the Federal Bureau of Investigation. She has also honorably served as a United States Surface Warfare Naval Officer, living for a time in Manama, Bahrain and visiting many ports across the Pacific Ocean.

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Diversifying the Law Library Collection with Intentionality **by Beth Van Fossen, University of Dayton**

I would like to thank ORALL for the grant making it possible for me to attend the second AALL virtual Conference in general and this program in particular since increasing and spotlighting my library's diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) holdings has been a major focus of my work over the past year. The synopsis for this program reads as follows: "Diversifying the law library collection is critical in this moment of racial justice reckoning. With small budgets, higher stakes, and traditional collection practices looming large, how can we work with intentionality to increase diversity in our collections." The moderator for this session was Nicole P. Dyszlewski from Roger Williams University School of Law, and the speakers were Raquel Gabriel of CUNY School of Law, and Anna Russell, from the US Court of Appeals, Ninth Circuit. The variety in the type of libraries the participants were from (small private school, large public school, and a Federal Court library respectively) really enhanced the usefulness of the information they provided.

The panelists had some good information on what worked for them in diversifying their collections. One of the things mentioned was working with DEI committees within their institutions to support activities centered around DEI. This can be done by asking for suggestions from DEI committee members on what items they would find helpful for the library to purchase for their specific DEI event and by checking the existing collection for material that would enhance and support those specific events as well. Soliciting suggestions from faculty and students about what books they would like to see in the collection seems like common sense, but as the panelists discussed, as librarians, we all too often limit our

focus by only considering items offered by our regular vendors which tends to restrict our purchases to practice oriented and scholarly research materials. Diversifying our sources, particularly in seeking out smaller, minority-owned publishing houses or those who carry diverse authors can be an important tool in diversifying our collections. A good starting point for developing a healthy DEI collection can be creating a “popular reads” collection and using suggestions from library patrons about what they would like to see in that collection as well as reviews of various best seller lists.

Another helpful suggestion was to include more books with a sociological or history background in the collection. Doing so, and including books from a wide variety of diverse experiences not only is more welcoming to students from diverse backgrounds but also helps to prepare students to serve clients from diverse backgrounds as well. It also allows students to better grasp the historical context in which laws were enacted. It should not be overlooked that ABA is making diversity a priority in its updated Standards so it is important that law libraries show that they are doing their part by including DEI as an important part of the overall collection development policies and strategy. And finally, the panelists suggested working with doctrinal professors who are interested in integrating diversity in their course work to see if there are any books in their specific subject area that they would like to have available to their students.

Of course, there are challenges to diversifying our law collections, the two main challenges being the ever-tighter budget restrictions and the ever-shorter time we have to do all the things. The panel suggestions to combat these challenges include keeping a running list of requested titles with priority given to the most frequently mentioned or requested books, working with Faculty and Administration to prioritize DEI spending in keeping with the ABA priorities (especially for those of us with upcoming ABA site visits) and utilizing a committee of stakeholders to search for quality DEI materials so that the entire burden does not fall on one person. The program also included a handout with an extensive list of podcasts/videos, articles, legal publishers and compiled resources to aid diversification efforts.

* * *

Insight into the Mental Health of Our Students: Leading the Way to Open Communication, Access to Information, and Institutional Support

by Paul D. Venard, University of Dayton

There traditionally has been a taboo surrounding the topic of mental health, leading to a lack of communication and support to those who may be experiencing issues. COVID has helped to exacerbate these issues, with people no longer having the type of interactions that they had in the past; this lack of physical togetherness has also created issues in noticing signs of mental health issues in others. However, since COVID isolation has affected so many people,

it has also allowed them to realize the types of mental issues that can arise. While this is a good starting point in attempting to address mental issues in our students, we must be cognizant that even after this isolation is (hopefully) over with, we need to remain aware. And, according to the AALL presentation on this topic, librarians may be some of the ideal people to help students work through these issues.

Faculty and staff on campus are rarely, if ever, trained with how to deal with mental health issues. Students are not always aware if services are provided on campus, and may be fearful of any costs even if they do know these services are offered. Outside of the potential cost and lack of knowledge, students may be wary of seeking help on-campus as they would be seen as a failure or a fraud. No matter the situation, students do not know where to find information either on-campus or off.

Libraries and librarians can start to help these issues by doing what they do best – providing information. Not only basic information such as available services, but also information on the signs of depression and other mental illness; very few people know what these mental illnesses “look” like, and as such may not even be aware they need help.

Librarians are also better suited to talk with students about these issues. Librarians rarely are the ones giving the students grades or seeing them in the classroom, creating less fear of embarrassment. As students are also more accustomed, and usually more comfortable, speaking to librarians outside of class. The library offers a centralized location with a Reference Desk and students know that the library is where information and knowledge is gathered and shared.

Librarians can start by providing information, whether it be on a Web site or in handouts. It can be carried even further with preventative measures such as small group meetings (on wellness strategies, stress management, etc.) and responsive measures (creating a safe space, conflict resolution, grief sessions, etc.). As long as reporting is not mandated, all information shared to librarians remains confidential.

Libraries are the perfect place to provide information, but librarians also must be aware of when they need to provide outside recommendations. Should the librarian become uncomfortable in providing the advice being sought, there is a threat of harm to others or themselves or there is an escalation of issues that requires professional help, librarians should be ready to provide outside resources more specialized in providing help. No matter if we attempt to help ourselves or outsource, if we are not taking care of ourselves, we can be of no help to our students.

Mental health is a serious issue that needs to be addressed everywhere. Identifying and providing basic resources is a beginning step we all can take.

Law school is a very stressful time, and we need to be prepared to help students in whatever way we can during this time.

I would like thank the presenters at AALL for speaking on such a timely issue, and ORALL for providing the grant that made it possible for me to attend.

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A Note from Your Newsletter Editor

Thanks to all who contributed once again this quarter. Hopefully all were able to enjoy and learn something from the AALL Annual Conference.

Next month is the ORALL Annual Conference. While it is disappointing that you all won't get to see my smiling face in person for a second year in a row, I'm sure there will be an excellent array of educational programs.

Please consider contributing to our next newsletter (to be published December, 2021) as this newsletter cannot exist without our members' input. Feel free to suggest new types of content or, better yet, submit the type of content you would like to see. This newsletter is always new ideas and becoming what our members want to read.

If you ever have any questions, concerns or ideas, please e-mail me at pvenard1@udayton.edu.