

CHECK IT OUT

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Changing Habits: Reading Law Treatises Online

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An important task of the law librarians is to evaluate regularly the patron usage of resources in the Law Library. It is particularly crucial to make such an evaluation when the library is subscribing to a resource in more than one format and experiencing budget constraints at the same time. In such a situation, it is incumbent upon librarians to make hard choices that may reduce or eliminate the availability of some resources traditionally held by the library "on the shelf" in order to use student tuition dollars more effectively. These decisions are not made lightly--we fully recognize that students, attorneys and faculty may prefer the print copy of a resource rather than seeing the text on a computer screen. However, the fact that an underutilized resource is available through an already-paid-for database (such as WESTLAW, LEXIS or HeinOnline) becomes a strong argument for dropping corresponding print materials which escalate in price almost every year (in many cases, because fewer and fewer libraries, law firm and academic, are choosing to continue to buy them in print).

Law treatises, commonly found on the second floor, are one resource type where you will likely see a change. In many cases, the print edition of a treatise will remain on the shelf for awhile, but will not be given

a new pocketpart or new looseleaf filing in the future. Instead, a sticker will be placed on the binding indicating that it is no longer updated. If you find this to be the case with materials that you are using, (or you cannot find the needed treatise on the shelf), you should not end your search. One step to take is to consult the online catalog and see if it indicates that the title is "available electronically." If so, you can link from the catalog to the online version of the treatise. If this yields no results, you should check

WESTLAW or LEXIS--the treatise (NOT CASEBOOKS) is quite possibly available at one of the two database services. The determination of which service to access will depend upon the publisher of the book--legal publishers allied with Thomson Reuters (West Publishing) will have treatises on WESTLAW and those belonging to LEXIS Publishing (such as Matthew Bender) may be available on LEXIS.

Does the researcher need to perform a keyword or other type of field search to access these books? In most cases, no. These treatises can be accessed and read from chapter to chapter, section to section, as you would a print publication. The paragraphs below provides the details:

See *Reading*, Page 2

In This Issue:

Professor In Print	3
Recent Acquisitions	3
Forum on Freedom of Expression	3
Beeson Law Library is Now on Facebook!	3
West Online Digest	4
Oxford English Dictionary Update	4
Remember Mark Twain	5
Back Up Your Data!	5
What Were You Doing on this Day in History?	6
Dollars for Scholars: 2010 Writing Competitions	6



LAW LIBRARY SCHEDULE

MONDAY-THURSDAY
7:30 A.M.-
12 MIDNIGHT

FRIDAY
7:30 A.M.-10:00 P.M.

SATURDAY
9:00 A.M.-10:00 P.M.

SUNDAY
1:00 P.M.-12 MIDNIGHT



Reading from Page 1

Thomson Reuters (West) Publications

There is an abundance of treatises available to law students and faculty through the WESTLAW database service. After signing on, an initial list of them can be viewed when you click on the “Alabama” tab. This database list under the Alabama tab will show several boxes including “Alabama Treatises and Practice Materials” as well as “National Treatises, Journals and Law Reviews.” Many of the treatise titles display a clickable “Table of Contents” after the title entry—click on it to enter and use the book’s database. The resulting screen will present a list of the chapters preceded by a box with a “plus” symbol inside. If you click on a chapter’s box, the symbol changes to a “minus” and WESTLAW then provides you with a

section-by-section listing of the contents of the chapter. When you click on a particular section within the chapter, a pop-up box will appear with the text of that section displayed. Using this table of contents list, the researcher can read all of the sections of the chapter and then continue to read the other chapters of the book.

Many more treatises are available on WESTLAW than those listed on the Alabama tab screen. Rather than clicking on the Alabama tab after signing on, click on “directory” situated at the very top center area of the page. The resulting screen will show a list of choices, including “Treatises, CLEs, and Other Practice Materials.” After clicking on this bolded and underlined entry, you will be given a long alphabetical list of legal treatises published by Thomson Reuters subsidiaries which you can click on to gain access. When viewing this alphabetical list, however, you are not given the option of immediately going to a publication’s table of contents as you are when given the list of Alabama treatises under the Alabama tab. Instead, you must first click on the name of the publication (giving you a search screen for that database) and then click on “Table of Contents” located at the right top of the search screen. Then, it is a matter of following the same steps as indicated in the previous paragraph.

After reading a text section, a researcher may just want to browse subsequent and preceding sections and chapters rather than going back to the table of contents to choose more text to read. This can be done by initially clicking on a section from the table of contents—the resulting screen will provide the text of that section in a small box with a clickable box labeled “Maximize.” If you click on this box, a full screen text display will appear with a clickable “next section” or “previous

section” at the center top of the screen. Clicking on these options allow the reader to browse the book.

LEXIS Publications

The LEXIS database service provides treatises online from a number of publishers, including John Wiley, Practising Law Institute, Aspen and Matthew Bender (the publisher that has the most titles on LEXIS).

Access to the Matthew Bender publications, LEXIS’ most prominent publisher, is a fairly straight-forward process. After signing onto LEXIS, you will be presented with the usual “Look for a Source” option list; under “Secondary Legal” you will find a clickable “Matthew Bender” option. After clicking on this option, you will be presented with three clickable options to find Matthew Bender publications: By Jurisdiction, By Area of Law or Emerging Issues Analysis. The first option leads you to a list of state and federal jurisdictions to choose from to find appropriate treatises. The second option lists 53 clickable topics of the law for finding Matthew Bender works on point. Once you have clicked on a desired book title, it will provide you with a list of subdivisions of the work (chapters, parts, etc.) with an encircled “+” sign before each; you should click on this icon for each subdivision you wish to access in order to be given a list of sections of that subdivision. By clicking on a section, a screen will appear with the text of that section. To return to the table of contents, simply click on “TOC” at the top left corner of the document screen.

Another series of secondary sources available on LEXIS originate from Practising Law Institute (PLI). These materials also allow for easy browsing. After clicking on “Secondary Legal” at the LEXIS source option list, you can choose “Practising Law Institute” from

among the available publishers. The resulting screen will, in most cases, provide a list of chapters for the text; after clicking on the desired chapter, you will be given the opportunity to choose a particular section to read from that chapter.

Similar to WESTLAW, a nice feature of the LEXIS treatise databases is the book browse option. After following the steps to access the text of a page or section, you will see a clickable "book browse" near the top center of the text screen. After clicking on this option, the resulting screen will show the same text, but with left and right arrows at the center top allowing the reader to browse forward to later sections or backward in the text.

If you have any questions concerning ways of finding treatises online, please see a reference librarian.



Professor In Print

The Law Library recently received a copy of the book *Diagnosis Critical: The Urgent Threats Confronting Catholic Health Care* (RA975/.C37/N3) written by Professor Leonard J. Nelson. The publisher is Our Sunday Visitor, Huntington, Indiana. The Law Library copy is shelved in the Friendship Room.

Recent Acquisitions



American Bar Association. **MODEL RULES OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT**. 2009 ed. KF306/.A756/2009.

INSIDE THE MINDS : BEST PRACTICES FOR SECURITIES LITIGATION : LEADING LAWYERS ON MAINTAINING REGULATORY COMPLIANCE, REPORTING FINANCIAL DISCLOSURES, AND WORKING WITH GOVERNMENT AGENCIES. KF1439/.A2/B47.

INSIDE THE MINDS : ENVIRONMENTAL LAW DEAL STRATEGIES : LEADING LAWYERS ON IDENTIFYING ENVIRONMENTAL LIABILITIES, STRUCTURING TRANSACTIONS, AND DEVELOPING A NEGOTIATION STRATEGY. KF3775/.A75/E5575.

Oates, Laurel Currie. **JUST RESEARCH**. 2nd ed. KF240/.018/.2009.

Prince, Mary Miles. **PRINCE'S BIEBER DICTIONARY OF LEGAL ABBREVIATIONS : A REFERENCE GUIDE FOR ATTORNEYS, LEGAL SECRETARIES, PAPER LEGALS, AND LAW STUDENTS**. 6th ed. KF246/.B46/2009/Reference.

Forum on Freedom of Expression

Law Library Director Gregory Laughlin and second year Cumberland law student O.Z. Hall will participate in a forum on Freedom of Expression in Cyberspace to be held Thursday, October. 1, at 1 p.m. in Brock Forum.

Facebook, blogs, Twitter and other electronic media have made published writers of us all. But what responsibilities accompany this ability to publish? what limits apply? When, if ever, should another individual or institution have a say about what we post? Student and faculty panelists will explore these issues at the forum "[Freedom of Expression in Cyberspace: Who Should Decide What You Publish?](#)"

The program is co-sponsored by the Mann Center, the University Library, the Journalism and Mass Communication Department, and the University Fellows program. Convo credit will be awarded for attendance.

Beeson Law Library is Now on Facebook!



To access our page or to become a fan, log onto Facebook and search for "Cumberland School of Law – Beeson Law Library." Check our Facebook page for handy links to reserve materials, recent acquisitions, newsletters, library hours, and more.

West Online Digest

by Brenda Jones,
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Abstract legal concepts sometimes are hard to find with simple keyword searches. An online digest integrates a structured analysis of the law with the convenience of full text searching. Moreover, online searchers can create a custom digest for any jurisdiction. West's time-honored digest, duplicated electronically on Westlaw, is both an index to case law and a comprehensive outline of the law. Within the digest system, West identifies more than 100,000 specific legal issues, each associated with a unique topic and key number.

West provides multiple ways to tap into its online classification system. Researchers on Westlaw may jump to the digest from the headnotes displayed in any retrieved case. Alternatively, users may limit keyword searches to fields for digest topic, headnote, or both. Additionally, the Key Numbers tab at the top of the Westlaw screen displays three basic options:

1. Search for Key Numbers

Use this search box to look for terms mentioned within West's digest outline. Remember that results are limited to cases

editorially enhanced with West key numbers which may exclude some unreported decisions or slip opinions.

2. Browse Key Numbers

Users may browse the digest to spot relevant topics. Legal research is rarely limited to only one topic and key number. Browsing the outline often reveals additional issues for research.

3. KeySearch

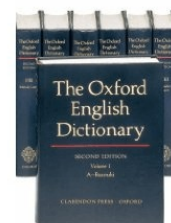
Topic headings in KeySearch differ from those in West's traditional key number system, but the concept is similar. Researchers may browse by drilling down through the topics and sub-topics, or enter a search term. Once a relevant sub-topic is chosen, KeySearch creates a search query that may be run as generated, or the user may add additional search terms. KeySearch results include unpublished cases or other materials that do not contain West key numbers.

If needed, ask a reference librarian for help using West digests - electronic or print.



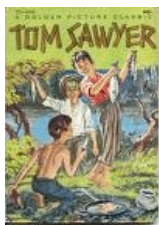
Don't miss the
October issue of
Check It Out!

Oxford English Dictionary Update



The Oxford English Dictionary represents more than a century of work by hundreds of scholars. The English words in this compilation date back to 1150 A.D. and represent the meaning, usage, pronunciation and etymology of these words. The large portion of the O.E.D. was published between 1884 and 1993 and has hardly been updated since. Through the years, improvements have mainly focused on adding new entries rather than revising the already existing ones. Now, the entire dictionary is being revised, online, for the first time ever. The current revision began in 2000 and, according to the editors, enormous changes have been made - often through adding information that was not available when the dictionary was first written.

The Law Library has a copy of the twenty volume set of The Oxford English Dictionary, 2nd ed. It is shelved in the Reference area - PE1625/.O87/1991. An earlier article on the O.E.D. appeared in the February 2009 edition of Check it Out and a recent article in the New York Times Magazine, entitled Dated Definitions by Ammon Shea, can be found online.



Remember Mark Twain

Are you a Mark Twain fan? Did you read all his books as a child or as part of your American literature class in college? If you enjoy his writing, you might be interested in the Mark Twain Project. This site provides access to texts, notes, letters and documents written by Twain. Twain was known for many of his quotes. Here is one that is applicable to law students, particularly first year students:

I notice that you use plain, simple language, short words and brief sentences. That is the way to write English - it is the modern way and the best way. Stick to it; don't let fluff and flowers and verbosity creep in. When you catch an adjective, kill it. No, I don't mean utterly, but kill most of them - then the rest will be valuable. They weaken when they are close together. They give strength when they are wide apart. An adjective habit, or a wordy, diffuse, flowery habit, once fastened upon a person, is as hard to get rid of as any other vice.

- Letter to D. W. Bowser, 20 March 1880

Quote from : <http://www.twainquotes.com/Writing.html>.

Back Up Your Data!

by Grace Simms,
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It is so important to back up your computer – that goes without saying. If you have pictures, music, documents, or anything else that you would hate to lose – back everything up before it is too late! A hard drive failure can happen at any time, and you need to be prepared.

If you have a Mac with Leopard or above, I recommend Time Machine. This is built into the OS. Just about any external hard drive may be used with Time Machine. The first time you connect an external hard drive to your Mac, you should receive a question asking if you'd like to use it with Time Machine. If you say yes – it will back up your data each time your computer is connected to the external hard drive. Don't say yes if the external hard drive is one that already has data on it that is located nowhere else. This is important because the external hard drive will be formatted before it will work with Time Machine.

For PCs, there are external drives that come with software that will also back up your data for you so that you don't have to do it manually. An example would be Seagate - FreeAgent Go 320GB External USB 2.0 Portable Hard Drive. This drive is equipped with software that is very easy to use and will allow you to schedule backups.

Another option would be online data storage. MozyPro (<http://mozy.com/home>) is a good choice. You can start with 2 GB per month for free. Just choose what needs to be backed up and MozyPro will back it up on a schedule.

You may read reviews of thirteen online data storage providers here: <http://online-storage-service-review.toptenreviews.com>.

Also – please remember that external hard drives will fail as well. The life span is often between five and eight years. CDs and DVDs are good options as well, but they may fail too, at some point.

If you have any questions or need help with any of the above – please contact me at: Grace Simms, Computer Services Librarian, 726-2687, or at glsimms@samford.edu.

What Were You Doing on this Day in History?

Exciting time - Wednesday, June 10, 2009, 5:22 a.m. - the English language added its millionth word, according to the [Global Language Monitor](#), a Web site that uses a math formula to estimate how often words are created. The site estimates the millionth word was - Web 2.0. The site says that at the current rate, 14 words are added to the English language each day. Paul J.J. Payack, president for the Global Language Monitor, says that the millionth word is not as important as the idea

behind the project and that is to show the complexity of the English language.

Source: English Gets Millionth Word on Wednesday, Site Says, <http://www.cnn.com/2009/TECH/06/10/million.words/index.html> (September 21, 2009).

Dollars for Scholars: 2010 Writing Competitions

By Brenda Jones,
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To win cash, opportunities to publish, and free trips, consider entering one of the many writing competitions open to law students. For more information, see the flyers posted by Mrs. Janice Brantley on the bulletin board just outside room 224 of the law school. If a topic catches your interest, ask Mrs. Brantley for a copy of the flyer. Because deadlines and criteria may change, contact the sponsoring organization directly for full details of any contest. The following is a sampling of current contest postings:

American College of Legal Medicine's competition on any aspect of legal medicine with \$1000 Letourneau Award to the best paper by a law student (deadline January 11, 2010).

American College of Legal Medicine's contest on bioethics awarding travel expenses to the association's annual meeting in Orlando plus \$1000 for first place, \$500 for second, and \$250 for third (deadline January 11, 2010).

Embryo Adoption Awareness Center's third annual embryo law essay competition awarding \$2500 for first place, \$1500 for second, and \$1000 for third (deadline March 8, 2010 with special cash incentive for early entry by February 1, 2010).

Nathan Burkan Memorial Competition on copyright law for third-year students awarding local prizes at each participating law school (\$600 for first place and \$250 for second) plus national prizes (\$3000 for first place, \$2000 for second, and \$1000 for third) (deadline June 30, 2010).



One more issue of **CHECK IT OUT** will be published this semester. If you have any ideas or suggestions as to ways we can improve, contact **Becky Hutto** via e-mail at rmhutto@samford.edu.
