



MAALL Markings

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MAALL.newsletter@gmail.com

DAZED & INSTRUCTED

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DIGITAL DISTANCE

I have always told my students that digital research is difficult. This may seem counterintuitive since digital research provides access to hundreds of thousands of materials — anything and everything a researcher could need. The databases that students have access to are some of the most complete legal libraries in the world, and students do not even need to leave the comfort of their own home to get to them. But herein lies the oxymoron: with all these resources, the pressure to find everything increases exponentially. In the past, a lawyer or student with access to a single law library was confined to the materials found in that library. To be sure, many print-only libraries were massive and expansive, but even so, there was a relatively finite body of literature from which to choose. These restrictions are no longer in place, and so students and attorneys today are expected to have better arguments based on better cases because their resources are, simply put, better. Now of course, this complaint is silly to an extent: how can an information professional complain about more information?

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This critique is not meant to bemoan the reality of too much information ([though information overload](#) is certainly a real thing); instead it is meant to demonstrate that technology is not always the panacea it is made out to be (though I am pretty sure that claiming such claims exist in the first place is apocryphal). Certainly, digital research demonstrates the drawbacks of digital tools, but we have all been starkly reminded or introduced to another drawback of their use: the loss of personal connections. In the last 8+ months, I have seen my colleagues

Isolation, by Azfar Ahmad, used under a [Creative Commons license](#)

very infrequently, and my students not at all. I have talked to them repeatedly, but there is something lacking in these exchanges. They have none of the flavor of in-class conversations, small talk in the halls, reference questions at the desk, or formal meetings in an office. Technology provides a convenient analog for these experiences, but that is all they are: analogous.

It is especially hard for the first-year students. Traditionally the new students, in a completely new experience, don't know anyone when they first come to law school, but over the span of days, weeks and months build bonds based on interests, struggles, and (maybe most importantly) proximity. Students who see each other every day in class begin to build lifelong friendships, as well as short term bonds that help make the burdens of law school lighter. Yet in the virtual classroom, there are virtual silos: each student in his/her/their own "box", always separated and oftentimes too remote for these bonds to form conveniently. Those students who are more extroverted will reach out and actively create these bonds, but for more closed-off or introverted students, law school can feel very isolating, both in education and experience.

It is therefore vitally important for instructors, professors, and educators to take extra steps to facilitate interaction between students, to a level that may even seem "unacademic." For instance, some of my colleagues build in "free talk" time where students are in class, but do not have a professor in the room, mimicking the pre-class experience where conversations happen. The law school has created a 1L mentorship program where a professor has 6-10 students in a group where we all talk about the law school environment, rather than the substantive law taught in the curriculum. The SBA holds virtual happy hours and other social Zoom meetings to build student relationships between class levels. In my class, I have used in-class exercises to facilitate interactions, culminating in a group project.

The most effective tool I have used so far is to require students to meet with me twice, one-on-one: once at the beginning of the semester and once at the end. These serve as informal meetings where I give students the chance to "vent" as well as to let them talk to me in-person rather than via email. Many students have been thankful for these meetings since they create the relationships that are sorely lacking in our virtual environment. Other students have seemed bemused by these meetings. Overall though, these meetings have been positive, and at the very least they give students a person to talk to about things that have been on their mind that are related to law school. There really is not any best tool for all classes and student bodies; unfortunately, most of us feel like new instructors, still feeling our way through what works and what does not. Ultimately, I think (and hope) that the efforts professors and instructors put forth to try and build the law school relationships will see returns once we all return to in-person instruction, and the relationships cobbled together in our virtual world will flourish in the "real" world.

LOTS OF VALUABLE INFORMATION AT THE 2020 MAALL VIRTUAL CONFERENCE

Gail Wechsler, Library Director, Law Library Association of St. Louis
(gwechsler@llastl.org)

I am probably not alone in dealing with Zoom fatigue, so many months into the pandemic year of 2020. Nonetheless, I always look forward to the Annual MAALL Conference and took it in stride that it would have to be virtual this year.

I learned a lot at a number of the sessions, but focus here on three programs that were very enlightening and of particular value to me.

In Week One, I found Miriam Murphy's session, "How to Avoid Wrong Turns When Setting the Pace," highly relevant. Miriam was extremely thorough and covered all the bases concerning what a manager needs to think about in all aspects of his or her role. The three discussion areas, relating to how a manager communicates, how a manager manages, and how a manager addresses leadership, were all on point and helpful for someone looking at the short, medium and long-range strategies that are part of running a library.

Also during Week One, I enjoyed hearing Cindy Bassett and Cindy Shearrer discuss "Match the Pace: Applying Gretchen Rubin's Four Tendencies Framework for Responding to Inner and Outer Expectations to Professional Interactions." It was fascinating to learn about the four tendencies and to be given real life examples of how having a particular tendency affects how you interact in a work space. I was motivated to take the quiz soon after the session and was not surprised to learn I am a Questioner. I plan to use this information to my benefit as I work with my staff, Board members and others in my library setting.

In Week Two, I enjoyed "How MAALL States Deal with Legislative History" presented by Ben Keele and Lee Little. The library I run caters to users in Missouri and Illinois, both MAALL states. Having a better sense of the type of legislative history available (or not) in these two states is definitely news I can use. While I was fairly familiar with the scant legislative history available in Missouri, it was helpful to learn more about the Illinois system for keeping track of legislative sessions and related historical information. It was beneficial for me to know what is available toward this end, both electronically and in print. I also appreciated the discussion about the wealth of legislative information on HeinOnline, a resource readily available to me and my patrons.

I want to end with a huge shout out to MAALL President, Matt Braun, and MAALL Local Arrangements Committee Chair Susan deMaine. Matt did an excellent job coordinating all aspects of this virtual conference, which was not an easy feat. Susan was equally nimble in taking charge of and running all of the vendor demonstrations. As always, MAALL rises to the occasion!

I look forward to the MAALL Annual Meeting in 2021, whatever the format may be. Our members and our presenters are first-rate and worth spending time with, even if it means yet more hours glued to a computer screen.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Matthew Braun, Associate Director for Administration, University of Illinois, Albert E. Jenner, Jr. Memorial Law Library (braun22@illinois.edu)

I have heard a lot of people say lately that they just want 2020 to be over. The struggles of this pandemic have indeed affected each of us, and it is natural to be thin on joy, hope, and enthusiasm. Allow me, however, to submit a digression.

For those of you who participated in the MAALL Virtual Meeting 2020 back in October, you know that we had thirteen remarkable educational programs that showed, beyond any doubt, that our organization can take sour lemons and make wonderful lemonade. We were not able to be together in-person, yes, but we still learned a lot from each other and proved that we can transcend difficult circumstances. For those who were not able to join us, or for those who would like to reexperience the Virtual Meeting, the videos for many of the programs are [available at this link](#).

Many, many thanks to each of the program coordinators and panelists for their hard work and thoughtful,

engaging sessions. Let us continue setting the pace as we move toward what is hopefully a more normal 2021 and a sure-to-be-great MAALL Annual Meeting in Indianapolis on September 23-25.

As I begin my term as President, I would like to not just encourage you, but to respectfully ask you, to strongly consider serving on at least one MAALL committee. The committees are central to the work and influence of the association and, just as importantly, provide us the opportunity to meaningfully connect and network with one another during these isolating and frustrating times. We can count on the importance of MAALL among new and seasoned legal information professionals, those who are considering a career in our profession, and those who rely upon and benefit from law libraries in all settings. There is still time to volunteer if you have not done so already. Please take a look at the [committee page](#) on the MAALL website, consider which committee(s) meet your interests, and fill out the [volunteer form](#).

I also ask you to consider sharing your experiences and expertise by contributing to [MAALL Markings](#), especially if you have not yet written a piece for *Markings* or have not written a piece in it for quite some time. We are fortunate to have an outstanding chapter newsletter, and it is content from our talented and dedicated members that sustains its high quality.

You also may recall that in 2016, MAALL assembled what became a multi-part Vision Planning Task Force, which identified the “three Cs” as main goals for the association: **community, continuing education, and collaboration**. The current Task Force has responsibility for a strategic vision through 2023, and will continue in the coming year to address matters such as continuity planning and fiscal responsibility, but will also focus on how our approach to the three Cs may evolve given the current pandemic and the social responsibility that is foundational to this organization. I will have more information about the Task Force as we progress through the year, but please reach out to me now if you have an interest in participating in this key initiative.

As 2020 draws to a close, I am sure that each of us is ready for it to be over. Before we move on, though, let us pause for a moment and be grateful and happy for everything MAALL is to each of us. We were successful in 2020, despite the challenges and, dare I say, because of the challenges. We enter 2021 a strong, adaptable, and responsive organization. Please join me with a smile, and a toast, and with joy, hope, and enthusiasm for the days ahead.



Screen capture of the Business Meeting at the MAALL Virtual Annual Meeting, by Matthew Braun

MESSAGE FROM THE VICE-PRESIDENT

Christopher Steadham, Director, Wheat Law Library, University of Kansas School of Law (csteadham@ku.edu)

The people of MAALL are amazing. That is not exactly a secret, especially to anyone reading this newsletter, but it is something I find myself saying more and more in recent years. We could all point to any number of things illustrating this fact but recent events provide especially compelling examples. The incredibly successful pivot to a virtual meeting in October, and the hallmark camaraderie that made it possible, demonstrated once again that the whole of MAALL's membership is greater than the sum of its parts. That is no small statement, as there is no shortage of remarkable individuals in our ranks, but it rings true now more than ever.

Every member of MAALL should take a little extra pride in our chapter's resiliency in the face of adversity. We should also take a moment to thank the previous Executive Board and committees that deftly navigated these challenges. We owe the outgoing members a debt of gratitude, and I know the current board is motivated to build on the positive momentum established in recent years. On that point, I am excited to share some details on our plans for next year's annual meeting.

With a spirit of cautious optimism, we are currently operating under the assumption that we will have an in-person annual meeting in Indianapolis on September 23 – 25, 2021. I think we can all agree that will indeed be a special reunion if we are able to make that happen. That notion is reflected in the meeting's theme, **Back on Track!** As chair of the Education Committee, I invite you to join us in our effort to make the MAALL 2021 Annual Meeting a memorable one. Whether you are interested in joining the committee, providing input for the committee, or proposing a program, we welcome your participation. Stay tuned for additional information coming soon, and please don't hesitate to contact me (csteadham@ku.edu) with any questions or concerns.



In conclusion, I should note that special thanks are due to all of the folks who already worked on the in-person meeting originally planned for 2020, along with the current Local Arrangements Committee and our gracious host institution, the IU McKinney School of Law. Once again, we are reminded that the people of MAALL make all the difference. We are lucky to build upon your good work and we will do our best to restart the engines, ensure MAALL is back on track, and run a worthy race.

FROM THE ACTING EDITOR

Therese Clarke Arado, Deputy Director/Professor, David C. Shapiro Memorial Law Library, Northern Illinois University College of Law (tclarke@niu.edu)

As we bring 2020 to a close, I want to highlight several changes that have taken place with *MAALL Markings*. After many years as the Editor-in-Chief, the last two served while also on the MAALL Board, Lacy Rakestraw

has stepped down from the Editor-in-Chief position. Thank you Lacy for the amazing work you have done for *Markings* and MAALL in general. Your energy and enthusiasm are unmatched.

We have also had some changes in the regular contributor areas. If you are in a management role and would like to take over the column on management ideas and issues, please let me know. This is a great way to get some publishing credit while at the same time sharing your wisdom with the membership.

We are also in need of state news liaisons for Missouri and Nebraska. The state news liaison positions give you the opportunity to keep up with the activities of your state colleagues. Updates are requested for each *Markings* issue and submitted to Hyla Bondareff, the State Member News Editor.

Markings is always looking for article submissions. You do not need to be a regular columnist to contribute. If there is an activity at your institution that you want to share with the membership, you attended an interesting professional development program, or you have a great experience to share, please consider contributing an article. There are any number of other ideas which would enhance *Markings*. If you are wondering if *Markings* is a good place for something you want to write, it probably is. Feel free to reach out and ask. You can contact me at tclarke@niu.edu. It is amazing what we can learn from each other.

2020 has been, well, 2020. Here is to 2021 being healthier, happier, brighter, and better for all.

STATE MEMBER NEWS



David C. Shapiro Memorial Law Library, Northern Illinois University College of Law

Kate Hartman has been promoted to Library Operations Associate at the David C. Shapiro Memorial Law Library at the Northern Illinois University College of Law. Thanks, Kate, for all your hard work and congratulations!

Little Mendelson, P.C.

Little's Senior Director of Research Services, Cynthia Brown, was named to the Fastcase 50 Class of 2020 for her forward-thinking approach to research and legal Knowledge Management.

We also welcome our newest Assistant Librarian, Steven Kelly, to the team. He's taught us much about onboarding in the virtual environment!

During these work-from-home months we've truly missed our themed potlucks and annual team outing. The team has gotten creative by awarding prizes in Work from Home Bingo, National Library Week Book Bracket Madness, and a Halloween Costume Contest. During our annual team event we guessed each other's birth cities and other fun facts we might know. We also covered Gretchen Rubin's Four Tendencies in a team-wide assessment.



University of South Dakota Knudson School of Law, McKusick Law Library

Like all of our MAALL colleagues, we have weathered the ups and downs of 2020 and are hanging in there with hope and optimism for the new year. While navigating 2020's stormy seas, we've had the opportunity to celebrate some big milestones along the way!

This summer, Karyl Knodel, our Serials Librarian, celebrated 45 years of service to the Law Library. Karyl plans to retire at the end of 2020 as one of the longest-serving employees at the Law School. We thank Karyl for her many years of loyalty and hard work and wish her the best in retirement, though she will be greatly missed!



Above: Karyl Knodel and USD Law Dean Neil Fulton

Right: The USD Law Library staff celebrates Karyl Knodel's recognition for 45 years of service (from L to R: Courtney Segota, Karyl Knodel, Sarah Kammer, Dean Eric Young, Sue Benton)



This fall, Sue Benton, Head of Technical and Collection Services, celebrated 40 years of service between the USD University Libraries and the Law Library. We congratulate Sue for her dedication and continued efforts in supporting the Law Library and Law School!

The Law School also celebrated a historic gift this year and the renaming of the Law School to the USD Knudson School of Law. We are all proud to be on the Knudson team, and from the Western outpost of MAALL, we wish you the best for the coming year!

Vanderbilt University

Clanitra Stewart Nejdil has been promoted to Head of Professional Development and Research Services Librarian at the Alyne Queener Massey Law Library at Vanderbilt University.





Marquette Law School

Patricia Cervenka, Professor of Law Emerita, Marquette Law School, served as chair for the ABA site team visit to Gonzaga Law School in Spring 2020.

To all our other members:

We hope no news is good news! And please let us know of any future news items!

MAALL MARKINGS INFORMATION

MAALL Markings is published four times a year by the Mid-America Association of Law Libraries, a chapter of the American Association of Law Libraries, and is a benefit of membership. The purpose of MAALL Markings is to publish news of the Chapter, selected news of AALL and other professional associations, and MAALL members, as well as to solicit and publish articles to add to the body of literature in the profession of law librarianship. All articles are copyrighted and any republication or use of any portion of the content for any purpose must have written permission from the author/s.

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The Mid-America Association of Law Libraries assumes no responsibility for the statements and opinions advanced by the contributors of its publications. Editorial views do not necessarily represent the official position of the Mid-America Association of Law Libraries or AALL.

LINKS TO AALL CHAPTER & SIS PUBLICATIONS

The lists on the following page were originally compiled by Lindsey Carpino for the CALL Bulletin and are reprinted with permission. (Broken links have been omitted.) The original post is available at <http://bulletin.chicagolawlib.org/2016/05/aall-chapter-sis-publications/>.

AALL Chapter	Chapter Links/Newsletter	Blog
Arizona Association of Law Libraries (AZALL)		AzALL Member Blog
Association of Law Libraries of Upstate New York (ALLUNY)	ALLUNY Website	
Atlanta Law Libraries Association (ALLA)	ALLA News	
Chicago Association of Law Libraries (CALL)	CALL Bulletin	
Dallas Association of Law Librarians (DALL)		Lex Scripta
Greater Philadelphia Law Library Association (GPLLA)	GPLLA News	
Houston Area Law Librarians (HALL)	HALL Quarterly	
Law Librarians Association of Wisconsin, Inc. (LLAW)	LLAW Briefs	
Law Librarians of New England (LLNE)		
Law Librarians of Puget Sound (LLOPS)		LLOPS Cited
Law Librarians Society of Washington, D.C., Inc. (LLSDC)	Law Library Lights	
Law Libraries Association of Alabama (LLAA)		LLAA Blog
Law Library Association of Greater New York (LLAGNY)	Law Lines	
Law Library Association of Maryland (LLAM)	LLAM Newsletter	
Michigan Association of Law Libraries (MichALL)	MichALL Website	
Mid-America Association of Law Libraries (MAALL)	MAALL Markings	
Minnesota Association of Law Libraries (MALL)		MALL News Blog
New Jersey Law Librarians Association (NJLLA)		NJLLA Blog
New Orleans Association of Law Librarians (NOALL)	NOALL Website	
Northern California Association of Law Libraries (NOCALL)	NOCALL News	
Ohio Regional Association of Law Libraries (ORALL)	ORALL Newsletter	
San Diego Area Law Libraries	SANDALL Newsletter	
Southeastern Chapter of the Amer. Assn. of Law Libraries (SEAALL)	SEAALL Website	
Southern California Association of Law Libraries (SCALL)	SCALL Newsletter	
Southern New England Law Librarians Association (SNELLA)	Obiter Dicta	
Southwestern Association of Law Libraries (SWALL)	SWALL Website	
Virginia Association of Law Libraries (VALL)	VALL Newsletter	VALL Talk
Western Pacific Chpr. of the Amer. Assn. of Law Libraries (WestPac)	WestPac Website	
Western Pennsylvania Law Library Association (WPLLA)	WPLLA Website	
AALL SIS	SIS Links/Newsletter	SIS Blog
Academic Law Libraries SIS (ALL-SIS)	ALL-SIS Website	What's New
Computing Services SIS (CS-SIS)	CS-SIS Website	CS-SIS Blog
Digitization and Educational Technology SIS (DET-SIS)	DET-SIS Website	
Foreign, Comparative & International Law SIS (FCIL-SIS)	FCIL-SIS Website	DipLawMatic Dialogues Blog
Government Documents SIS (GD-SIS)	JURISDOCS	
Government Law Libraries SIS (GLL-SIS)	GLL-SIS Website	
Legal History & Rare Books SIS (LHRB-SIS)	LH&RB Newsletter	
Legal Information Services to the Public SIS (LISP-SIS)	LISP-SIS Website	
Online Bibliographic Services SIS (OBS-SIS)	OBS-SIS Website	TSLL TechScans Blog
Private Law Librarians & Information Professionals SIS (PLLIP-SIS)	PLLIP E-Newsletter	On Firmer Ground
Professional Engagement, Growth, and Advancement SIS (PEGA-SIS)	PEGA-SIS Website	
Research Instruction & Patron Services SIS (RIPS-SIS)	RIPS-SIS Website	RIPS Law Librarian Blog
Social Responsibilities SIS (SR-SIS)	SR-SIS Website	
Technical Services SIS (TS-SIS)	TS-SIS Website	TSLL TechScans Blog

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Chair: Susan Boland

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There are a number of opportunities available to serve MAALL. Please contact Matthew Braun at braun22@illinois.edu if you would like to serve on a task force or committee.