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Museletter: September 2006

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Museletter

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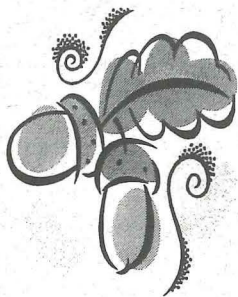
**Fall Break 2006
Library Hours**

Friday, October 13
7:30 a.m.- 10:00 p.m.

Saturday, October 14
8:30 a.m.-10:00 p.m.

Sunday, October 15
1:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m.

Monday, October 16
7:30 a.m.-6:00 p.m.



Researching The Constitution

Caroline Osborne

"Where do we find law?" "The Constitution" responded one student. "Which Constitution" was the return volley? Silence. "The U.S. Constitution" was the retort. "Is that the only Constitution?" "How many are there?" Then the responses came, the states, the territories, foreign countries . . .

The initial question is falsely deceptive. It seems quite easy. Where do we find the law? Of course there are many places we find law, cases, statutes and constitutions. Where we do find them is, perhaps, the more complex question along with the suggestion that we have more than one candidate when we say the word constitution. We can make things even more complicated when we consider that there may be multiple versions of constitutions for states, territories and nations as well as a large volume of literature produced surrounding the history, evolution and interpretation of any given constitution and its accompanying amendments. This article highlights a selection of resources available within the Muse Law Library for researching Federal, state and foreign constitutional law issues.

The starting point for most constitutional research is to obtain a copy of the relevant document. While a quick internet search may provide a copy, one must be careful: anyone can and will put information up on the net. For a more scholarly alternative, a copy of the applicable state constitution and the U.S. Constitution can be located in most codes. The annotated version of a code is the preferred choice providing not only a copy of the document but references to sources of valuable additional information discussing the provisions of the constitution. The *United States Code Annotated* ("U.S.C.A.") devotes multiple volumes to the Constitution and has the convenience of the West topic and key numbers to provide links to Westlaw and other West publications. The *United States Code Service* ("U.S.C.S") is arranged similarly with both it and the U.S.C.A. maintaining separate indexes for the volumes related to the Constitution. Annotated state codes will offer versions of their applicable state constitution comparable to that of the U.S.C.A. and the U.S.C.S.

Three other resources of interest in the area of the U.S. Constitution are (1) *U.S. Constitution is The Constitution of the United States of America: Analysis and Interpretation:*

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Annotations of Cases Decided by the Supreme Court of the United States to June 29, 1992 (KF4527 .U54) offered by the Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, (2) Laurence H. Tribe's *American Constitutional Law* (KF4549 .T73 2000) and (3) *Encyclopedia of the American Constitution* (Ref. KF4548 .E53 2000) edited by Leonard W. Levy and Kenneth L. Karst. *The Constitution of the United States of America: Analysis and Interpretation*, in addition to the text of the Constitution, also provides all amendments ratified and unratified, Acts of Congress determined to be unconstitutional, state and municipal statutory provisions held unconstitutional, and commentary. Its limitations are that it only cites to U.S. Supreme Court cases and is infrequently supplemented. Tribe's work takes a fresh approach by looking at the area by issue rather than sequence. *The Encyclopedia of the American Constitution* attempts to bridge law, history and political science in a multi-disciplinary approach to the topic. Topical articles are arranged in alphabetical order with generous cross-references to more detailed treatments on the subjects.

State and foreign constitutions are of increasing interest. Resources of note in such area include Robert L. Maddex's *State Constitutions of the United States* (KF4530 .M33 2006) and Oceana's loose-leaf publication titled *Constitutions of the United States, National and State. State Constitutions of the United States* (KF4530 .C6 1974) provides commentary on the constitutions and government structure for each of the fifty states, the District of Columbia and the territories of the United States. Each entry provides a general description of the government, constitutional history and an introduction to the current constitution and respective provisions as well as a summary of key provisions and references of selected court rulings of interest. *Constitutions of the United States, National and State* is a comprehensive resource updated to include the text of the relevant federal, state and territory constitutions as well as their respective amendments. Its key feature is the frequency with which it is updated. Most states will also have some form of treatise discussing the applicable constitution. In Virginia the seminal work on the topic is A.E. Dick Howard's *Commentaries on the Constitution of Virginia* (KFV2801 1970.A6 H68). Similar works can be located for states other than Virginia via the Library's catalog or the WorldCat database. Items not available within the Library's collection can be obtained via interlibrary loan.

The University of Richmond School of Law also hosts the Constitution Finder project located at University of Richmond at <http://confinder.richmond.edu/>, founded by Professor John Paul Jones. Confinder is a database of constitutional texts from nations around the world and their subdivisions. In addition to the constitutions themselves, charters, amendments and other relevant documents may be accessed via the site.

The resources referenced are but a selected few of those available. For additional resources, please browse the catalog using the available search functions and take advantage of the assistance offered by the Library's research staff.

Library News

Welcome back to Priscilla Greene. Ms. Greene is the newest addition to the Library having joined the staff as a Public Services Assistant at the end of the last school year. Ms. Greene provides valued assistance to the librarians. She is located in office L26 behind Dr. Barden.

Lest we forget as we did in the August issue of the Museletter, Alison Merner became Ms. Alison Harvey last year. Apologies are extended for the faux pas.

But What If We Don't Have It?: Making Interlibrary Loan Requests

By Gail Zwirner, Head of Access Services

The Law Library's collection of over 350,000 volumes, and access to the University's collections at Boatwright, normally meet the needs for faculty and student research. However, when a faculty member sees a source useful for his research, a Law Review article author has cited something we don't hold, or a student wants to review a source to complete research for the upper level writing requirement, those circumstances require the Access Services Department to make an interlibrary loan request.

Many times these source requests are non-legal titles, where the researcher wants to find a broad or "pop culture" context on a topic. Examples of sources I borrowed this summer were on the death penalty, community property and the Disney Corporation. In other cases, researchers are looking for a historical context. I made a request, for example, for a 1901 hornbook on civil procedure.

Some of the frequently-asked questions about the interlibrary loan process are as follows:

How do I make a request? After you have exhausted the possibilities on campus by checking the online catalog of our holdings at <http://librarycat.richmond.edu>, or using online sources such as Hein Online, send an e-mail to Gail Zwirner at gzwirner@richmond.edu and make the request. Please provide as much information as possible, including author, book or journal title, year of publication, article title if applicable, and citation. For Law School faculty and staff, please make requests through our Library and not through Boatwright or the *FirstSearch* system. That will delay the request because the Boatwright staff will forward the request to me.

How many titles may I borrow? As many as you feel you need to complete your research.

How soon will I get the book? It depends; usually within a week. We are members of two consortia. One is RALC in Richmond. Member institutions include VCU, Randolph Macon, Virginia Union, Union Theological, and the Library of Virginia. Requests are delivered by shuttle on Tuesdays and Thursdays. We lend and borrow with VCU the most of all libraries. Patrons can also obtain a RALC pass and go to the library for quicker self-service. You will be entered into their system and you'll be entitled to check out two books. The other consortium is COSELL, a group of southeastern law libraries.

How long may I use the book? Again, it depends on the lending institution. The clock starts ticking as soon as the item is mailed. Sometimes it's two weeks; sometimes two months. I recommend when you receive the title, that you use it immediately. Most libraries do not allow renewals with interlibrary loan requests.

Anything else I should know about I.L.L.? Make your requests promptly to insure timely receipt. Double-check your citation for accuracy. One character off on a volume/page number or a misspelled author can jeopardize receiving the article promptly.

Best of luck with your research projects. Let us know how we can help. -gfb

Computer Tips

By Kimberly Wiseman

No one ever thinks that his or her hard drive will crash. Why would you? After all, those computers cost a lot of money and therefore are indestructible, right? Wrong!

The most important folder on your hard drive is your "My Documents" folder. Most programs default to save data to this folder. Some of us also like to save data to our desktops so the file is easily found and available. Other programs save data in different places.

Before beginning the backup process, determine where your data files are located. Programs themselves do not need to be backed up, only the data associated with the files. Once you determine where your data is located, you have several choices as to where to save a back up copy of the data. The options are:

Burn a CD

This is the easiest way to create a backup copy of your data. All Option 1 students, as well as faculty and staff, have CD burners. CDs hold 700 megabytes of data. What does that mean? Floppy disks hold 1.44 megabytes of data, so a CD will hold almost 500 times more data than a floppy! The average Word file is less than 1 megabyte.

Save Your Documents to your USB Memory Stick Drive

Also known as a "thumb" or "flash" drive, this handy device is a great place to backup data. Memory sticks come in different storage sizes. Depending on the storage space available, you can save almost as much data on a memory stick as on a CD.

Save Files to Your Network Drive

The University provides each student 200 megabytes of storage space on a server called NetFiles. Faculty and Staff have storage there as well. When you log into your computer on the Richmond Domain at school, the NetFiles (U:\) drive automatically maps. If it does not automatically map, or you are using VPN from home, click Start, choose Run, and type \\netfiles\users\<>first letter of your netid>\netid (i.e., \\netfiles\users\k\kwiseman). Save information to your "private" folder.

For more information on the use of these tools, stop by the computer help desk for a handout.

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