1993


William & Mary Law Library

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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Beginning Sunday, August 22, 1993, the Law Library initiates evening/weekend reference hours. Evening/weekend reference continues through Thursday, December 16, 1993. Evening hours extend from 5:30 - 8:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday. Reference will also be available on Sunday from 1:00 - 5:00 p.m. Exceptions are Fall Break and the Thanksgiving Holiday.

The four public services librarians, Marty Rush (Room 130 C), Mary Grace Hune (Room 130 E), Sue Trask (Room 130 D) and Haibin Hu (Room 130 A) will rotate evening and weekend hours. Jim Heller (Room 130 B-1) will be available some Sundays as necessary.

We believe this additional service will prove advantageous to those requiring reference assistance in the evenings or on Sunday afternoons. We hope you agree. ...MR

DIRECTOR'S WELCOME

Welcome (or for returning students "Welcome Back") to Marshall-Wythe. Although I am sure you would prefer spending these last days of summer at the beach or the mountains, we’ll try to make your transition as easy as possible. But there have been some changes in the Library since last May.

No, the basement hasn’t gotten smaller; it only appears that way. During the summer we installed a wall to create a more secure area for some sensitive materials, including records and briefs from the U.S., 4th Circuit and Virginia Supreme Court, older editions of primary materials such as the Code of Federal Regulations, and other books infrequently used by students. Check with someone at the circulation desk or with a librarian when you need materials from the secured area.

You may already have noticed the new CD-ROM network that has been installed in the reference area (more commonly known as the fish bowl). Several CD-ROM products already have been loaded, including LegalTrac, Michie’s Virginia Law on Disk, CIS Congressional Masterfile I and II (which includes extensive indexing and abstracting of federal legislative history materials), and selected CCH tax publications. Soon to come will be a number of H.W. Wilson Co. products, including Wilson Business Abstracts, Social Science Abstracts, and Index to Legal Periodicals.

And don’t overlook the rapidly expanding "Popular Reading" shelves just past the circulation desk as you enter the administrative/reference area. We’ve got Grisham and Turow, as well as
Carter (Jimmy), Coon (Stacey), and Meese (that’s Edwin). (The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly?)

Finally, we are delighted to be able to offer for the first time evening/weekend reference service. A librarian will be on duty in the reference area Monday - Thursday evenings until 8:30 p.m., and Sundays from 1:00 - 5:00 p.m.

We welcome you back, and wish you a great year. ...Jim Heller

MEET THE NEW AUDIOVISUAL/ MICROCOMPUTER TECHNICIAN

WELDON GODFREY
PHONE: 221-3476

Born in Portsmouth, I’ve lived in this area my entire life. I Graduated from Warwick High School in Newport News in 1988 and received my Bachelor of Science in computer science with a minor in philosophy at Christopher Newport in 1992. My specialty is network administration and design and artificial intelligence. Before arriving at Marshall-Wythe I worked for Busch Gardens as a Computer Electronics Technician in charge of maintaining all computers for Busch Gardens, Water Country and the Hospitality Center.

I have no specific hobbies, but enjoy what happens as it comes along. I do, however, like camping, the beach, and philosophical debates. ...WSG

Three 486DX2/66 IBM PC compatible student workstations are set up to provide access to the network. Researchers can access any of the fourteen titles from either of the three workstations just by selecting the title from the menu. When you search a CD-ROM title that contains multiple disks, the system will search automatically through all of the disks of that title. Plans are underway to provide access to this network from the student network located in the Computer Lab on the top floor of the Library. An introductory class to this new service will be offered by MWLL Computer Services this Fall.

New Face in MWLL Computer Services. Weldon Godfrey joins the MWLL Computer Services Staff as Audiovisual/Microcomputer Technician. His office is located in Room 250 in the MWLL Computer Lab and his extension is 1-3476. He is available to answer questions about computer and audiovisual support services, to assist with computer and audiovisual problems, and to provide classroom computer and audiovisual setup configurations. We are very fortunate in having someone with his knowledge and expertise on our staff.

BITS & BYTES

New CD-ROM Network. New for Fall is the Marshall-Wythe Law Library CD-ROM network. Located in the reference area, the network server will be a 486DX2/66 IBM PC compatible with 14 CD-ROM players containing the following CD-ROM titles:

- LegalTrac
- Michie’s Virginia Law on Disk
- CIS Congressional Masterfile I and II
- CCH Access Tax Research Series
- Wilson Business Abstracts
- Wilson Index to Legal Periodicals
- Wilson Social Sciences Index

LEXIS/WESTLAW NEWS

Student Representatives. The LEXIS and WESTLAW student representatives provide a valuable service to the Marshall-Wythe community. In addition to assuring that all the
equipment is working properly, replacing supplies, and distributing passwords and software, our student reps also offer individual training in using online research sources in your research projects, informing faculty and students of new enhancements to the services, and generally assisting the librarians with the administration of the online systems. If you need LEXIS training or assistance contact John Einstman or Todd Pilot. For WESTLAW training or assistance contact Leslie Platt, Ken Hickox, or Nancy DeLogu.

**Password Distribution.** LEXIS and WESTLAW passwords for 2L’s and 3L’s will remain the same from last year and will be reactivated on August 23. If you are a 2L or 3L and did not receive a personal password for LEXIS or WESTLAW last year you can pick one up the week of August 23. A table will be set up in the lobby for password distribution. Software to access both systems from home computers also will be distributed the first week of classes. 1L’s will receive passwords when they attend the Introduction to Computerized Research in September. If you live in the Graduate Complex you must request an ADI from Telecommunications in order to access LEXIS and WESTLAW from your room. You must also obtain a special copy of the LEXIS and WESTLAW access software to use with the campus telecommunications system. See one of the LEXIS or WESTLAW student representatives, Mary Grace Hune in Room 132 E in the Reference Department or Weldon Godfrey in Room 250 for more information.

**Training Sessions.** Representatives from LEXIS and WESTLAW will be in the Law School to provide training in the use of online research systems to assist students in their job searches. The LEXIS representative will demonstrate Martindale-Hubbell online on Tuesday, September 7, from 3:00 - 5:00 p.m. in Room 119. A WESTLAW representative will demonstrate the use of West’s NALP database and the West Legal Directory in Room 120 on September 16, at 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. If you are preparing to send out resumes or interview, you won’t want to miss this opportunity to learn how to use online research to help you in this process. ...MGH

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**CIRCULATION LITE**

The following poem first appeared on the LIBADMIN listserv in January 1992, and was composed at Hofstra University:

For roaches, ants, and silverfish  
Your leftovers make a tasty dish.  
Your apple cores and crusts of bread  
Allow the rats to stay well fed.

And in a building of this size,  
Your care could help to minimize  
The little pest we can’t divert  
From thinking books make great dessert.

We try to clean, but need your help  
To stamp the little vermin out.  
We’ve asked before, but you ignore  
The signs we place by every door.

This time we hope you’ll heed our plea.  
For if you don’t, you soon may see  
That when you’ve had your coffee break,  
Your sandwiches, your piece of cake;

And settled with the library book  
You need to pass a course you took,  
You’ll open it and know you’re doomed ...  
Chapter 4 has been consumed!

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At Marshall-Wythe Law Library, you may bring drinks into the stack areas only in a spill-proof container. Food is prohibited.

At Swem Library on the main W&M campus, neither food nor drink is allowed. ...AF
IN BRIEF

New Carrel Policy. Starting this semester, Law Library carrels may be reserved for the entire semester instead of by the month. If your project will continue into the spring semester, you must renew your carrel reservation in December. Complete carrel policies are available at the circulation desk. ...AF

THE REFERENCE SHELF

Beginning with this issue, selected reference books will be featured in each newsletter.

Bieber's Dictionary of Legal Abbreviations
Bieber's Dictionary of Legal Citations

1. What does T.A. stand for?
2. What is the full title of the journal abbreviated O.L.J.?
3. How do you cite a Virginia Court of Appeals case in a document being submitted to a Virginia state court?
4. How do you cite a Virginia Court of Appeals case in all other documents?
5. What is the correct abbreviation for the Journal of Forensic Sciences?
   (answers at end of article)

Do you know the answers to these questions or where to look? What do you do when you come across an unfamiliar abbreviation in your case book? Are you mystified by the abbreviations you see in law review article footnotes? How do you accurately cite check an article? Two books can be particularly useful in answering these and other questions.

Bieber's Dictionary of Legal Abbreviations: Reference Guide for Attorneys, Legal Secretaries, Paralegals and Law Students
REF/KF/246/B46/1988

REF/KF/246/B45/1992

This dictionary is intended to serve as a companion to The Bluebook by applying Bluebook rules to common legal authorities. The citations are based on the rules found in the 15th edition of The Bluebook. Abbreviations used are either found in The Bluebook or derived from its guidelines.

Arranged alphabetically, each entry includes the proper abbreviated form and some entries offer specific examples. Additionally, references to a particular Bluebook rule is provided as appropriate.

Unfortunately, this guide does not clarify the difficult Bluebook rules or offer examples for
materials not addressed in The Bluebook. Still, it is a helpful companion that can be consulted for questions about citing the more common legal sources.

Answers:

1. T.A.
   - Board of Tax Appeals
   - trading as
   - Trustee under agreement
2. O.L.J.
   - Ohio Law Journal
   - Oudh Law Journal (India)

FOCUS ON WIN™: FITTING NATURAL LANGUAGE SEARCHING INTO THE RESEARCH PLAN

One year ago West Services introduced a "breakthrough in computerized legal research." The new research method was called WIN, which stands for WESTLAW is Natural. Press releases recounted the many advantages of WIN, including that it was a way to retrieve cases from a computer database using natural English. Company representatives espoused the new research technology and quickly added WIN to law school training programs. Many law librarians were not so quick to jump on the bandwagon. Now, one year later, has WIN fulfilled its promise of easier and more efficient computerized legal research? Before answering this question, let's first look at some of WIN's claims and features.

What WIN Is
In its promotional literature West Services claims that WIN allows you to use natural language to retrieve cases from the WESTLAW databases. It is a way to conduct computer assisted legal research without boolean terms and connectors. With WIN you simply type the phrases and terms that describe your issue using standard English. For example, where you once had to enter the boolean search:

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require! +5 (stand! or stood /s "pledge of allegiance") /p "public school"
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with WIN you can enter the search:

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whether a public school can require students to stand for the pledge of allegiance
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and supposedly retrieve more relevant documents. After typing in your description, WIN locates documents by completing the following steps:

1. WIN removes common words such as to and for.
2. WIN identifies legal phrases and puts them in quotation marks. ("public school" in above example).
3. The WIN stemming program generates variations of terms in your description, such as stood, stand, standing, require, required, requirement, etc.
4. WIN then searches for the legal phrases and other concepts, such as significant words, phrases, legal citations, or topic and key numbers. (The terms require, students, pledge, allegiance, and stand in our example.) Based on the frequency with which each concept appears in the database and in each document, statistical methods are used to find documents that closely match your description.
5. While this was pretty cool in itself, WIN goes on to claim that using advanced statistical methods to compare the frequency with which concepts occur in the database and in each document, it will return the "20 most statistically relevant" cases.
Reviewing Retrieved Documents
After testing, interviewing, and analysis, West Services determined that twenty is the average number of documents most people want to browse. Therefore WIN defaults to displaying the twenty documents most likely to match your description. You can change this number by typing opt and then changing the maximum number (from 1 to 100) that will be retrieved with one search. From the Options menu you can also specify whether, when the search is complete, you would like to see a citations list of the cases retrieved or the first page of the first case. Any changes you make in the Options menu will affect all subsequent WIN and Terms and Connectors searches.

WESTLAW in Terms and Connectors mode, displays the most recent case first. When your WIN search is complete, the document that is most likely to match your description will be displayed first. This is called the WIN concept ranking method. With this method, WIN analyzes your description to locate the "key concepts." A key concept might be a significant word, legal phrase, legal citation, or topic and key number. WESTLAW then performs a statistical analysis on the documents in the database to retrieve the ones that are most likely to match your description. The first case to appear is the one with the highest likelihood of matching the concepts in your description. This is what is referred to as concept ranking. Concept ranking works based on the frequency with which each concept appears in the database and in each document.

The WIN best command allows you to go directly to the portion of the document that most matches your description. WIN also lets you focus your research with the Thesaurus and the Restriction features. After running your description, you can use the online thesaurus to add alternative terms to your original description. You can also enter field restrictions before or after you run your description. Typing res at the Enter Description screen takes you to a menu with various field restrictions. After you have entered your restrictions, press enter to return to the Enter Description screen. You can also return to the Terms and Connectors mode of research by entering the WIN command tc.

Does WIN Measure Up
Back to our original question, after using WIN for a year has it fulfilled its promises? Well, to a limited extent maybe yes, but to a greater extent it has not. While you may now be able to enter a computer search request using natural English and retrieve something, my real life experience has been that the something, more often than not, has nothing to do with my research. An article in a recent issue of Password, WESTLAW’s monthly newsletter, asked, "Is Natural Language the same as 'artificial intelligence'?" The article goes on to answer, using a level of techie language understood only by computer scientists and system engineers, that WIN is not the same as artificial intelligence. It will not take your carefully worded "natural language" description of the issues and use logic or reason to determine which are the relevant or helpful cases. What WIN does is identify the concepts in your description and count the number of times your concepts appear in the database and in each document. Then it gives you the cases in which your concepts appear the most number of times. WESTLAW has determined that if a concept appears in a document many times, the document may be useful. Let’s look at an example to see whether this is a valid assumption.

In preparing this article, I tried to locate recent articles or reviews of WIN written after 1992. I performed a WIN search in the TP-ALL database using the following description:

**WESTLAW is natural**  **Restriction:**
**DA(aft 1992)**

I retrieved and began browsing my twenty documents. In the first article, the word "WESTLAW" appeared on page after page -- in
citations to the WESTLAW LAWPRAC database and in sentences that WESTLAW could not reproduce tabular material, therefore, such material had been deleted. The word "natural" did not appear at all. In all twenty articles, not one of them was a review of WIN. (Note that WIN would not work in the description because WESTLAW, unlike LEXIS, has no way to specify all uppercase letters in a search term. "WIN" produces win, winning, wins, winter. After browsing through several of these irrelevant terms, I didn’t stick with that search long enough to find out if it ever did retrieve WIN.)

I have had similar results performing case research. One of my key concepts may appear several times in one part of the case, another concept may be located pages away with no relation to the first.

West claims that WIN’s concept ranking is "simply a reflection of statistical probability" that a particular case might be relevant. Actually, I would say that concept ranking as used by WIN is purely a numbers game -- it is a game of chance, a guess, that because a concept appears many times instead of once, by that fact alone the case may be relevant. The researcher should be aware that WIN may involve browsing through more "garbage" than with basic boolean searching with which you can specify that the key concepts at least be in the same sentence or same paragraph. While West may tell you to place your bets on WIN as the front runner of legal research in the 90’s, my money is still on boolean as the proven performer.

How Best to Incorporate WIN into Your Research Plan
WIN should be viewed as an additional method of computerized legal research, not as a substitute to boolean searching. Researchers need to be aware of WIN’s usefulness and its shortcomings to utilize it effectively. WIN may be helpful for the infrequent user of computer assisted research to locate a few relevant cases. Boolean searching, however, will still be the preferred method for comprehensive retrieval. Some researchers have indicated that WIN may work better in "case" databases because judicial opinions are more issue oriented than law review articles. Also, WESTLAW has created hypertext links between the keynumbers and headnotes to allow researchers to jump from one case to another. Even if the WIN search only turns up one relevant case, the researcher may use the topics and keynumbers to jump to other relevant cases. While boolean searches may require more time up front in formulating workable queries, WIN will be more time consuming in weeding out the irrelevant documents. As a final word of caution, read with some amount of skepticism promotional material or vendor statements that WIN will revolutionize legal research as we know it. Remember the old saying -- "If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is." ...MGH

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