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# Southeastern Law Librarian

## Presidential Ponderings ... from Shamika

Greetings SEAALL Members,

I hope everyone is doing well. It is hard to believe that we are halfway through the fall semester. Due to COVID-19 and the closing of most of our schools, courts, and law firms, we had to move our in-person reference services and research classes/trainings online, conduct library business via video conferencing, and develop new fall library reopening policies. It has been tremendously helpful for me to attend programming and read listservs to learn how all of you are adapting your services to meet your communities' needs virtually during this unprecedented time. Our ability to pivot and be resourceful shows how resilient we are as law librarians.

As we continue to fight a health pandemic, we also must commit to fighting our country's racism pandemic. To further our commitment to promote anti-racism and a culture of diversity, equity, and inclusion in SEAALL, the Executive Board met on October 14, 2020, to finalize our



**Shamika Dalton**  
SEAALL President  
University of Tennessee  
College of Law

2020-2021 action items. We voted, and the following action items passed unanimously.

Create a book club with a focus on readings about race,

anti-racism, social justice, and other diversity-related topics

Incorporate diversity, equity, and inclusion into our Mission

Create an anti-racism and racial justice resource guide on the SEAALL website

Create a Task Force to evaluate systemic and unconscious bias in SEAALL's nominations, scholarship, recruitment, and programming policies and practices

The Task Force will also review committee charges

to ensure a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout our volunteer efforts.

Create a column in the SEAALL Newsletter to provide a space for BIPOC members to share their thoughts and experiences

Sponsor a program to promote awareness of the challenges facing historically underrepresented members of our profession and the communities we serve

Sponsor a deep-dive program that focuses on leadership that fosters an anti-racist library and workplace (for directors and middle managers)

The Executive Board cannot execute these action items alone. We will be reaching out to our committees and members for help. As with our global health pandemic, we must work together, and we all have to take responsibility for our part in moving our organization forward.

During our meeting, we also finalized the logistics for the 2021 SEAALL Meeting-- "Don't Call It a Comeback." You may recall the South Carolina Local Arrangements Committee disseminated a survey in June to

## Presidential Ponderings Cont.

assess the state of our members' professional development budgets and gauge our members' interest in the format of next year's meeting. Based on those results, the Executive Board decided to host the 2021 SEAALL Annual Meeting virtually. While it is disappointing that we cannot meet in-person, I am confident that we will have a successful virtual

meeting. We have decided to host the 2021 SEAALL Annual Meeting on Wednesday, March 17, 2021 from 10:00am-1:45pm, Thursday, March 18, 2021 from 12:00pm-3:45pm, and Friday, March 19, 2021 from 10:00am-1:45pm. Please mark your calendar! We will send more information at the

beginning of the year. As you think about program proposals for the Teaching the Teacher Conference or AALL, please consider submitting your proposals for the upcoming SEAALL annual meeting. I hope everyone has a great second half of the fall semester and a relaxing holiday break.



Gerard Fowke  
Digital Services  
Librarian  
Georgia State University  
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## Tech Tip : Faster, More Effective Screenshots

### Using Adobe Premiere Rush to Spice Up Instructional Videos

Nobody wants to watch a boring video. When faced with module after module of informative yet lackluster content, even students who usually are quite motivated have trouble remaining engaged. To keep your virtual 'back row' interested, try adding some visual interest to your videos using

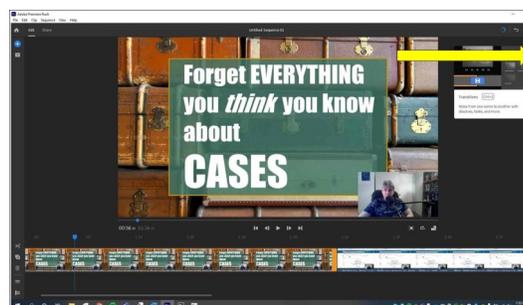
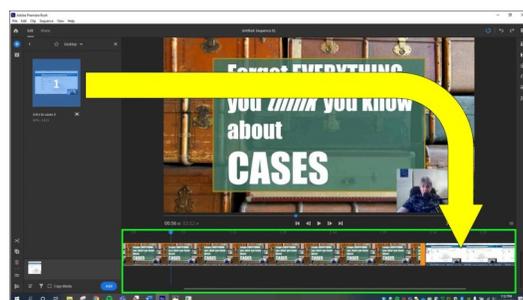
Adobe Premiere Rush.

Premiere Rush is the little sibling to Adobe's venerable video editing application, Premiere Pro. Designed to be simple, fun, and intuitive, Rush is primarily marketed to Gen-Z content creators and savvy social media influencers. Still, its ease of use also makes Rush a solid choice for the stressed-out law librarian who just needs to knock out an exciting video on the CFR for his Research Methods class, stat. And if you're lucky enough to have access to either Premier Pro or Adobe's Creative Cloud bundle, you also have Rush, which is included as a pack-in.

### Combining Clips

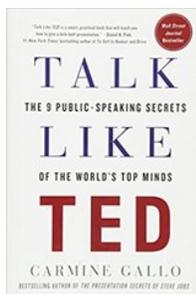
I often find myself wanting to start an instructional video by lecturing alongside some slides and then transition to demonstrating the concepts I just taught on Westlaw or Lexis. If I stick with Kaltura, the versatile video app bundled with USG's iCollege LMS, I'm out of luck: the software can do many things, but combining separately recorded video clips is not one of them.

This is where Rush comes in handy. By choosing 'Add Media,' (Figure 1) you can drag as many video clips as you'd like (you'll need to record them elsewhere) onto your timeline (Figure 2). You can also create smooth segues by choosing the 'Transitions' icon on the right sidebar (Figure 3), and dragging the transition of your choice (I'm a 'Cross Dissolve' fan) to the point where your clips meet. Voila! You've added some pedagogical complexity and professional polish to your humble instructional video.



## Closed Stacks

It has been almost two years since my last closed stacks piece. Similar to then, I still carefully select every book that I own in my personal collection. I take advantage of my memberships with various libraries to catch up on some readings. In particular, GSU has many books and other materials available. I can find many items of interest in the catalog. I am also in a situation of being able to get many materials for work as a faculty member for professional development. Still, there are materials that I like to obtain for my personal collection, including self-help books, planners, and guidebooks. (I get in trouble in Barnes & Noble.) Many of the same books are still in my collec-

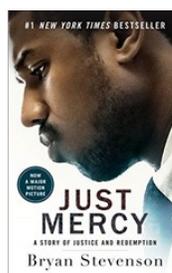


tion, like: Talk Like Ted and A Short and Happy Guide to Financial Well-Being. Since the beginning of the year, events have occurred that reduced my “normal” purchases of print books. At the same time, e-book availability has increased within a couple of the libraries that I use. With these two things happening, I have only purchased a couple of print books. One book is Limitless: Upgrade Your Brain, Learn Anything Faster, and Unlock Your Exceptional Life by Jim Kwik. It's a great addition to my print collection because it has a 10-day plan that I am excited to work through.

In the last SEAALL newsletter, I talked about two books that I recently acquired: Limitless and How To Be An Antiracist by Ibram X. Kendi. The latter book is now a part of my digital collection. This book is available electronically through

my law library, but I wanted to get a personal copy and support the author. This book joins my other eBooks like White Fragility by Robin Diangelo and Can't Hurt Me by David Goggins.

Surprisingly, I have not purchased any audiobooks in almost a year. I am not sure of the reason, other than not commuting daily and having more time to read print books! (Well, not really. Class is kicking my butt.) Seriously though, I almost forgot about my audiobook app until writing this piece. I have some of the same audiobook titles like Becoming by Michelle Obama and recently acquired Just Mercy by Bryan Stevenson. The goal this summer was to get more reading done, both personally and professionally. However, 2020 had another thing in mind. Hopefully, once my research class is over, I can read my recent acquisitions and report back to you in the next SEAALL newsletter!



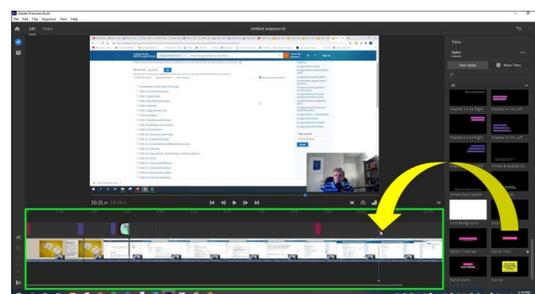
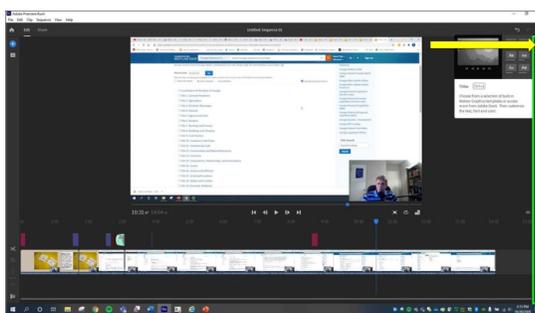
Cassandra Patterson  
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## Tech Tip : Faster, More Effective Screenshots Cont.

### Using 'Titles' to Add Signposts

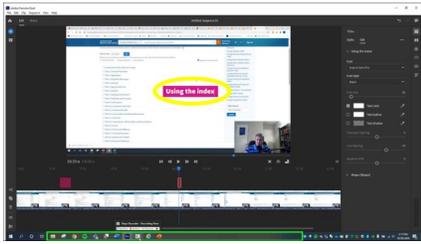
Even if your demos are fun and lively, if your video features long stretches of uninterrupted Westlaw research, students will inevitably get lost. To avoid this, add some signposts to give the tutorial some structure.

To accomplish this in Rush, choose the 'Titles' icon from the right sidebar (Figure 4), find your preferred style/font (hot pink!), and then drag it onto your timeline above the part of the video where you would like the 'signpost' to appear (Figure 5).



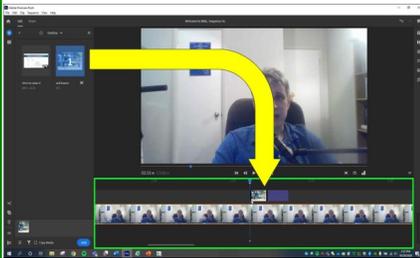
You can then drag it to your preferred position and type directly on the video to change the default text. I prefer to alert students to a new topic with something short and descriptive. Here, I've introduced a new method of finding relevant information in a treatise: 'Using an Index' (Figure 6). You can also use this same method to add humorous commentary to your videos, which increases student engagement.

### Tech Tip : Faster, More Effective Screenshots Cont.

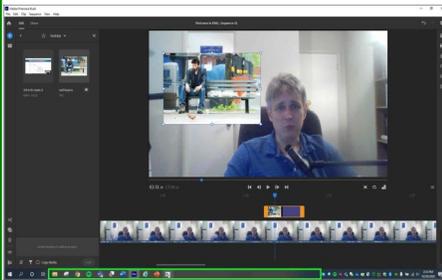


#### Inserting Memes and Other Images

Speaking of humorous commentary, I'm a big fan of peppering my instructional videos with hilarious memes. An appearance from 'Sad Keanu' or 'Success Kid' can make otherwise dry content memorable engaging. Rush makes inserting a meme (or any image) easy and straightforward. Click on the "Add Media" icon and drag the image onto your timeline above the part of the video where you want the image to appear (Figure 7).



As with titles, you can easily resize and reposition the image by dragging its edges or center. You can also adjust how long you want the image displayed by dragging the edges of the clip in your timeline. 'Daily show' placement usually works pretty well for me



(Figure 8).

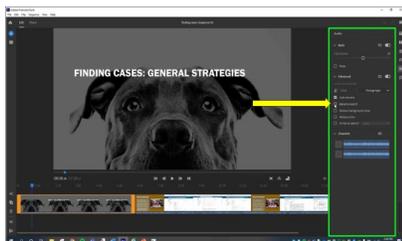
#### Cleaning Up the Audio

Once you've added some visual interest to your video, you'll want to make sure it's easy to listen to. Many of us are



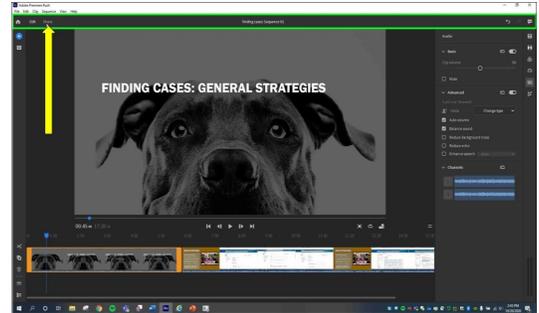
stuck using the rudimentary microphone inside our laptop,

which can make our videos sound harsh and uneven. Go to the "Audio" icon in the right sidebar (Figure 9) and open up the "Advanced" options. I always click the "Balance

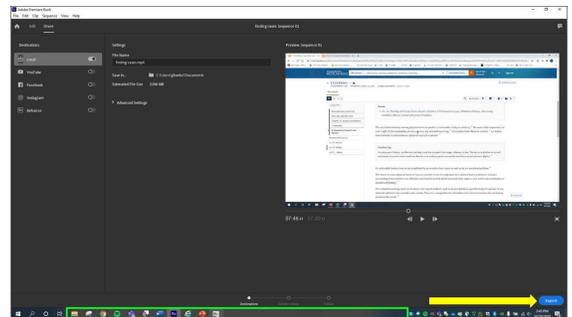


Sound" option (Figure 10), which makes your audio more legible by evening out the quiet and loud parts. "Reduce Background Noise" can also be useful for damping down intrusive traffic or A/C sounds.

#### Exporting your Spiced-up Video



Now that you've improved your video with these simple and powerful tools, it's time to export your new creation. You do this by going to the 'Share' tab (Figure 11). You get some options for adjusting the video quality,



but the default settings work fine for me. Click on 'Export' (Figure 12) and give it a few minutes to render. Voila, you are now a content creator. I'm sure your students will appreciate it.



Meet and Three...

Meet... As with many law librarians I've met, my road to law librarianship was circuitous. Out of college, I was a secretary in the patent law department at an international company headquartered in St. Louis. One of the patent attorneys took me under his wing and urged me – and gave me the confidence – to go to law school. I practiced for several years at a Kansas City law firm out of law school, where I focused on estate planning and probate. For many reasons, law firm life wasn't for me, so I moved down the road (literally) to join a trust department at a local bank where I was a trust administrator. After several years there, I joined the trust department at a competing local bank across the street (literally). For many reasons – or perhaps it was an early mid-life crisis – I quit my job and loved the two years of low-stress life I spent as a library student. Out of library school, I wanted to leave Kansas and move to “the south.” I landed at the University of Miami Law Library – which, geographically speaking, is “the south” – as a reference librarian.

And Three... When I arrived in Miami, I knew I wasn't in Kansas anymore. One big difference is the wildlife. I live close to Biscayne Bay, and there's a wonderful bike path be-

tween my house and a marina. On any given bike ride, I never know what I'm going to see – crocodiles (or alligators – I still can't tell them apart), iguanas, crabs, pelicans, peacocks, herons (or egrets



– I still can't tell them apart), and during the winter months, manatees. For this mid-western girl, it's mesmerizing every time.



I've intentionally lured some of Miami's tamer wildlife – bees and butterflies – into my backyard by growing plants that attract them. With the Monarch butterflies, I



How many caterpillars can you find?

never tire of watching the process that makes me a proud parent every few months: the laying of eggs



Fighting over the remaining Milkweed leaves

on the Milkweed plant, the caterpillars eating ALL the leaves and then inching along looking for a place to transform into a chrysalis, and then the opening up of the chrysalis, where the Monarch stretches its wings and flutters away. It's mesmerizing every



A Monarch butterfly breaking out of its chrysalis

stretch my wings and take a trip overseas. This year, I planned to travel to Cornwall and Bath in England, two places I really want to visit thanks to Rosamunde Pilcher and Peter Lovesey. But then came COVID-19, and the trip was canceled. At first, I was optimistic that it would be rescheduled, but my optimism fades as the months have dragged on. So, what does this have to do with wildlife in Miami? I realize that I don't need to travel very far to see that life around me is awe-inspiring, and as I watch my Monarch butterflies transform themselves again and again, my optimism for life – in this ever-changing and uncertain world – is slowly being restored.



Pamela Lucken  
Head of Reference  
& Lecturer in Law  
University of Miami  
Law Library

time, even for this mid-western girl. Every few years, I, too,



A chrysalis on a pillar at my house



Aimee Pittman  
Reference  
Librarian  
LSU Paul M. Hebert Law Center

## Library Profile: Inside the Louisiana State University Paul M. Hebert Law Center

Founded in 1906 with the law school, the LSU Law Library currently has over 845,000 volumes and provides a growing digital library and IT support for the law center. As the only law school in the United States to confer two degrees, a Juris Doctorate and a Diploma of Comparative Law, upon most of its graduates. The Louisiana State University Paul M. Hebert Law Center is a unique place, and the library that serves it must also be.

Most of the library's public areas are located on four floors within the "new building." Built in 1969, the new building is an addition to the original 1937 law school building modeled after the U.S. Supreme Court building. In the "old building," the law



library maintains a special collection and closed stacks, archival materials, and rare books. The first and second floors are open within the library, forming

ing a large reading room with a spiral staircase connecting the floors. This space serves as the student body's living room during a typical semester, with students coming in and out all day as they study and at-



tend classes. The third and fourth floors are quiet floors and hold most of the collection. The majority of the study rooms are located on those floors. The fourth floor is especially popular this year as a complete renovation of that space has just been completed, and it is one of the brightest and quietest areas in which to study.

One of the library's special collections is the personal papers of Paul M. Hebert – the Law Center's namesake and Dean of the law school from 1937 to 1977. Of special interest are Hebert's documents and notes from his time serving as a judge during the I.G. Farben company's trial at Nuremburg following World War 2. In 1947 and 1948,

Hebert was one of three judges that presided over the war crimes trial of the 24 managers of I.G. Farben, a German chemical and pharmaceuti-



cal company that utilized labor from the concentration camps to make its products, including the gas used in the gas chambers. Hebert wrote a dissent in that argued against the acquittal of some of the managers because they did not personally decide to use slave labor from the camps.

The law library has a unique relationship with civil law. Louisiana was founded by the French, won by the Spanish, and then reclaimed by the French before being purchased by the newly founded United States. Louisiana state law is a product of this history. The state's non-criminal law is modeled after French, Spanish, and Roman civil law traditions while the criminal law more closely resembles the Anglo-American legal tradition. Therefore, the library maintains an extensive collection of foreign, international, and comparative law resources in addition to more traditional American legal materials.

This is reflected in our entire collection, but most especially in our rare books. Our oldest book is a 1534 edition of *Le Grant Coustumier du pays et Duché de Normandie*, a commentary on Normandy's traditional laws written by Guillaume Le Rouillé, a French poet and jurist.

## Library Profiles Cont.

This book comments upon an earlier book "le Grand Coutume de Normandie" that set out medieval Normandy's law in 125 articles. While Normandy's ancient legal customs have little effect on the current Louisiana law, it provides an interesting historical context.

The library also has a copy of the first English translation of Domat's Civil Law, published in 1722, which influenced civil law globally and became a principal source for the Napoleonic Code. Several copies of the Las

Siete Partidas – a foundational work of Spanish civil law – also reside in our rare book room.

Another unusual collection within the library is the Tucker Collection. Following his military service in the First World War, Col. John Tucker, Jr. graduated from LSU Law and practiced law in Louisiana before and after his military service in the Second World War. During this time, Tucker amassed over 12,000 volumes on world history and the history of the law. In a series of donations before and after his death in 1984, Col. Tucker gave the law library his exten-

sive collection of books, including the Roman, French, and Spanish antecedents to the Louisiana Civil Code and the source materials from the drafters of the early Louisiana Codes. The bulk of the world history collection is maintained in the law school's conference room in the original law building, while the legal volumes are housed within the main library and the rare book room.

The LSU Law Library's collection reflects Louisiana's usage of the civil law and common law that supports the research needs of a student body and faculty working and learning within a unique legal framework.



Deborah Turkewitz  
Reference, Faculty  
& Publications Librarian

## Legal Movie Review: Mr. Smith Goes to Washington (1939)

### Mr. Smith Goes to Washington

Directed by Frank Capra, 1939

Written by Sidney Buchman. Story by Lewis R. Foster. Based on his unpublished story "The Gentleman from Montana."

We are huge Jimmy Stewart fans in our home. You name it, we've probably seen it. Everything from Westerns (*The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*), to Alfred Hitchcock collaborations (*Rope*, *Vertigo*, *The Man Who Knew Too Much*), quirky *Harvey*, courtroom drama *Anatomy of a Murder*, to conflicted George Bailey in *It's A Wonderful Life*. So how is it I never saw *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*? I have no explanation, it seems like this film would tick all the boxes for me: Washington, political scandal, and did I mention Jimmy

Stewart? The SEAALL newsletter gave me the perfect reason to check off another one of Jimmy Stewart's eighty films.

*Mr. Smith Goes to Washington* is described as an American political comedy-drama starring Jean Arthur and Jimmy Stewart. By way of plot, following the sudden death of a United States Senator, an idealistic and wholesome leader of the Boy Rangers, Jefferson Smith (Jimmy Stewart) is appointed as senator. The junior Senator Smith is taken under the wing of his childhood idol, Senator Joseph Paine (Claude Rains). Unknown to Jefferson, Senator Paine and their state government officials are involved in a dam construction graft scheme.

Senator Jefferson Smith, meanwhile, is causing a sensation in Washington with his naivete. His staff loses him for several hours while he takes a D.C. landmarks bus tour. He is caught responding to news reporters' questions with bird calls and ranger hand signals, landing him on newspa-

per front pages and looking like a bumpkin. Jefferson responds to these articles by chasing down the Washington press corps and punching reporters. Jefferson tries to keep out of more trouble by drafting a bill to establish a boys' camp in his state. His secretary, Saunders, (top-billed Jean Arthur) is politically savvy, yet jaded, about legislative process and the bill is drafted. However, the proposed campsite is situated on the dam property and Jefferson is unknowingly threatening the state graft scheme. To stop Jefferson, Senator Paine accuses him of owning the camp land in question and attempting to profit from his legislation. A motion is made to expel Jefferson from the Senate.

## Legal Movie Review: Mr. Smith Goes to Washington Cont.

The folks back home mobilize to support Jefferson, but the state political machine violently fights back with malicious newspaper articles and destroying the Boy Rangers' printing press. There are some unexpected scenes of the child newspaper carriers being physically struck, their newspapers stolen, and even hit by a car. Jefferson tries to defend himself on the Senate floor in the famous filibuster scene. He speaks to the point of collapse. Yet even when bins of letters arrive demanding his expulsion, Jefferson vows to fight on. Will Jefferson clear his name? You'll have to watch and find out. *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington* is widely considered one of the most influential American political films. It was included on the [National Film Registry](#) in the first group of films inducted in 1989. [Click here](#) for an article by Robert Sklar at the film's induction. It was nominated for eleven Academy Awards in 1940, including Best Actor for Jimmy Stewart, but won only one for Best Writing, Original Story. A quick search on JSTOR returned over 250 entries addressing the film and themes of populism, democracy, and political institutions. Yet the film's release was not without controversy. A premier was held at Constitution Hall in Washington D.C., but people walked out of the film. Capra was also criticized for showing graft in the Senate. The late 1939 release was in

the shadow of events in Europe where World War II had started. Yet, you might be struck at the parallels with today's current events. This eighty-year-old film confronted issues of graft and corruption, undue political influence and violence, role of the press and biased news reporting at a time you might have expected an untarnished view of American institutions. Do we have a Jefferson Smith today?



Given the film is eighty years old, there are aspects that likely jump out at a modern viewer. The only two leading female roles are Saunders, the secretary, and Susan, Senator Paine's socialite daughter. African Americans are railway porters and a newsboy. Jefferson's proposed camp is a national camp for boys. I'll leave it up to you to decide whether the dated imagery and casting redeem the movie's message.

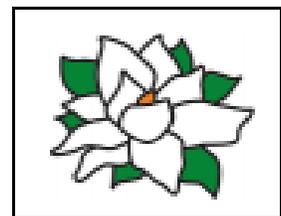
You might be interested also in some other imagery in the film. The Senate pages were fun to watch and just amazing at how they shepherded the Senators in

the proceedings. Technology-spotting was also entertaining: Boy Rangers setting lead type by hand on their printing press; manual typewriters; reporters running to find a telephone; and Jefferson Smith's carrier pigeons. It's also a challenge to try and spot how many cast members appear in other Capra films – can you find “Uncle Billy” as news reporter “Diz” Moore (Thomas Mitchell)?

Given the film's echo of today's political climate, I thought *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington* more relevant than I expected and I'm glad to add this to my list of Jimmy Stewart films. You can rent the movie on Amazon Prime and our county public library has the DVD.

Photo Credit: Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, NYWT&S Collection, [LC-USZ62-123288 (b&w film copy neg)].

Matt Slovic, *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*, Washington Post (1996), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/style/longterm/movies/features/dcmovies/mrsmithgoestowashington.htm>.

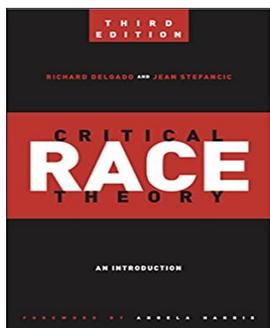


## Readers Advisory: Critical Race Theory: A Tale of Two “Primers”

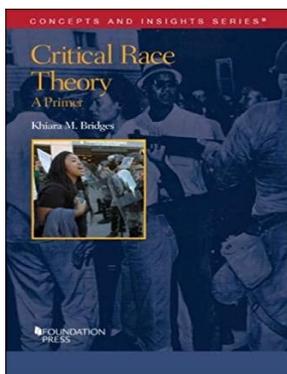
“A small introductory book on any subject.”

—*Primer*, OXFORD ENGLISH DICTIONARY (3d ed. 2007).

Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic. *Critical Race Theory: An Introduction*. New York, NY: New York University Press, 3d. ed. 2017. xxiii, 199 pp. ISBN 9781479802760. \$20.00.



Khiara M. Bridges. *Critical Race Theory: A Primer*. St. Paul, MN: Foundation Press, 2019. xviii, 486 pp. ISBN 9781683284437. \$49.00.



Critical Race Theory (CRT) has been in the news a lot lately. On September 4, 2020, the Director of the Office of Budget and Management issued a memo ordering federal agencies to discontinue all

trainings based upon CRT, opining that “[t]he divisive, false, and demeaning propaganda of the critical race theory [sic] movement is contrary to all we stand for as Americans and should have no place in the Federal government.” See OFF. OF MGMT. & BUDGET, EXEC. OFF. OF THE PRESIDENT, MEMO. NO. 20-34, TRAINING IN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT (2020). This attempt to rid the federal government of all traces of CRT calls to mind the title of the pioneering Critical Race Theorist Derrick Bell’s 1995 David C. Baum Memorial Lecture on Civil Liberties and Civil Rights: “Who’s Afraid of Critical Race Theory?” See Derrick A. Bell, *Who’s Afraid of Critical Race Theory?*, 1995 U. ILL. REV. 893. Who indeed?

Although CRT has now entered the mainstream of American culture, it began its life as a legal theory: an attempt to explain why racial justice efforts had stalled in the 1970s and 1980s—and continue to stall to this day—in spite of the success of the civil rights movement. Only in the 1990s did CRT begin to enter the fields of education, philosophy, political science, public health, and sociology, among many others. More recently, CRT has captured the popular imagination (one thinks, for instance, of the writings of Ta-Nehisi Coates, the publication of *The 1619 Project*, and the premiere of the HBO series *Lovecraft Country*). But where should a law librarian send a patron—a law student or an attorney, for in-

stance—interested in learning about the basics of CRT *qua* legal theory?

For many years now, the first stop has been Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic’s *Critical Race Theory: An Introduction*. First published by New York University Press in 2001

and now in its third edition, Delgado and Stefancic’s text is concise and highly readable. Written in a conversational tone, this pithy volume breaks down complex theoretical concepts (e.g., interest convergence, legal storytelling, and intersectionality) in a way that makes them comprehensible to readers with no prior knowledge of CRT. Indeed, this book is commonly assigned to high school and college students. In fact, *Critical Race Theory: An Introduction* was one of the titles in the curriculum of the Mexican-American Studies (MAS) program infamously banned by the Tucson Unified School District in accordance with Arizona State law. See Richard Delgado, *Precious Knowledge: State Bans on Ethnic Studies, Book Traffickers (Librotraficantes), and a New Type of Race Trial*, 91 N.C. L. REV. 1513, 1521–23 (2013)

Recently, I came across a new book that appears to parallel the efforts of *Critical Race Theory: An Introduction*. Last year, Foundation Press published *Critical Race Theory: A Primer* by Khiara M. Bridges. At 486 pages, it is more than twice the size of Delgado and Stefancic’s



**Nicholas Mignanelli**  
Reference & Instructional Services Librarian Lecturer in Law  
University of Miami School of Law

## Cont. Readers Advisory: Critical Race Theory: A Tale of Two “Primers”

*Introduction.* Bridges’s *Primer* is thorough and copiously footnoted. Of particular interest are two chapters on the submovements of CRT and an entire section on contemporary issues.

Although Bridges’s text has much to recommend it, the word “primer” is something of a misnomer. In reality, *Critical Race Theory: A Primer* is a very good and afford-

able textbook. Delgado and Stefancic’s *Critical Race Theory: An Introduction*, on the other hand, is a primer in the traditional sense of the word.

While *Critical Race Theory: A Primer* would make an excellent choice of text for an instructor teaching a seminar on race and the law, it is somewhat advanced for the reader simply seeking an

answer to the question “what is Critical Race Theory?” For that reader, Delgado and Stefancic’s *Critical Race Theory: An Introduction* remains the best choice. One hopes that it will continue to be updated for years to come..

## Recent Acquisitions: Focusmate

I’ve welcomed the opportunity to work from home during the pandemic, but at times it has been isolating. I’ve missed the bustling ambience of a café or library where a room full of strangers are tapping away on computers, interacting only to order another cup of coffee or ask if a seat is taken. One way to partially simulate this is through [Focusmate](#), a videoconferencing service that pairs people who are working on their own projects to keep each other company and hold each other accountable.

To use Focusmate, first you request a 50-minute session on the Focusmate calendar. Focusmate recommends scheduling at least a day in advance to increase the odds of the service being able to match you with someone who wants an accountability partner during the same 50 minutes. On the other hand, I have had good luck so far when scheduling with only 10 or 15 minutes’ notice.

You’ll be notified as soon as Focusmate has paired you with someone, and you can launch a test session to make sure your camera and mic are working.

When the session begins, both of you take a few seconds to say somewhat specifically what you’ll be working on, for example, “grading research logs” or “catching up on email in my inbox.” Ask whether your partner wants you to be muted or unmuted. Keep your video on, and stay in the frame the whole time (or let your partner know via text chat that you’ll be right back). Then, you do your work while your partner does theirs, and if the task changes (“responding to an urgent reference request”), update your partner in text chat. A timer will gently let you know when the session is nearing the end. Take about one minute to update each other on how your tasks went, and compliment each other on how much you both accomplished.

Focusmate is no substitute for work sessions with colleagues who know the ins and outs of what you do and

can answer questions. And it’s not a way to meet people for conversation or otherwise; socializing is against the [community guidelines](#). For me, Focusmate sessions have been helpful reminders that I’m not alone working from home, and my accountability partners have helped me feel a bit more connected, supported, and yes—focused—as I work.

For more details, try the blog posts on getting started with Focusmate and exploring its features: <https://blog.focusmate.com/guide/>. Up to three sessions per week are free, and unlimited sessions are \$5 per month.



Exe Ross  
Reference  
Librarian  
University of South  
Carolina

## Committee "Quarterlies"

The hope is for this column to be a place where the many SEAALL committees can provide important updates or infor-

mation about the work they are doing. There may not be times where a committee won't have an update, but it will be a place where

committees can reach out to you - our awesome membership - about important information or updates. We hope that you'll find it helpful and in-

## Service to SEAALL Award Committee

It's that time again! The Service to SEAALL Award Committee is seeking nominations for the 2021 Service to SEAALL Award, and the nomination form is available at this link:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeADpmzPC-C9n0XdKD8hft-eSTmS7BQUwSfiMT7tyLpS63Ro-g/viewform>

Candidates must have given special service to the chapter, demonstrated a sustained record of service to the chapter, and been a chapter member for at least five years. Current and immediate past SEAALL officers are not eligible.

Please check out the list of previous Service to SEAALL Award recipients at <https://>

[seaall.wildapricot.org/page-7745](https://seaall.wildapricot.org/page-7745), and consider who you know who belongs in such rarified company. Self-nominations are also encouraged. The deadline is Monday, February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021.

Thank you very much, Your Service to SEAALL Award Committee (previous Award recipients Paul Birch and Catherine Lemann, and also Louis Rosen)

## SEAALL 2021 Local Arrangements Committee

The Local Arrangements Committee regrets it will be unable to host SEAALL 2021 in Columbia, SC, due to the pandemic. Thanks to President Shamika Dalton's negotiations with the Columbia Hilton, we look forward to hosting SEAALL 2024 in-person in Columbia, SC, at no penalty to SEAALL. We also look forward to being crowned longest-serving local arrangements committee in SEAALL history.

**The SEAALL Newsletter Committee accepts guest submissions.**

**If you would like to write a short piece and see your name in print in the next SEALL newsletter please submit it to Kathleen (Katie) Brown at**

**[kbrown@charlestonlaw.edu](mailto:kbrown@charlestonlaw.edu)**

**I look forward to reading your submissions.**

## SEAALL Member News

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

**SEAALL  
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LIBRARIES**

Become an author in the Southeastern Law Librarian! Share your articles, notes, photos, comments, ideas, rejected blog entries, or anything else that will fit into a Word document in the SEAALL Newsletter! Guaranteed to be your first step to conquering the librarianship world or your money back!

Editorial comments or submissions should be sent to:

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**Submission Guidelines**

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**Newsletter submission deadlines are:**

Spring: April 20, 2020

Summer: July 20, 2020

Fall: Oct. 20, 2020

Winter: January 20, 2020\

MS Word is the preferred format for electronic submissions.

All submissions will be edited for grammar, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation, and to ensure style consistency within the newsletter. Every effort will be made not to change the intended meaning of the text.

The opinions in the columns are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of SEAALL. .

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