4-24-1992

Letter to Jean Holcomb regarding use of Scholarship funds, April 24, 1992

Gail Zwirner

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Ms. Jean M. Holcomb  
Norfolk Public Law Library  
1300 Dominion Tower  
999 Waterside Drive  
Norfolk, VA 23510  

2308 Park Avenue  
Richmond, VA 23219  
April 24, 1992  

Re: Lucile B. Elliott Scholarship  

Dear Jean:  

Thank you again for SEALL's contribution to my library school course this semester, "Libraries and Information in Society." This was a required "core" course in the program, where we tackled some hot issues in librarianship. Although my four hours of commuting to D.C. from Richmond for a three hour class for sixteen weeks borders on insanity, I find the diversity of student experiences in the D.C. area libraries refreshing.

Enclosed is a bibliography of ethics issues for law firm librarians, which was one of my weekly assignments for the course. It should give you an idea of the kinds of issues the course covered. Christopher Philips, a librarian at the Washington Post, was the instructor. You will recall that he was one of the speakers at VALL's annual meeting in March.

I am glad to see you on the schedule again to teach for the fall semester. You certainly are an inspiration to us for promoting the profession.

Sincerely,

Enclosure  
cc: Ms. Kathy S. Heberer  
(with enclosure)
ETHICS ISSUES FOR LAW FIRM LIBRARIANS

ACCESS TO INFORMATION


Nissenbaum, Robert J. "An Impressionistic View of LEXIS and WESTLAW." Legal Reference Services Quarterly 2 (No. 3 Fall 1982) : 95-100.

Legal Reference Services Quarterly frequently offers useful comparisons of different applications by the major vendors for online legal research, LEXIS and Westlaw. The above articles discuss topics including: efficiency in searching between vendor databases, pricing structure, and currentness.

COPYRIGHT


In this seminar, three experts in the copyright field, including Professor Paul Goldstein, outlined the details of copyright compliance in for-profit libraries.


Ms. Jensen's bibliography is a comprehensive offering of sources discussing all areas regarding the copyright issue, and is particularly useful for firm libraries with sections on "fair use," "for-profit institutions," "databases," "photocopying," and "section 108 libraries.

This article analyzes the results of a law firm survey regarding compliance with copyright laws. Ms. Nemchek includes sample copyright compliance policies for printed material and software.

**ETHICS**


Dr. Preer discusses how a professional code of ethics can perform two valuable functions by stating the core values of its practitioners and by creating a presumption in favor of certain values that must be overcome if library policy is made to the contrary. She cites examples of ethical dilemmas law firm librarians might face which test the ethics code.


This article is an edited transcript of a program presented at an annual meeting of AALL. The panelists cite an example of a possible delicate situation distinguishing library versus personal expenses.


This compilation presents the official codes of ethics of the major professional organizations in business, health, and law. It includes the Statement on Professional Ethics promulgated by the American Library Association, and adds several principles adopted by the American Association of Law Libraries as applied to the special character and mission of law libraries.

**FUNDING**


This article questions the billing ethic of law firms' billing practices of "unbundling" certain charges which used to be considered overhead. It cites the possibility for abuse in certain profit centers, including the library's LEXIS/Westlaw markups.

This article includes cost-saving ideas to consider in a decade of trends toward departmental profitability for firm libraries. It includes bibliographic references.

**FUTURE**


Many firms are looking to new technology to replace the traditional law library. Mr. Hildebrandt discusses the best use for new technology, how the next decade will provide better access to information, and the increasingly viable role of the law firm librarian.


**PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY**


This article tackles the long-standing debate in law librarianship of the need for the librarian to have a law degree in addition to an M.L.S. Ms. Bonney explores all factors involved, including kind of library, the kind of position the librarian holds, and the gender of the librarian.

Mr. Newman discusses several reasons why a law firm should have a librarian, including administration and maintenance, records management, and reference and research.


Librarians have seen expanded responsibilities in areas such as marketing, records management, and computer systems management, unfortunately without an increase in the firm's channels of communication. Ms. O'Grady's article makes suggestions for improvement of communication between lawyers and attorneys.


Ms. Schwarz suggests possibilities for an expanded role for a firm's librarian in areas of marketing, records management, and litigation support. She cautions that promoting the library in this fashion may mean doing more than one job only half as well.


Ms. Shimpock-Vieweg discusses marketing plans for law firm libraries, and argues that a plan is essential to the success of the promotion of the library. A sample plan is included for reference.

SOCIETAL ISSUES


In this seminar, Gloria Leonard, the Co-chair of the ALA President's Committee on Cultural Diversity, and Jackson Raines, BNA's Training Manager in Human Resources Development, spoke about demographic changes in the work force, and offered management strategies for building positive working relationships in a culturally and ethnically diverse working environment.

Law libraries are becoming significant producers of waste paper. This article discusses programs which librarians are initiating to recycle the waste they create. The American Association of Law Libraries is entertaining a resolution that would encourage law book publishers to advertise the use of materials that can be recycled easily.


The Americans with Disabilities Act has spawned the development of electronic assistive devices to accommodate the disabled in the work place. This article reviews many of the products and suggests that reasonable compliance with the ADA may not be outrageously expensive.


While lawyers are advising clients about the implications of the Americans with Disabilities Act on businesses, they are not looking closely at the applications to their own law firms for making reasonable accommodations to disabled employees and applicants. Mr. Samborn’s article discusses the factors to consider in deciding what changes are readily achievable to relieve current barriers.

Gail F. Zwirner
April 9, 1992