

## EDITORIAL COMMENT

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Every proceedings issue of the *International Journal of Legal Information* (IJLI) is special. Each of them provides a review of the most recent Annual Course, articles and lectures from that year's Course, as well as conference programs and other content related to the Course. This particular issue is especially important to me as Atlanta is my hometown and Emory University School of Law and the Hugh F. MacMillan Law Library is my workplace. Atlanta and Emory were the locations for the 2017 Annual Course. This issue of the IJLI contains information from the 36<sup>th</sup> Annual Course on International Law and Legal Information held in Atlanta on October 22–26, 2017. The theme of the Annual Course was *Human Rights, Civil Rights, and Other Critical Issues in U.S. Law*.

Bringing IALL to Atlanta was a long process. I had advocated for many years at Board meetings for returning IALL to the continental United States for an Annual Course, and that Atlanta in particular would be a fantastic host city for an IALL conference. I also knew we had a great group of people to form the local planning committee (the most important aspect in choosing a venue for IALL conferences). IALL Annual Courses are always wonderful, but the vast majority of IALL members are from the United States, and after a 15-year absence from the continental United States, it seemed that hosting an IALL Annual Course here was overdue. Once approved by the Board, I formed a Local Planning Committee (LPC) from members of my staff at the MacMillan Law Library, and we began work immediately. But planning and executing the conference involved every member of the MacMillan Law Library staff – not just the LPC. It is a huge undertaking! The Local Planning Committee consisted:

- **Christina Glon**, Chair,
- **Amy Flick**,
- **Jason LeMay**,
- **Avery Le**,
- **Michael Umberger**, (who was critical to our early planning efforts, but left Emory for another institution four months before the conference), and
- Yours truly, **Mark Engsberg**

We knew that 2017 was a crucial time in U.S. politics with the recent change in administration, especially as those changes were affecting international law and the international community. The annual course tackled these issues and more, with a special eye toward how libraries and legal information play a role.

Given both the location and recent events in the United States, the Atlanta Course was designed to be both interesting and highly topical. Atlanta has historic roots, was a pivotal location during the American Civil War; it is also the birthplace of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and it is internationally known as a major center for the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s. Atlanta is the financial, business, and transportation hub for the entire southeast of the US. It is also a nexus for the study of international human rights as home to the Carter Center, a non-profit organization established in 1982 as a partnership between Emory University and former President Jimmy Carter.

The conference took place on October 22–26, 2017. The main venue was Emory's beautiful Conference Center Hotel, located a short distance from Emory Law School. For those who may not already know, Emory is one of the nation's top-ranked law schools, and the opening reception official welcome took place at the Law School. Among the other venues involved in the 2017 Annual Course were the Fernbank Museum of Natural History, site of the Annual Dinner, the Center for Civil and Human Rights in downtown Atlanta, and the Carter Center and Jimmy Carter Presidential Library and Museum. As we had hoped, the conference was a big success: we welcomed 122 librarians from 18 countries and 25 states to Atlanta. It also attracted twenty-two library vendors who generously sponsored many of the excursions, meals, and other features that make IALL conferences so special.

Back to this issue of the IJLI: in addition to the ever-popular sections on Book Reviews, edited by **Thomas Mills**, and the International Calendar, edited by **Amy Flick**, this issue contains a cross-section of pieces from the Atlanta Annual Course itself. These include presentations from the IALL's inaugural Pre-conference Workshop, *Well, Isn't that Special? A How-To Workshop on Creating and Using Archives and Special Collections in a Legal Research Context*. The workshop introduced instruction on practical skills to conference delegates. This augmented the more conceptual or theoretical lectures that took place in the subsequent days during the conference. It was a highly-anticipated addition to the conference schedule. The hands-on nature of the workshop meant that registration had to be limited, and so the event was quickly sold out. It was so successful that pre-conference workshops of similar pragmatic value will be regular features of future IALL annual courses. Two of the speakers from the pre-conference workshop were from the MacMillan Law Library's own staff: **Jason LeMay**, *Assistant Law Librarian for Cataloging and Metadata*, and **Vanessa King**, *Assistant Law Librarian for Special Collections*. Emory University's **Travis McGahee**, *Archives Coordinator*, Woodruff Health Sciences Center Library, was a speaker at the pre-conference workshop and also contributed a piece focusing on archives. Additional articles from the workshop and the conference will appear in a subsequent issue.

Included in this issue of the IJLI are also pieces by:

- **Allison Rutland Soulen**, *Director of Projects*, Georgia Appleseed Center for Law and Justice, on race and law enforcement;
- **Silas Allard**, *Associate Director, Center for the Study of Law and Religion and Harold J. Berman Fellow in Law and Religion*, on refugee protection;
- **Gary Hauk**, *Emory University Historian and Senior Advisor to the President*, on Atlanta and Emory History; and
- **Catherine Scott**, *Chair and Professor of Political Science* at Emory's near neighbor, Agnes Scott College, on gender and the 2016 presidential election.

Rounding out the issue is the annual report by IALL President, **Jeroen Vervliet**, as well as the conference program, the conference welcome message from the IALL President and Board Liaison Officer, **Kurt Carroll**; Speaker Information; and information and images of conference Venues and Visits. It makes for a fantastic issue and great reading. For those who missed the Atlanta conference, I hope the contents of this issue will encourage you to attend next year's annual course, set to take place in Luxembourg in late September and early October 2018. Happy Reading!

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