Legal Periodicals and Scholarship

Law Reviews or Law Journals

- **Purpose:** Publish scholarly thought and ideas on legal issues.
- **Authors:** Law faculty and other legal scholars; plus some student-authored pieces.
- **Publishers:** Law student editors; plus a few peer-edited journals.
- **Content:** New theory and doctrine; intensive analysis; comprehensive documentation; opinion and dialog.
- **Use:** Analysis of law; starting point for legal research (citations to primary sources of law); et al.
- **Finding tools:**
  - Legal periodicals indexes –
    - *Current Law Index* and *LegalTrac* (online)
    - *Index to Periodicals and Books* and *Wilson Web* (online)
  - Periodicals databases such as *Lexis* and *Westlaw*.
- **Sources:**
  - Print collections in law libraries
  - Online collections in *Lexis*, *Westlaw*, and *HeinOnline*

Location: **Compact, movable shelving along the far wall of the Main Reading Room.** The Mason Law Library has a print collection of every law school’s primary law review and some law school specialty journals.

Institutional Repositories (e-libraries)

- **Purpose:** Provide faster access to scholarship than conventional publishing and, often, open access.
- **Authors:** Law faculty and other legal scholars.
- **Publishers:** Consortia of scholars; law schools.
- **Content:** Working papers or papers recently accepted for publication by law reviews.
- **Use:** Open access, dialog, feedback for new works, pre-publication access.
- **Finding tools:** Internet search engines; but some e-libraries are subscription only
- **Examples:**
  - Social Science Research Network (SSRN)’s *Legal Scholarship Network*
  - Berkeley Electronic Press Legal Repository
  - NELLCO Legal Scholarship Repository

Location: **Online, open access and, sometimes, password access only.**

Resources for Finding Legal Periodicals

Full-text Databases and E-libraries


*Law Review websites* – Many law reviews now make articles available free on-line as well as in paper format.

**Social Science Research Network** — Legal Scholarship Network. Password required.

**The Berkeley Electronic Press** — Peer-reviewed law journals. Password required.

**Westlaw** — Journals and Law Reviews Combined Database. Searchable by journal and keyword. Password required. Also available on the Westlaw Public Access terminal in the Mason Law Library circulation area.

### Indexes

**Current Law Index (CLI) and LegalTrac (1980 – present)**

- Indexes primarily U.S. law reviews and journals.
- Excellent subject index, author/title index, and tables of cases and statutes referenced in legal periodicals. Yearly bound volumes with monthly supplements.
- The on-line service is LegalTrac, sometimes called Legal Resource Index.

**Index to Legal Periodicals and Books (ILPD) and Wilson Web (1926 – present)**

- Indexes legal periodicals and selected books published in the U.S. and British Commonwealth countries.
- Excellent subject and author index, tables of cases and statutes referenced in legal periodicals, and book reviews. Yearly bound volumes with monthly supplements.
- The online service is Wilson Web.

**Index to Periodical Articles Related to Law (1958 – present)**

- Indexes English language articles published worldwide which are not indexed in CLI, Index to Foreign Legal Periodicals, or ILPD.

**Index to Foreign Legal Periodicals (1960 – present; library has 1989 – 1994)**

- Indexes selected legal periodicals from non-common law countries.
- Includes subject index, author index, geographical index, and book review index. Cumulative volumes published yearly, with quarterly updates.

**Location:** Reference Room.

### Online Search Engines

Search periodicals databases of Lexis and Westlaw by keyword, author, title, and citation.