

Electronic Research and Citation

**Google, Legal Citations, and Electronic Fickleness.
The Future of Legal Scholarship and the Role of law
Libraries in the New Digital Environment**

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The Internet and ...

- 1. “Uniform Resource Locators (URLs) experience ‘link rot,’ that is, over time the URL is more and more likely to become a dead link, making the footnote citation worthless or nearly so.”[\[1\]](#)
- [\[1\]](#) Lyons, Susan. “Persistent Identification of Electronic Documents and the Future of Footnotes” in *Law Law Library Journal*: 97 (Fall 2005): 681-694.

... the Bluebook

- Starting with its 17th edition, *The Bluebook* has relaxed its citation rules and allows the use of electronically identified sources, based on their URL. [1]
- [1] While it distinguishes between the rules of citations covering commercial electronic databases (such as LEXIS and Westlaw) – Rule 18.1 – and those covering the rest of the online sources – Rule 18.2.1 – *The Bluebook* allows online citations. Rule 18.2.1 at 132-33.

Legal Scholarship in the Digital Age

- A June 14, 2005 search on Lexis/Nexis Academic Universe for law review articles published between March 13th and June 13th 2005, and citing at least three Web-based documents yielded 938 results.
- Twenty one of the first twenty five hits, a whopping 80%, cited at least one online source which had become publicly inaccessible.
 - Those online sources varied from federal and local governmental sites to self-published ones, from html to PDF documents, but invariably some of them proved evanescent.

Legal Scholarship in the Digital Age

- A more recent empirical experiment produced equally telling results. A May 17, 2007 search on Westlaw-JLR for articles published from December 31st, 2006 citing at least three documents published on the Web produced 1789 results.
- Seventeen of the first 20 documents, or 85%, cited at least one online source which had become publicly inaccessible.
 - Again those sources varied from federal and local governmental sites to self-published ones, from html to PDF documents.

Solutions

- 1. changing authors' behavior (PURL)
- 2. self-archiving
 - Wayback Machine:
<http://www.archive.org/web/web.php>
 - The Webcite Consortium
<http://www.webcitation.org/index>
- 3. institutional archiving:
 - Law reviews
 - Law Library Journal
 - Law libraries

The Role of Law Libraries

- The URL Archive
 - <http://library.law.columbia.edu/urlmirror/>
- The database would contain the electronic documents referenced in the footnotes.
- The project envisages the creation of a database at the individual law school level (covering all the law school publications) and then the creation of a consortium at the national level.

The URL Archive

- The database would contain electronic documents, and its basic fields would be:
 - the volume number of the law review or journal where the article that cites the electronic document was published;
 - the date of the law review or journal
 - the title of the law review or journal
 - the title of the article
 - the page number the article begins on
 - the footnote number
 - the page number the footnote appears on
 - the author's name
 - the URL address of the cited material
 - the downloaded html file, and
 - the date when the document was harvested.

The URL Archive Pilot Project - Microsoft Internet Explorer

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URL	Citation	Journal	Author
	14 Colum. J. Asian L. 235 (2000)		Jason Gottlieb. launching the phnom penh stock exchange

Search for document

Displaying 2 of 2 matches for:

14 Colum. J. Asian L. 235 (2000) Jason Gottlieb. LAUNCHING THE PHNOM PENH STOCK EXCHANGE: TOWARD A LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR LAUNCHING A STOCK EXCHANGE IN AN UNDERDEVELOPED COUNTRY

1. FN1 See Gottlieb, "The Cambodia Coup," at <http://www.suite101.com/article.cfm/389/8554> (June 12, 1998). The major sources for that article were David P. Chandler, *A History of Cambodia* (1983), for the events up to the Vietnamese occupation, and Steven Heder and Judy Ledgerwood, *Propaganda, Politics, and Violence in Cambodia*, 1-10 (1996), for following events.
2. FN12 Naranhkiri Tith, *The Challenge of Sustainable Economic Growth and Development in Cambodia*, in *Cambodia and the International Community: The Quest for Peace, Development, and Democracy* (Frederick Z. Brown and David G. Timberman, eds., 1999). Internet version (12/26/99) http://www.ciaonet.org/book/ass02/ass02_d.html

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