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# Applied Legal Storytelling A Bibliography

J. Christopher Rideout\*

#### I. Introduction

This article contains a bibliography on the movement commonly known as Applied Legal Storytelling.<sup>1</sup> The movement is largely, although not wholly, identified with a series of academic conferences,<sup>2</sup> and its starting date is difficult to pinpoint precisely. Some might say it began with the striking of a large wooden staff on a stone floor.

On the evening of July 20, 2007, a group of legal academics assembled in the historic Old Hall at Lincoln's Inn, in the center of London, for a glass of wine and a formal dinner. They had come from the U.S., the U.K., and a handful of other countries to attend a conference on Applied Legal Storytelling at the City Law School, not far away at Gray's Inn. The evening marked the culmination of the conference,<sup>3</sup> and everyone in the room was somewhat spellbound. The conference had sparked an ongoing and lively conversation about the uses of storytelling in the law, and the ancient, timbered ceiling and the historical portraits on the stone walls added to what seemed the import of the moment. Ideas were flowing and the room had a buzz, to such an extent that the steward of the Old Hall

<sup>\*</sup> Professor of Lawyering Skills, Seattle University School of Law. The author thanks those who helped him with this bibliography, including Ruth Anne Robbins, Steve Johansen, Ken Chestek, Sue Provenzano, and Erika Rackley. They generously shared their own bibliographic work or cheerfully responded to his pestering emails. He also thanks the many people who corresponded with him during the summer of 2014 about the project, almost always with a pleasant note, and most of whom who are represented in this bibliography.

<sup>1</sup> See Ruth Anne Robbins, An Introduction to Applied Legal Storytelling and to This Symposium, 14 LEGAL WRITING 3 (2008).

<sup>2</sup> The first conference was held from July 18–20, 2007, at the City Law School, City University, in London, United Kingdom. The conferences have since been held biennially: at Lewis and Clark School of Law in Portland, Oregon, in 2009; Denver University in 2011; and City University again in London in 2013. The fifth biennial conference is scheduled to be held at Seattle University in July 2015. All of the conferences have been co-sponsored by the Legal Writing Institute and the Clinical Legal Education Association.

<sup>3</sup> The organizers of this originating conference were Robert McPeake, Erika Rackley, Ruth Anne Robbins, Steve Johansen, and Brian Foley.

had to strike his staff on the floor to get the attention of the group. One member<sup>4</sup> then read out loud from the opening to Charles Dickens's *Bleak House*,<sup>5</sup> fittingly set in that very hall, and the group sat down to dinner and more conversation. Talk arose of publishing some of the conference presentations as law-review articles. Applied Legal Storytelling as a visible movement was underway.

#### **II. Applied Legal Storytelling**

Those interested in Applied Legal Storytelling examine the use of stories—and of storytelling or narrative elements—in law practice, in law-school pedagogy, and within the law generally. Not surprisingly, they often teach either in legal writing programs or in law-school clinics.

In the introduction to a symposium that followed the 2007 conference mentioned above, Ruth Anne Robbins wrestles with the definition of Applied Legal Storytelling.<sup>6</sup> She ties it to the practical aspects of lawyering—"storytelling is the backbone of the all-important theory of the case, which is the essence of all good lawyering"7—and suggests that Applied Legal Storytelling also promotes the incorporation of storytelling into the pedagogy of lawyering skills.<sup>8</sup> Brian Foley, another organizer of the 2007 conference, underscores the notion that the movement is applied and that storytelling has fundamental uses in the practice of law.<sup>9</sup>

But Robbins and Foley both acknowledge other efforts to understand the role of narrative and storytelling in the law and in legal discourse. Robbins, in particular, notes that the Applied Legal Storytelling movement shares common ground with the Law and Literature movement, even as she senses that the two also differ in some ways. <sup>10</sup> Both movements share an interest in the theories that underlie legal storytelling—for example narrative, rhetorical, or semiotic; <sup>11</sup> in the ethical implications of legal storytelling; <sup>12</sup> and in the presence of legal themes in literary works—a

<sup>4</sup> Erika Rackley, Professor of Law, Durham Law School, Durham University, Durham, England.

<sup>5</sup> CHARLES DICKENS, BLEAK HOUSE (Oxford 1998) (1853).

<sup>6</sup> Robbins, supra n. 1, at 13-14.

<sup>7</sup> Id. at 3.

<sup>8</sup> Id. at 12.

<sup>9</sup> Brian J. Foley, Applied Legal Storytelling, Politics, and Factual Realism, 14 LEGAL WRITING 20 (2008). A later contributor notes that Applied Legal Storytelling "aspires to be concrete, accessible, and useful to lawyers, judges, and students." Derek H. Kiernan-Johnson, A Shift to Narrativity, 9 LEGAL COMM. & RHETORIC: JALWD 81, 87 (2012).

<sup>10</sup> Robbins, supra n. 1, at 12.

<sup>11</sup> Id. at 10.

<sup>12</sup> Id. at 9.

central concern of Law and Literature.<sup>13</sup> In doing so, she implicitly acknowledges that the initial definition of Applied Legal Storytelling could be enlarged beyond its purported focus on law practice. And the conference presentations and articles that have emerged since 2007 partially confirm her suspicion.

Both Robbins and Foley also wisely stop short of offering a definitive description of Applied Legal Storytelling. Robbins looks to the conferences that will follow the 2007 conference, as well as to the accompanying scholarship, for her claim that the definition could grow as the movement grows. <sup>14</sup> Foley, like Robbins, sees the movement as too young to define. <sup>15</sup> This article makes no attempt at that definitive description, but it does offer a listing of the scholarship on Applied Legal Storytelling that has followed since 2007. The bibliography will show that Applied Legal Storytelling now has many branches.

Finally, any discussion of the Applied Legal Storytelling movement must acknowledge the broader turn in legal scholarship toward narratives and storytelling in the law, beginning at least as far back as the 1970s. The publication of James Boyd White's The Legal Imagination in 1973 is often cited as a starting point. 16 White's work is often identified with the Law and Literature movement, but in 1981 another pair of scholars, Lance Bennett and Martha Feldman, looked in a different direction—at the role of stories in trial practice, in Reconstructing Reality in the Courtroom. 17 In 1989, the Michigan Law Review devoted an entire issue to legal storytelling, offering a scholarly approach to narratives and the law. 18 Both Patricia Williams and Richard Delgado began using storytelling in discussions of critical race theory. 19 Peter Brooks and Paul Gewirtz assembled an important collection of essays on law's stories.<sup>20</sup> And Anthony Amsterdam and Jerome Bruner dug deeply into narratives in the law in two of the chapters in their treatise Minding the Law.21 All of these works make significant contributions to the legal scholarship on narratives

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<sup>13</sup> Id. at 10.

<sup>14</sup> Id. at 14.

<sup>15</sup> Foley, supra n. 9, at 52.

<sup>16</sup> JAMES BOYD WHITE, THE LEGAL IMAGINATION (1973). See also Chapter 8, "Telling Stories in the Law and in Ordinary Life," in White's Heracles' Bow: Essays on the Rhetoric and Poetics of the Law (1985).

<sup>17</sup> W. LANCE BENNETT & MARTHA S. FELDMAN, RECONSTRUCTING REALITY IN THE COURTROOM JUSTICE AND JUDGMENT IN AMERICAN CULTURE (1981).

<sup>18 87</sup> MICHIGAN L. REV. 2073 (1989).

<sup>19</sup> PATRICIA J. WILLIAMS, THE ALCHEMY OF RACE AND RIGHTS (1992); Richard Delgado, Storytelling for Oppositionists and Others, 87 MICHIGAN L. REV. 2411 (1989).

<sup>20</sup> See Peter Brooks & Paul Gewirtz, Law's Stories: Narrative and Rhetoric in the Law (1998).

<sup>21</sup> See chapters 4 and 5 of Anthony G. Amsterdam & Jerome Bruner, Minding the Law (2000).

and storytelling in the law. But for the purposes of this bibliography, they and the scholarly trends that they represent lie outside the Applied Legal Storytelling movement as it has been defined thus far.<sup>22</sup>

### II. Structure of the Bibliography on Applied Legal Storytelling

This bibliography uses the biennial conferences on Applied Legal Storytelling as the center of gravity for its listing of articles and books. Many of the articles began as a paper or presentation at an Applied Legal Storytelling conference. But the bibliography also reaches beyond those articles because the list of publications on Applied Legal Storytelling can fairly be described as somewhat broader than those emerging from the conferences alone.

For that reason, the bibliography first lists articles that predate the 2007 conference, but that could be called precursors to Applied Legal Storytelling. This first section is selective, and no doubt other articles might arguably belong in it. But because the bibliography in general focuses on work that has emerged from the Applied Legal Storytelling conferences, this section has been kept in check. It contains articles that represent earlier efforts to apply storytelling to law and law practice (as opposed to articles that offer more general discussions of narrative and the law); articles that have often been mentioned as precursors to applied legal storytelling, either at the applied legal storytelling conferences or in the articles that have emerged from those conferences; and in a few cases, articles that have been directly suggested as belonging in the bibliography.<sup>23</sup>

Next, the bibliography lists articles on Applied Legal Storytelling from 2007 to the present.<sup>24</sup> The overwhelming majority of these articles began as presentations at one of the Applied Legal Storytelling conferences, and the sheer number of them points to the liveliness of the academic conversations that these conferences have triggered.<sup>25</sup> The articles in this section are not subcategorized within the bibliography itself,<sup>26</sup> but a number of different emphases emerge. Here is a quick overview.

<sup>22</sup> In a recent book, Philip Meyer comments on the distance between the interests of legal academics in narrative and the interests of practitioners and law students in storytelling. See PHILIP N. MEYER, STORYTELLING FOR LAWYERS 204–05 (2014).

<sup>23</sup> See infra notes 61-65 and accompanying text (discussing "methodology" of this bibliography).

<sup>24</sup> December 2014.

<sup>25</sup> By my count, ninety-five articles.

<sup>26</sup> Some of the articles, for example, could easily belong to more than one subcategory—an inevitable classification problem for a group of articles as diverse as this one.

#### A. Application of Fiction-Writing Techniques to Storytelling in Law Practice

These articles take the phrase "applied legal storytelling" literally and address the original topic most centrally. Early examples would be Brian J. Foley and Ruth Anne Robbins, Fiction 101: A Primer for Lawyers on How to Use Fiction Writing Techniques to Write Persuasive Facts Sections,<sup>27</sup> or Philip N. Meyer, Vignettes from a Narrative Primer.<sup>28</sup> A more recent example is Cathren Koehlert-Page, Come a Little Closer So I Can See You My Pretty: The Use and Limits of Fiction Techniques for Establishing an Empathetic Point of View in Appellate Briefs.<sup>29</sup>

#### B. The Uses of Storytelling in Law Practice

These articles show how storytelling more generally (as opposed to specific fiction-writing techniques) can be used in law practice. Some examples include Kenneth D. Chestek, *Judging by the Numbers: An Empirical Study of the Power of Story*;<sup>30</sup> Elizabeth Fajans and Mary R. Falk, *Untold Stories: Restoring Narrative to Pleading Practice*;<sup>31</sup> and Karen J. Sneddon, *The Will as Personal Narrative*.<sup>32</sup>

#### C. The Uses of Storytelling in Legal Pedagogy

These articles discuss the uses of storytelling in legal pedagogy. Some examples include Stefan H. Krieger and Serge A. Martinez, A Tale of Election Day 2008: Teaching Storytelling Through Repeated Experiences;<sup>33</sup> Robert McPeake, Fitting Stories into Professional Legal Education—The Missing Ingredient;<sup>34</sup> and Laurie Shanks, Whose Story Is It, Anyway?—Guiding Students to Client-Centered Interviewing Through Storytelling.<sup>35</sup>

#### D. The Uses of Storytelling in Legal Scholarship

These articles discuss the uses of storytelling in legal scholarship. Some examples are Philip N. Meyer, Will You Please Be Quiet, Please? Lawyers Listening to the Call of Stories, 36 and Nancy Levit, Reshaping the Narrative Debate. 37

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27 32 RUTGERS L.J. 459 (2001).
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**<sup>28</sup>** 12 LEGAL WRITING 229 (2006).

<sup>29 80</sup> UMKC L. REV. 399 (2011).

<sup>30 7</sup> J. ALWD 1 (2010).

<sup>31 15</sup> LEGAL WRITING 3 (2009).

<sup>32 20</sup> ELDER L.J. 355 (2013).

<sup>33 16</sup> LEGAL WRITING 117 (2010).

<sup>34 41</sup> LAW TEACHER: INT'L J. LEGAL EDUC. 303 (2007).

<sup>35 14</sup> CLINICAL L. REV. 509 (2008).

<sup>36 18</sup> VT. L. REV. 567 (1994).

<sup>37 34</sup> SEATTLE U. L. REV. 751 (2011).

#### E. Law's Stories

Some articles discuss stories in the law, whether historical or contemporary—or mythic. A few examples include Louis J. Sirico, Jr., Benjamin Franklin, Prayer, and the Constitutional Convention: History as Narrative; Mary Ellen Maatman, Justice Formation from Generation to Generation: Atticus Finch and the Stories Lawyers Tell Their Children; Erika Rackley, Judicial Diversity, the Woman Judge and Fairy Tale Endings; Oessica Mayo, Court-Mandated Story Time: The Victim Narrative in U.S. Asylum Law; and Linda H. Edwards, Once Upon a Time in Law: Myth, Metaphor, and Authority.

#### F. Narrative Theory and Legal Storytelling

Some articles use narrative theory to analyze legal storytelling and, in turn, its uses. See, for example, J. Christopher Rideout, Storytelling, Narrative Rationality, and Legal Persuasion, 43 or Anne E. Ralph, Not the Same Old Story: Using Narrative Theory to Understand and Overcome the Plausibility Pleading Standard.44

#### G. Psychology, Cognitive Science, and Legal Storytelling

Some articles explore the connection between cognitive science and legal storytelling. Examples include Lea B. Vaughn, Feeling at Home: Law, Cognitive Science, and Narrative, 45 and Lucille A. Jewel, Through a Glass Darkly: Using Brain Science and Visual Rhetoric to Gain a Professional Perspective on Visual Advocacy. 46

#### H. Legal Storytelling and Metaphor

Applied Legal Storytelling conferences have often included presentations on metaphor, as a few articles reveal, for example Linda L. Berger, How Embedded Knowledge Structures Affect Judicial Decision Making: A Rhetorical Analysis of Metaphor, Narrative, and Imagination in Child Custody Disputes, 47 and Julie A. Oseid, The Power of Metaphor: Thomas Jefferson's "Wall of Separation between Church and State." 48

38 10 LEGAL COMM. & RHETORIC: JALWD 89 (2013).

39 14 LEGAL WRITING 207 (2008).

40 27 LEGAL STUD. 74 (2007).

41 89 WASH. U. L. REV. 1485 (2012).

42 77 TENN. L. REV. 883 (2010).

43 14 LEGAL WRITING 53 (2008).

44 26 YALE J.L. & HUMAN. 1 (2014).

45 43 MCGEORGE L. REV. 999 (2012).

46 19 S. CAL. INTERDISC. L.J. 237 (2010).

47 18 S. CAL. INTERDISC. L.J. 259 (2009).

#### I. Applied Legal Storytelling as a Movement

Some articles discuss Applied Legal Storytelling itself, as a movement. See, for example, Brian J. Foley, Applied Legal Storytelling, Politics, and Factual Realism, 49 or Derek H. Kiernan-Johnson, A Shift to Narrativity.50

#### J. Limitations of Legal Storytelling

A few articles investigate the limits of legal storytelling, for example Steven J. Johansen, Was Colonel Sanders a Terrorist? An Essay on the Ethical Limits of Applied Legal Storytelling,<sup>51</sup> and Jeanne M. Kaiser, When the Truth and the Story Collide: What Legal Writers Can Learn from the Experience of Non-Fiction Writers About the Limits of Legal Storytelling.52

#### K. Using Storytelling to Broaden Our Understanding of Law and **Law Practice**

Some articles use legal storytelling as a way of broadening our discussion of what we do in law and law practice, an important conversation that emerges from Applied Legal Storytelling. See, for example, Helena Whalen-Bridge, The Lost Narrative: The Connection Between Legal Narrative and Legal Ethics;<sup>53</sup> Binny Miller, Telling Stories about Cases and Clients: The Ethics of Narrative;54 Ian Gallacher, Thinking Like Nonlawyers: Why Empathy is a Core Lawyering Skill and Why Legal Education Should Change to Reflect Its Importance;55 and Andrea McArdle, Using a Narrative Lens to Understand Empathy and How It Matters in Judging.56

#### L. Storytelling in Literature and Law

Despite their alleged distinction from the Law and Literature movement, from the beginning Applied Legal Storytelling conferences have included presentations about law in literature, most amusingly those that later ended up in the collection on The Law and Harry Potter.57

48 7 J. ALWD 123 (2010).

49 14 LEGAL WRITING 17 (2008).

50 9 LEGAL COMM. & RHETORIC: JALWD 81 (2012).

51 7 J. ALWD 63 (2010).

52 16 LEGAL WRITING 163 (2010).

53 7 J. ALWD 229 (2010).

54 14 GEO. J. LEGAL ETHICS 1 (2000).

55 8 LEGAL COMM. & RHETORIC 109 (2011).

56 9 LEGAL COMM. & RHETORIC: JALWD 173 (2012).

57 THE LAW AND HARRY POTTER (Jeffrey E. Thomas & Franklin G. Snyder, eds., 2010). The following chapters of the book were presented at either the 2007 or 2009 Applied Legal Storytelling conference: Mary Beth Beazley, Which

#### M. Other.

Some articles manage to apply storytelling or narrative in creative ways. Two examples of this are James Parry Eyster, Lawyer as Artist: Using Significant Moments and Obtuse Objects to Enhance Advocacy,<sup>58</sup> and Derek H. Kiernan-Johnson, Telling Through Type: Typography and Narrative in Legal Briefs.<sup>59</sup>

Following the section on articles dating from 2007 to the present is a section on books and textbooks that could be included within the Applied Legal Storytelling movement, whether wholly or in part. Some of the books are directly about legal storytelling; others contain chapters or sections on legal storytelling; and one, although not directly about legal storytelling, originated with a presentation at an Applied Legal Storytelling conference and has narrative at its core. Finally, the bibliography ends with a section on articles that mention Applied Legal Storytelling as a subdisciplinary movement.

#### III. A Quick Note on Methodology

This article began as an effort to accumulate citations to the many publications that have grown out of the first four Applied Legal Storytelling conferences, in preparation for the fifth conference, scheduled for July 2015. After four conferences, the conversation on Applied Legal Storytelling has been well under way, and a bibliography might offer a means to summarize what had come before, encourage potential presenters for 2015 to take the next step in the conversation, and offer those new to Applied Legal Storytelling a way in. To that end, calls went out on the list serves of the Legal Writing Institute and the Clinical Legal Education Association in June and August of 2014 for people to suggest items for the bibliography. These calls emphasized articles and books that either began as presentations at one of the Applied Legal Storytelling conferences or were inspired by one of the conferences. A number of presentations ended up in one of three journals—Legal Writing: The

Spell: Learning to Think Like a Wizard; Eric J. Gouvin, The Magic of Money and Banking; Susan P. Liemer, Bots and Gringotts: Anglo-Saxon Legal References in Harry Potter; Ruth Anne Robbins, Harry Potter as Client in a Lawsuit: Utilizing the Archetypal Hero's Journey as Part of a Case Strategy; Heidi Mandanis Schooner, Gringotts: The Role of Banks in Harry Potter's Wizarding World; Aaron Schwabach, Harry Potter and the Unforgiveable Curses.

<sup>58 14</sup> LEGAL WRITING 87 (2008).

<sup>59 7</sup> J. ALWD 87 (2010).

**<sup>60</sup>** At the Seattle University School of Law, July 21–23, 2015.

<sup>61</sup> But contributors were invited to suggest other bibliographic items besides those that were conference-related.

Journal of the Legal Writing Institute; Legal Communication and Rhetoric: JALWD;<sup>62</sup> and The Law Teacher: The International Journal of Legal Education—each of which at various times also devoted a special issue to articles based on conference presentations.<sup>63</sup>

But not all of the articles and books relevant to Applied Legal Storytelling originated with the conferences, so the search for bibliographic items was broadened, both in the list-serve calls that went out and through online searches.<sup>64</sup> For articles that predate the first conference, in 2007, the task also became one of narrowing the articles to those that might best fit the rubric of Applied Legal Storytelling, as discussed above.

Now the bibliography.

### IV. Applied Legal Storytelling: Selected Articles Predating 2007

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- Edwards, Linda H., The Convergence of Analogical and Dialectic Imaginations in Legal Discourse, 20 Legal Stud. F. 7 (1996).
- Fajans, Elizabeth & Mary R. Falk, Shooting from the Lip: United States v. Dickerson, Role [Im]morality, and the Ethics of Legal Rhetoric, 23 U. Haw. L. Rev. 1 (2000).
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- Grose, Carolyn, A Persistent Critique: Constructing Clients' Stories, 12 Clinical L. Rev. 329 (2006).
- Johansen, Steven J., This Is Not the Whole Truth: The Ethics of Telling Stories to Clients, 38 Ariz. St. L.J. 961 (2006).
- Lopez, Gerald P., Lay Lawyering, 32 UCLA. L. Rev. 1 (1984).
- Lubet, Steven, Story Framing, 74 Temp. L. Rev. 59 (2001).

62 Previously titled J. ALWD: Journal of the Association of Legal Writing Directors.

<sup>63</sup> Those special issues are volume 41, number 3, of The Law Teacher: The International Journal of Legal Education (2007); volume 14 of Legal Writing (2008); volume 7 of J. ALWD: Journal of the Association of Legal Writing Directors (2010); and volume 48, number 2, of The Law Teacher: The International Journal of Legal Education (2014).

<sup>64</sup> Online searches under the term "applied legal storytelling," by the way, revealed many of the articles that began as conference presentations at one of the Applied Legal Storytelling conferences because those authors almost always acknowledged in their initial footnotes that their articles began as a presentation at one of the conferences, always referred to as an Applied Legal Storytelling conference. Future authors might want to take note of this custom, for the ease of anyone compiling an addendum to this bibliography.

- Meyer, Philip N., "Desperate for Love III": Rethinking Closing Arguments as Stories, 50 S.C. L. Rev. 715 (1999).
- Meyer, Philip N., Making the Narrative Move: Observations Based Upon Reading Gerry Spence's Closing Arguments in The Estate of Karen Silkwood v. Kerr-McGee, Inc., 9 Clinical L. Rev. 229 (2002).
- Meyer, Philip N., Vignettes from a Narrative Primer, 12 Legal Writing 229 (2006).
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- Rackley, Erika, When Hercules Met The Happy Prince: Re-imagining the Judge, 12 Tex. Wesleyan L. Rev. 213 (2005).
- Robbins, Ruth Anne, Harry Potter, Ruby Slippers and Merlin: Telling the Client's Story Using the Characters and Paradigm of the Archetypal Hero's Journey, 29 Seattle U. L. Rev. 767 (2006).
- Sherwin, Richard K., *The Narrative Construction of Legal Reality*, 18 Vt. L. Rev. 681 (1994).
- Spencer, Shaun B., Dr. King, Bull Connor, and Persuasive Narratives, 2 J. ALWD 209 (2004).

### V. Applied Legal Storytelling: Articles from 2007 to the Present

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- Anderson, Helen A., Changing Fashions in Advocacy: 100 Years of Brief-Writing Advice, 11 J. App. Prac. & Process 1 (2010).
- Becker, Mary Ann, What Is Your Favorite Book?: Using Narrative to Teach Theme Development in Persuasive Writing, 46 Gonz. L. Rev. 575 (2011).
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- Berger, Todd A., A Trial Attorney's Dilemma: How Storytelling as a Trial Strategy Can Impact the Criminal Defendant's Successful Appellate Review, 4 Drexel L. Rev. 297 (2012).
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- Boyd, Richard, Narratives of Sacrificial Expulsion in the Supreme Court's Affirmation of California's "Three Strikes and You're Out" Law, 11 Legal Comm. & Rhetoric: JALWD 83 (2014).
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#### VI. Books and Textbooks

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- Mary Beth Beazley, Which Spell: Learning to Think like a Wizard;
- Eric J. Gouvin, The Magic of Money and Banking;
- Susan P. Liemer, Bots and Gemots: Anglo-Saxon Legal References in Harry Potter;
- Ruth Anne Robbins, Harry Potter as Client in a Lawsuit: Utilizing the Archetypal Hero's Journey as Part of a Case Strategy;
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