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# The Sohn Collection Shines at UGA School of Law

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### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

#### Author Interview

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#### Witnessing History

A follow-up on last spring's inaugural China-U.S. conference in Beijing.

#### Customer Insight

Law Librarian Anne Burnett talks about the Louis B. Sohn Collection on International Relations, a unique resource at the University of Georgia School of Law.



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#### FEATURE:

### New Frontiers for International Criminal Courts

Authors Rod Dixon and Karim Kahn discuss the latest release of a classic.



## The Sohn Collection shines at UGA School of Law

**An interview with Anne Burnett, foreign and international law librarian at the Alexander Campbell King Law Library, reveals a unique library collection from a former world scholar.**

Up in the balcony at the Alexander Campbell King Law Library at the University of Georgia School of Law sits a unique and sizable selection of materials known as the Louis B. Sohn Collection on International Relations.

Louis B. Sohn (1914-2006) was a longtime, widely renowned scholar of international law and an advocate of international institutions. Born in former Austria-Hungary, he earned his first law degree from the University of Lwow in 1939, fleeing to the United States shortly before the Nazi invasion of Poland. He went on to earn LL.M. and S.J.D. degrees from Harvard Law School, and made lasting, worldwide contributions to international relations and international law.

After his retirement from Harvard, Professor Sohn held the Woodruff Chair in International Law at the University of Georgia School of Law until 1991. It was there that Anne Burnett, the school's current foreign and international law librarian, met him.

"I was fortunate to know Professor Sohn, first as a student in his international law class, and later as a librarian. The professor donated the initial part of his personal library to the law school in 1996, when I became a librarian there," Anne said.

Professor Sohn donated the second part of his collection in 2003, and it is now the centerpiece of the library's international law collection.

### **The Sohn Collection legacy**

While Anne benefited from knowing Professor Sohn, the law school's library has benefited even more because of the immense historical perspective his collection brings to the study of international law.

Professor Sohn started his collection early in his career and built it around events and situations he perceived as impacting international relations. He collected books on history, philosophy, religion, demographics, customs, economics, geography, languages, and, of course, law. The result is that a researcher can assemble a multi-dimensional picture of the conditions that prevailed as a particular situation developed.



As Anne points out, the Sohn Collection is a “living” collection. Anne and her colleagues at Alexander Campbell King Law Library continue to select and add a broad spectrum of new literature, keeping in mind the criteria that Professor Sohn himself developed. This ensures the integrity of the collection as well as its intent – something Anne and her colleagues believe is of immeasurable value.

### **Continuing focus on the international horizon**

In addition to housing the Sohn Collection, the Alexander Campbell King Law Library supports a variety of comparative and international law needs at UGA School of Law.

With law students matriculating from all over the world, and faculty who are internationally acclaimed law experts, the school is reflecting the burgeoning need for international materials and studies at a rapidly increasing pace.

For example, UGA offers summer programs in Belgium and China; a semester-at-Oxford program; a partnership and faculty exchange with Universidad del Salvador in Buenos Aires, Argentina; and a judicial training program for judges from Brazil, Ghana, Bulgaria, and several other countries.

In support of the school’s ongoing international focus, and in addition to her librarian responsibilities of maintaining and expanding the library’s international holdings, Anne teaches courses in foreign and international legal research. She also teaches several sessions on U.S. legal research for the school’s international LL.M. students.

### **A European Union depository for UGA and beyond**

The law library at UGA has been a depository for EU documents since the late 1980s, and is in fact one of only 11 U.S. law school depositories for European Union documents.

This collection stems in large part from the law school’s Brussels Seminar on the Law and Institutions of the EU, which has provided law students from Georgia and elsewhere with a solid introduction to EU law for more than 30 years.

Historically, the collection has featured many western European documents. However, with the expansion of the EU and the push for creating the “rule of law” in many former Soviet countries, central and eastern European Union holdings have also increased in recent years.

The library’s United Nations masthead documents collection, issued on items of the agenda to be discussed during meetings of the UN’s principal organs, complements the extensive UN documents collection housed at UGA’s main library.

### **The Dean Rusk Center for International and Comparative Legal Studies**

The Dean Rusk Center at the UGA School of Law was established in 1977 to expand the scope of research, teaching, and service into the evolving international dimensions of law. The Center was named after former

U.S. Secretary of State Dean Rusk, who held the position of Samuel H. Sibley Professor of Law at UGA until his death in 1994.

The Center plays an active role in international law and policy – hosting conferences, colloquia, and visiting scholars and undertaking international research and outreach projects. For example, the Center supports the annual Brussels Seminar on the Law, which offers law students an intensive exposure to the law and institutions of the European Community (EC) within the European Union (EU).

Within the School of Law, the Rusk Center serves as a forum for the exchange of ideas and development of concrete international projects among students, faculty, staff, practitioners, and alumni.



**Anne Burnett**

*Anne Burnett is the foreign & international law librarian at Alexander Campbell King Law Library at UGA School of Law. She received a BA from the University of Nevada, a JD cum laude from the University of Georgia School of Law, and an MLIS from the University of Texas in Austin. She is a member of the state bars of California and Nevada and is active in the American Association of Law Libraries and the American Society of International Law.*

## **Global expansion for the law library – and librarians**

Since recent years have seen an increase in global research needs, that is a direction the law library will continue to pursue. One example, according to Anne, has been the explosion in Chinese legal resources, such as Westlaw China, an exciting development to note as she continues to evaluate new resources for UGA's law library.

And true to her international focus, Anne also attended the inaugural China-U.S. Conference on Legal Information and Law Libraries, which took place earlier this year.\* No doubt Professor Sohn would have approved.



**Louis B. Sohn**

*The late Professor Louis B. Sohn also coauthored The Law of the Sea in a Nutshell, part of the Nutshell Series® published by West, a Thomson Reuters business.*

\* Read the Conference update on page 20 in this issue of GlobalLaw Quarterly