

**Legal Knowledge**  
**Episode 5, Season 2 Interview**  
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**Hosts:** Randi Flaherty and Loren Moulds  
**Guests:** Meggan Cashwell, Addison Patrick

—Musical Intro —

**Meggan Cashwell 00:11**

This volume is making some really important contributions to the history of the South. This is Virginia history. This is regional history. And this is really also, you know, a history of American legal education. Some of these chapters are making very important contributions to the field.

—Musical Break—

**Randi Flaherty 00:35**

Hello, everyone. Welcome to *Legal Knowledge*. I'm Randi Flaherty, one of your hosts.

**Loren Moulds 00:40**

And I'm your other host, Loren Moulds. Today, we are delighted to be joined by our third coeditor and former cohost of this podcast, Meggan Cashwell. Welcome.

**Meggan Cashwell 00:50**

Thanks for having me. I always love getting the band back together.

**Randi Flaherty 00:53**

Meggan, we are so glad that you are here with us. The episode today features a conversation that I just love. It's between you and Addie Patrick, who is our colleague here in the UVA Law Library, and you talk about the chapter that you and Addie coauthored for our book, *Legal Education at the University of Virginia*. Your chapter focuses on really a particularly consequential stretch of the Law School's history, roughly the 1970s through the 1990s.

**Randi Flaherty 01:18**

And you call this in your chapter a period of financial and physical reimagining, which I, which I really love. During this period, the Law School underwent some major changes,

which included the move to North Grounds and the development of the Law School grounds that we know today, separate from the Academical Village down on Main Grounds. And the Law School also arranged financial self-sufficiency from the University.

**Loren Moulds 01:43**

You also pick up on another major theme of the book, which is a debate over the curriculum. And many of our authors explored this debate in their chapters. You looked at it in the 1970s through the 1990s, when the Law School, and legal education more broadly, was debating the merits of adding practice-based courses, clinical offerings, and specialized electives into a law school's curriculum.

**Meggan Cashwell 02:11**

Yes. In our interview, Addie and I talk about how this period revealed a real tension or negotiation between administrative visions for change and the urgency felt by students who were only there for three years. And this is really reflected in sources like the dean's reports and the *Virginia Law Weekly*, the student newspaper, which formed the backbone of the chapter.

**Randi Flaherty 02:34**

I really enjoyed how you and Addie talked about the process of doing research with those sources, and I think listeners will really enjoy the second part of your conversation, which gives them a behind the scenes look at what it takes to make a book like this. And you talk about the many hats that you wore for this project, not only as editor, but also as author and as podcast creator and host for season one of this podcast.

**Meggan Cashwell 02:58**

Wearing those hats was really my favorite part of the job. It was fun to work with so many authors and explore various aspects of the Law School's history. I loved making the podcasts and now I'm really enjoying listening to season two.

**Loren Moulds 03:12**

And we're so glad you're here. And so, with that, let's turn now to your conversation with Addie Patrick.

—Musical Break—

**Addie Patrick 03:27**

Good morning, Meggan.

**Meggan Cashwell 03:28**

Good morning, Addie.

**Addie Patrick 03:29**

Are you ready to talk about our chapter in the book?

**Meggan Cashwell 03:32**

I am so ready. I knew this day had to come eventually.

**Addie Patrick 03:36**

But first, let me say welcome back to the Law Special Collections reading room, where we're recording this episode today.

**Meggan Cashwell 03:42**

Thank you. It's great to be back.

**Addie Patrick 03:44**

I want to give a brief introduction to our listeners of who you are. Although, if they've listened to season one of *Legal Knowledge*, then they will know you quite well. But you, Meggan Cashwell, are a historian of the nineteenth century United States and the Alvin V. and Nancy Baird Curator of Historical Collections at the University of Virginia Claude Moore Health Sciences Library. Can you tell us really quickly what you do in this new role?

**Meggan Cashwell 04:06**

Sure. I have the honor of stewarding a very robust medical archive of institutional history, medical artifacts. We have a very large, rare book collection that really speaks to all facets of the history of the health sciences. We have a very large manuscript collection that really chronicles the institutional history of the School of Medicine of UVA Health, but we also collect more broadly in the history of the health sciences in the Atlantic world. We have a growing archive of digitized and born digital content, which we're very excited about. And in my capacity as curator, I get to wear many hats. I lead collection development for the department. I also lead instruction, and so I get to host archival workshops and I do tours. In addition to that, I get to supervise two very wonderful archivists in processing our collections. And I serve on the library's leadership council as well and get to weigh in on kind of the larger life of the library. And then we host and sponsor the history of the health sciences lecture series, in addition to that. So, lots of exciting things. And I'm still doing exhibits too, which is something that you know I love.

**Addie Patrick 05:19**

Thank you for that. But prior to entering this new role, you were the Horatio and Florence Farmer Postdoctoral Fellow in Legal History here at the Law Library from 2019 to 2023. And that's when you and I met. And it's really where our story begins.

**Meggan Cashwell 05:35**

I was hired as the postdoc in September 2019, and I came to the role with a lot of experience writing institutional history and in doing public history initiatives. And I am a legal historian by training. So, I was very, very excited to accept the position and to come to Virginia Law. And I really became the project manager for the book. And along with my coeditors, Randi Flaherty and Loren Moulds, got to conceptualize the book project. So, when I started, we had some draft chapters from Gordon Hylton (1977), who was originally going to write this book, but very sadly passed away. But also grateful for Gordon's work and how he got us started in this project. Throughout the book, just got to work with all of our contributors in providing research support in, you know, thinking through the landscape for individual chapters. And so, I loved partnering with our contributors on this book project, and it was just a lot of fun to be able to research, really, all aspects of the Law School's history. You know, one week I might be studying student notebooks and looking at the various laws of slavery. And then, because I would be helping another author, for instance, I might be looking at the recollections of former students through notebooks or correspondence that they left behind. I just I really loved kind of having a hand in, in every aspect of the book in that way, and it was just a real joy for me.

**Addie Patrick 07:15**

And how did you think about balancing different voices and perspectives as the project evolved?

**Meggan Cashwell 07:22**

Well, when we conceptualized the book, we knew that it was very important to have people involved who had lived part of this history, who had taught here at the law school. We invited Anne [M.] Coughlin, Ted [G. Edward] White and [A. E.] Dick Howard (1961) to contribute to the book. And I really love how their chapters are telling very important history, but they're also able to really reflect back on their own tenures as well. And that's especially true of Dick Howard's chapter, as he's talking about the revisions to the Virginia constitution and his role in that. Risa Goluboff, who was dean during the writing of this book, was such an important supporter of the project. And we knew we wanted Risa to write the epilogue and for her to reflect back on her time as dean, but also to talk about

really important changes in legal education in the twenty-first century. But Risa is also very wonderful civil rights historian, so for her to coauthor the chapter on Gregory [H.] Swanson (1951) and to have her perspectives on that really important piece of Law School history was also great. And then we invited contributors who were maybe less familiar with the Law School's history but had written about the history of the University of Virginia. So, people like Justene Hill Edwards and Claudrena Harold really brought their expertise on UVA to UVA Law. And I really value the perspectives that they contributed to this volume.

And then we, you know, we also acknowledged that we'd like to get some outside voices. We invited David Konig, who is a Jefferson scholar. He also was very good friends with Gordon Hylton. And so, it was special for him to be able to write that chapter in part in honor of Gordon and to honor the research and work he had done, but to be able to contribute some very valuable knowledge. And I think new insights on the founding history of the Law School and of UVA. Laura Edwards, who is a legal historian, she wrote a very important chapter on nineteenth-century coverture, on the women of the Law School, and the wives and daughters of John [B.] Minor (1834) and John A. G. Davis. It was, it was a lot of fun to be able to read the letters of those women, and for Laura to be able to shed some light on, I think, a part of the Law School's history that was new to all of us, but had always been there. And then to bring her particular expertise on how coverture law had developed in the nineteenth century and how professors here were teaching it. And then, of course, we all were involved in the volume as well. You and I writing this chapter. Randi wrote the chapter on John Minor in the nineteenth century and then coauthored a chapter on the twentieth century as well. And we had all become very close to this history, so it was fun to write about it, too.

**Addie Patrick 10:20**

So, narrowing down on our chapter now, why were these decades from 1970 to 1997, why did they feel especially important to the history of the Law School?

**Meggan Cashwell 10:31**

We knew that these were really pivotal years for the Law School. We knew that the Law School had achieved financial self-sufficiency during this time. We also knew that the Law School had relocated to North Grounds. And as we dug into the sources, we came to realize that these were actually years where American legal education was kind of in crisis. In these particular years, there's conversations in broader society about what is the purpose of a lawyer. There are questions over whether or not lawyers are properly trained. There are questions in American legal education about the purpose of the case method. And if the case method is really appropriate beyond the first year. And that was a

particularly important through line, because we've been talking about the case method since the late nineteenth century. And so, to see legal educators still debating this, but not really knowing what an alternative would be, I think was really fascinating to me. And on a more local level, you know, the Law School during this time is also figuring out kind of what makes its curriculum unique. So, we talk a lot about how we're on this road to really creating public servants. And so, it's a matter of balancing legal theory with clinical education and experiential learning. And during these decades, we're figuring out kind of what that balance is and what are the courses that that make that up, and what kind of lawyers should the Law School be producing? Well, do you want to talk a little bit about your role in the project, Addie, and how you came to be a coauthor on this chapter?

**Addie Patrick 12:20**

Yes, I, well I have you to thank for that. I remember, I still remember very vividly you asking if I'd like to go on a walk with you around the loop of the Law School. For those who don't know, Virginia Law is a big rectangle on the inside. So, we would sometimes walk and talk and about projects and things. And so, we went for a walk. And you asked if I'd coauthor the chapter with you, and it was very easy for me to say yes to that, because as you mentioned earlier, we've sort of started working at the Law School at the same time in 2019, and since the beginning we've worked very well together, very collaboratively on a number of projects, from physical exhibits to oral history projects, graphic design work. Anything in between that just comes up. So, we had and have a collaborative relationship, I think, that really lent itself well to co-authorship. But also I have, since 2019, also been really involved in some of these sources. And so, I think my role as a researcher and just having two people being able to research the primary sources here at the Law School was really valuable in and putting this chapter together, using the sources that we did.

**Meggan Cashwell 13:31**

I think listeners would be interested to know more about the sources we relied on for this chapter and how we worked to balance administrative perspectives with student voices. So, do you want to talk a little bit about that?

**Addie Patrick 13:42**

Yes. So, I mentioned those archival sources. Specifically. The bulk of the research came from the primary sources in the Law Special Collections. So, that would be the *Virginia Law School Report*, records of that publication, which is now the *UVA Lawyer*. We also have in our collection past issues of the *Virginia Law Weekly*, which is the law students' student run newspaper here, which is still extant. We, those two were sort of the main ones. And the *Virginia Law School Report* was sort of the administrative side, the administrative

perspective of what was going on at the Law School. So, you have this introductory letter from the dean that talks about what's going on at the Law School, what's going on, and how the Law School is situated within broader trends in legal education. So, we had that source, which was incredibly valuable. And then you have the *Virginia Law Weekly*, which comprised of articles from, written by the students about student life, but also what's going on in legal education as well. And student perspectives on some of the changes that the law administration is making in the curriculum, in everything from the curriculum to the move to North Grounds. These two sources and these two sets of voices were not necessarily always conflicting, but one area that they did conflict that we saw over and over again, that was really interesting to me was, and kind of obvious but it struck me, is the difference in the sense of urgency between these two sets of voices. So, law administrators and deans have a longer time in their role, so change can come a little bit more gradually. Or at least it seemed that way in reading the reports from the deans' perspectives, from administrators' perspectives. Whereas law students, of course, are only at the Law School for three years, so they are much more urgent in their calls for change, whatever that call, whatever those calls may be.

—Musical Break—

**Addie Patrick 15:42**

So, what surprised you most about the sources as you were working through them?

**Meggan Cashwell 15:47**

So, Addie, as you've already mentioned, we used the *Virginia Law School Report*, what is now the *UVA Lawyer*, very robustly in this chapter. And at the beginning of these publications would be sort of an annual letter from the dean to the broader Law School community. And I need listeners to know that right now in front of me is a binder of those letters that Addie and I printed and put together. There were two of them. Each of us had one. It's bringing back a lot of memories of sitting in my office here and flipping through these letters and reading them daily as I was writing this piece. And they're important for so many reasons, but I can remember just reading all of them one time through during this twenty-five or so year period, and you're seeing a lot of important history unfold. For one, you're getting the perspectives of four different deans, and that's Emerson [G.] Spies, Richard [A.] Merrill, Thomas [H.] Jackson, and Bob [Robert E.] Scott. And you're able to really chronicle their contributions to the Law School throughout this period and see their different perspectives of kind of national and local changes that are impacting the curriculum here at UVA Law. And you can also see how each of these deans is, is really

grappling with sort of the national landscape of legal education and then communicating that to the Law School community.

So, as I mentioned earlier, there are these crises in legal education about whether or not lawyers are properly trained and what is it that makes up a solid legal curriculum? On the one hand, deans are communicating with alumni and trying to assuage any concerns they might have. On the other, they're also acknowledging the fact that the curriculum has to change, and that at Virginia Law, over time, you know, it will become a curriculum that is balancing legal theory and acknowledging that legal theory is really the foundation of legal education here at UVA Law, but that experiential learning and clinical training, or hands on learning, is also really important to equip law students for the myriad issues that they are going to face as practicing attorneys. So, I really appreciated how each of these deans was interacting with these national trends and these questions and then talking about how the Law School was responding and adapting. I was really grateful to have these sources for the chapter. And I think the deans' voices kind of become the heartbeat of the first half of this piece. And then we come in with student voices and balancing that perspective. So, we see that exchange, that curriculum is, it's made by administrators and students alike. Addie, was there a particular section or theme in the chapter that you found especially fascinating or maybe unexpected?

**Addie Patrick 18:47**

Yes. So, I, this comes up again and again for me, but the role of students and their agency in advocating for curricular change was just super interesting to me. And these students during this period are building off the work that students, student activists had done during the period that Claudrena Harold covers in her chapter. But, separate from that, I was really interested to see, although again, shouldn't have been that surprised, the constant utilization of Thomas Jefferson as a figurehead and his writings and his ideals as ways through which to advocate a variety of different arguments, both from the students and from the administration. So, to give some specifics, as we talk about in the chapter, there's a period in the late 1980s, early '90s when students are advocating for greater diversity in the student body and among the faculty, for greater diversity among curricular offerings, specifically critical legal studies and feminist legal scholarship, and greater clinical opportunities in general. So, students are advocating for this through letters and op eds and things published in the *Virginia Law Weekly*. There's a quote from the April 8th, 1988, edition of the *Virginia Law Weekly* in which a group of students collectively write to Dean Thomas Jackson. Quote, "When Thomas Jefferson founded this University, he envisioned an arena where a free exchange of ideas could take place. His belief was that exposure to a diversity of viewpoints was essential to a complete education. Unfortunately, Jefferson's

ideal bears little resemblance to the Law School we attend today.” End quote. So, talking about the free exchange of ideas, this is a Jeffersonian idea, although it's not unique to Jefferson. The idea of the university as this place where freedom of speech, all this stuff, these are conversations that, of course, universities and academia are having today. Very much so. It was interesting to see Thomas Jefferson appear there in, again, in the context of advocating for a greater diversity of curricular offerings as well as, you know, student and faculty makeup. I felt like this chapter really exemplified the subtitle of the book, which is *Tradition and Transformation*. And you really see that again and again through the inescapable references of Thomas Jefferson. You and I could talk a lot more about the details of the chapter, things that we found in the sources and stories that we learned about that were new to us. But we do want listeners to read the chapter as well as the rest of the book. So, since we have you in the studio, I think it would be fun to hear a little bit from you about the origins of this podcast, this *Legal Knowledge* podcast itself, because the idea, it was your brainchild. So, I think for the record, we need to know how exactly that came about. Can you tell us the origin story of the podcast while you're here?

**Meggan Cashwell 21:30**

Sure. So, I mentioned before that I started the postdoc in fall of 2019, and by December we already had a draft table of contents. Now, the book changed a lot from that, but we wanted to go ahead and have a meeting with UVA Press, and were introduced to our editor, Nadine Zimmerli, who was such a wonderful partner throughout this project. And I remember at that lunch with Nadine, her giving us some sound advice, which was, start building the audience for your book now and finding ways to let people know about it. And so, as a department, we had done a lot of public history work that complemented the book project and was chronicling various aspects of the Law School's history. But I thought that a podcast would be a really great way to reach a broader community. And I was fortunate to have, as a predecessor, Jim Ambuske. Jim is a fantastic historian. He is also a well-known podcaster in the humanities. And I approached Jim and talked to him about this idea, and he thought it was a great idea, but he also warned me of how much work it would be and all of the technical aspects that we would have to learn to do this. But he was also a really wonderful mentor during this process.

And so, it really began with an internship, and we hired Rebecca Barry to be our intern for this project. And Rebecca built a skillset from the ground up, really, in audio editing, and it was just so impressive. She ended up staying with us through that year to continue editing the podcast. And so, I just really appreciate Rebecca as a partner as well. But when I was conceptualizing the podcast, I wanted to call it *Legal Knowledge*, because I felt like that phrase really encompassed what we were doing in the book, which was to talk very broadly

about the Law School in a way that was really touching on many aspects of legal history, of American legal education, and of also institutional history. And that sort of notion of legal knowledge was allowing us to have a broader view of the Law School's history and to envelop more people into the story. And so, season one covered the first hundred years of the Law School's history. And those decades are especially important to me as a nineteenth-century historian. And I had worked with each of these authors on their chapter, providing research support. I should maybe add that I started this in 2019, and then 2020 happened and kind of disheveled all of us, and we had to find really unique ways to keep the project going and to provide research support to our authors. And we really moved chronologically throughout this process. So, the authors who wrote these nineteenth-century chapters were doing a lot of this work during the pandemic and, as a result, I really worked more closely with them. And we recorded back then at WTJU, and so it was just really cool to be in that studio. But I think for me as a historian, these authors had been important to my work as well. So, Liz Varon, for instance, I was very familiar with before I came to UVA. But getting to sit down with her and have a conversation, kind of historian to historian, about her contribution about the Civil War was really a wow moment. Laura Edwards was my dissertation advisor at Duke. She's now at Princeton, and to have her be a part of the project and bring her perspectives on women's coverture, that was also really special for me. So, the podcast was very much a labor of love. It was a heavy lift, but I'm so glad that we did it. And now on my wall in my office, I still have our original *Legal Knowledge* poster, and I look at it and smile.

You're now in season two and I have to say I am a fan. I am a listener and I appreciate the shout out in the first episode. So, I'm just wondering, you know, you've been there from the beginning. Addie signed up early on to be a co-producer with me, and I'm just wondering now that you're in season two. How has your role in and perspective of this podcast evolved since those early beginnings? When I said, Hey, I think we should do a podcast?

**Addie Patrick 26:02**

Yes, I mean, I remember that conversation very explicitly, too. I remember where we were standing at the top of the stairs in the library on the second floor. It stands out to me because I was like, wow, this sounds like a lot of work. And it was. But like you mentioned, it was just fun to learn everything along the way. From the content, of course, learning new things from the contributors themselves, through listening in on these interviews, to the audio tech stuff. We learned a lot from Mary Garner McGehee, who was at WTJU at the time, through Jim, of course, like you mentioned. We learned alongside Rebecca Barry, who, the intern for season one, alongside Blake, who I'm looking at right now, who's in the studio, the intern for season two. Learning together the tools, as well as the content, has

been a lot of fun. I was pleased to bring some of my own skillset to the podcast in designing the logo, which was a lot of fun. In addition, I worked closely with Loren Moulds to create our website, [legalknowledgepodcast.com](http://legalknowledgepodcast.com), and to make sure that all of the episodes get launched on time through all the magical channels that make that happen, and make these episodes, like the one you're listening to right now, appear on your podcast app. It's been great. It's been a lot of work, but it's been a really satisfying project to see come together, and even more satisfying now that we're recording this episode in season two, and we both have next to us our published copies of *Legal Education at the University of Virginia: Tradition and Transformation*. So, it's sort of a surreal moment to reflect back as you're talking about the origins of the book and the podcast, to sitting here now, seeing the finished product.

**Meggan Cashwell 27:40**

Absolutely. It very much is surreal, I will say, to hold this book in my hands, which is kind of something that, or at least envisioning that moment of holding the book in my hands, propelled me forward. Whenever you're doing a big project like this, you have many moments where you think, this is not going to happen is it? But it came together in a really beautiful way. And I'm really proud of this book, and it was just an honor and a pleasure to get to do this work with all of you here at Law Special Collections.

**Addie Patrick 28:10**

Well, the pleasure is ours, too. We miss you, but we're very proud of you in your new role. Before we close up the episode, and now that it's all over, or at least now that we have the book in hand, I wanted to ask you, why should people read this book?

**Meggan Cashwell 28:27**

When we conceptualized the book, we wanted to make sure that it spoke to a few different audiences. For one, you know, this is a history of the Law School. And so, I think anybody who is close to the Law School, whether you're a former or current student, a former or current faculty member, it really is going to provide you valuable insights on how this history has evolved and changed. And I think particularly those who lived through parts of this history, are going to find this volume very special and illuminating. And I will say that a book project that started out being very, I think, strictly focused on the curriculum, became something much broader and comprehensive. And I'm really proud of the fact that we were able to balance a lot of different voices throughout this volume. And I think that, again, people who are, who are or have been affiliated with the Law School are going to appreciate that. But it's not just institutional history. This volume is making some really important contributions to the history of the South. This is Virginia history. This is regional history. And

this is really also a, you know, a history of American legal education. So, if you are a, you know, a legal historian interested in this topic, we are sort of constantly throughout the volume situating the Law School within these broader regional and national changes. And so, you are getting a larger picture as, as you're reading it. And then I think that just on an individual chapter level, some of these chapters are making very important contributions to the field. I think of, again, Laura Edwards's chapter on the history of the wives and daughters of John Minor and J. A. G. Davis. You know, Laura's using their stories to be able to get at, sort of, bigger changes in coverture laws, how these professors were teaching them, and how their female family members were negatively impacted by that. But I recently corresponded with Laura, and she was telling me how this is becoming the basis for her next book project, and she's finding these stories elsewhere as well. So, it's exciting to kind of see where the book is inspiring, more work as well. And, you know, another chapter that really sticks out to me is like Randi Flaherty's chapter on John Minor in the nineteenth century, of really talking about this Virginia way of teaching the law. And you really, through student notebooks, are able to get into the classroom in a way that I think we really haven't before. So, I still work with student notebooks in my work now as a curator. I think, you know, as a through line for this project, these law student notebooks are just really so enlightening, and they really balance that perspective, like what we were saying earlier between what was being taught, but then how students were interpreting it, how students were engaging with the law. So, I think that's, you know, another really important contribution of the book, is utilizing those student notebooks over time and balancing those perspectives throughout the volume.

**Addie Patrick 31:40**

Well, I have to agree, but perhaps I'm a little bit biased. So, I guess I will say now, thank you, Meggan, for coming back to the Law Special Collections reading room once again, not for the last time though, I'm sure, to talk about our chapter, but also to talk about the making of the book and the making of this podcast. It's been a pleasure.

**Meggan Cashwell 31:59**

Pleasure was all mine. I had a lot of fun.

**—Musical Break—**

**Blake Cabral 32:08**

*Legal Knowledge* is a product of the University of Virginia Law Library Special Collections team. Randi Flaherty, head of special collections and legal historian, and Loren Molds, head of digital scholarship and preservation, served as interviewers. Music and production

by me, Blake Cabral, with editorial contributions from Addie Patrick and Jane McBrian. The *Legal Knowledge* podcast features interviews with contributors to our book *Legal Education at the University of Virginia: Tradition and Transformation*, published by University of Virginia Press.

You can listen to season one online at [legalknowledgepodcast.com](http://legalknowledgepodcast.com) or wherever you get your podcasts. Join us next time as we continue to explore the history of legal education at the University of Virginia. Thank you for listening.

**—Musical Outro—**