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HOLDING A CITATION CARNIVAL¹

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As a way to make learning citation form less deadly, I came up with the concept of a “Citation Carnival.” The goals were to consolidate students’ knowledge of basic citation form, work in small groups, and have fun at the same time. For those with similar goals, I’m happy to share the steps I follow on the one day each year I convert the classroom into a four-ring circus.

Setting the Stage

To ensure that the goal of having fun is achieved on this day, I dress up like a carnival ringmaster and play circus music as the students enter the room. I have already decorated the room with stuffed animals for a midway milieu. Students are assigned to teams, each named for famous (or infamous) attorneys. During the carnival, I signal the teams to move from station to station by starting up the music again (just like the childhood game of “musical chairs”). Finally, you can’t have a carnival without prizes, so the big winners get Cracker Jack while there is consolation Halloween-sized candy for everyone else.

A Carnival Step-by-Step

1. Tell your students to bring their copies of the *Bluebook* to class. But don’t tell them anything else. (Not letting the cat out of the bag is half the fun.)

2. Before class, set up the room with marked stations (e.g., A, B, C, D) and display a large, carnival-style stuffed animal at each. At each station, place one citation exercise set that asks which citations are correct, which are

incorrect, and why. (Examples of the exercises I’ve used—covering case names, state court citations, federal court citations, and selected secondary sources—are included in the appendix.) At each station, place as many copies of the exercise set as there are students in the class.

3. As students enter the room, assign them to a team and direct them to their first station. (I do this by having them draw slips of paper that have the team name and the starting station on them.) Tell them to put everything other than their *Bluebook* and a writing implement at the side of the room, and to take a seat at their station. The circus music is continuously played during this time.

4. Give the teams a set period of time to work on the exercise at their station as a group. (I give them about five to seven minutes per station.) At the end of this period, when the music starts up again, students move as a team to the next station (A to B, etc., with the last moving to A), bringing their answer sheets with them. This process continues until all teams have completed all the exercises.

5. When the teams have rotated through all the stations, start scoring by calling on each team in turn for the answers to each question. I award one point for a correct answer, and two points if they can also provide the reason and *Bluebook* reference for the answer. I ask a student to keep score on the blackboard. (Originally, I did the scoring myself, but the “thrill of the competition” led students to protest my “arbitrary” scoring, so now I let a student handle that task.) Where questions are grouped, I handle a group as one question for scoring purposes.

6. After going through all the exercises, the team with the most points is declared the winner of the Citation Carnival. I give prizes to the winning team, and to everyone else too. As noted, the carnival usually falls near Halloween, so it’s snack-sized candy for the runners-up and Cracker Jack for the winners.

Conclusion

The teaching goals of the Citation Carnival seem to work—using the small groups as teams, there is usually at least one student per team who by the time the class is scheduled has become

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familiar with the *Bluebook*. The others see that the *Bluebook* is not so impenetrable as to be beyond student use. The students learn that they can recognize and verify correct citation form, and that they can learn to use the *Bluebook*. Seeing their classmates do so is better reinforcement than my telling them. And, best to my way of thinking, they explain and argue about the rules with each other instead of listening to me drone on in dull lecture. Finally, they usually never make errors in these types of citations again. (Unfortunately, they do make them in others.)

The trappings of the Citation Carnival are for fun. When I first came up with the idea, I was worried that my students would react negatively or think the carnival was childish. But one of my colleagues said, "If you believe in it, it will work." (Sort of like clapping for Tinker Bell.) So far it has.

Appendix:

Sample Exercises Used in Citation Carnival ²

SET A — Case Names

For each problem, determine which citation is correct. Be prepared to explain your answers with reference to the *Bluebook* if necessary.

1.
 - a. Good Hope Industries, Inc. & Others v. Ryder Scott Company
 - b. Good Hope Industries, Inc. v. Ryder Scott Co.
 - c. Good Hope Industries, Inc. v. Ryder Scott Co.
 - d. Good Hope Indus. v. Ryder Scott Co.
2.
 - a. Bethel School District No. 403 et al., petitioners v. Matthew N. Fraser, a minor and E.L. Fraser, guardian ad litem
 - b. Bethel School Dist. v. Fraser
 - c. Bethel School Dist. No. 403 v. Fraser
 - d. Bethel School District No. 403 v. Fraser
3.
 - a. DiMarzo v. American Mutual Life Insurance Company
 - b. DiMarzo v. Am. Mut. Life Ins. Co.
 - c. DiMarzo v. American Mut. Life Ins. Co.

SET B — State Case Reports

For each problem, determine which citations are correct and which are incorrect and why. There may be more than one correct citation in each problem. Be prepared to explain your answers with reference to the *Bluebook* if necessary.

MASSACHUSETTS CASES

1.
 - a. Cleary v. Cardullo's, Inc., 347 Mass. 337, 198 N.E.2d 281 (1964).
 - b. Cleary v. Cardullo's, Inc., 198 N.E. 2d 281 (Mass. 1964).
 - c. Cleary v. Cardullo's, Inc., 347 Mass. 337, 198 N.E.2d 281 (Mass. 1964).
 - d. Cleary v. Cardullo's, Inc., 198 N.E.2d 281 (Mass. 1964).
2.
 - a. Baker v. Katz, 33 N.E.2d 222 (Mass. App. Ct. 1985).
 - b. Baker v. Katz, 24 Mass. App. Ct. 221 (1985).

² These exercises are adapted from some I was given by Davalene Cooper, now at New England School of Law, when we both taught at Suffolk University School of Law. You can create your own variations, including incorporating a citation that was troublesome in an earlier assignment or is about to be used in the students' next memoranda.

- c. Baker v. Katz, 24 Mass. App. Ct. 221, 33 N.E.2d 222 (1985).
 d. Baker v. Katz, 24 Mass. App. 221 (1985).

OTHER STATES

3. a. Kirksey v. Jernigan, 45 So.2d 188 (1980).
 b. Kirksey v. Jernigan, 45 So. 2d 188 (1980).
 c. Kirksey v. Jernigan, 45 So. 2d 188 (Fla. 1980).
 d. Kirksey v. Jernigan, 45 So. 2d 188 (Fla. Sup. Ct. 1980).

SET C — Federal Case Reports

For each problem, determine which citations are correct and which are incorrect and why. There may be more than one correct citation in each problem. Be prepared to explain your answers with reference to the *Bluebook* if necessary.

UNITED STATES SUPREME COURT

1. a. Udall v. Tallman, 380 U.S. 1, 410 S. Ct. 25 (1964).
 b. Udall v. Tallman, 380 U.S. 1 (1964).
 c. Roe v. Wade, 410 U.S. 113, 92 S.Ct. 703, 35 L. Ed. 2d 147 (1964).

OTHER FEDERAL CASES

2. a. Deppe v. Lufkin, 116 F. 2d 483 (1 Cir. 1940).
 b. Deppe v. Lufkin, 116 F. 2d 483 (First Cir. 1940).
 c. Deppe v. Lufkin, 116 F.2d 482 (CA 1 1940).
 d. Deppe v. Lufkin, 116 F.2d 482 (1st Cir. 1940).
 3. a. Rogers v. Okin, 478 F. Supp. 1342 (D. Mass. 1979).
 b. Byrum v. United States, 311 F. Supp. 892 (S.D. Ohio).
 c. Byrum v. United States, 311 F. Supp. 892 (S.D. Ohio 1970).

SET D — ALR and Secondary Sources

For each problem, determine which citations are correct and which are incorrect and why. There may be more than one correct citation in each problem. Be prepared to explain your answers with reference to the *Bluebook* if necessary.

1. a. 6A C.J.S. Arson § 22 (1975).
 b. 6A C.J.S. Arson § 22 (1975).
 c. Restatement 2d of Torts § 46 .
 d. Restatement (Second) of Torts § 46.
 e. Restatement (Second) of Torts § 46 (1965).

2. a. Annotation, Modern Status of Intentional Infliction of Mental Distress as Independent Tort: "Outrage", 38 A.L.R.4th 998 (1985).
 b. Georgie M. Porgie, Annotation, Modern Status of Intentional Infliction of Mental Distress as Independent Tort: "Outrage", 38 A.L.R.4th 998 (1985).
 c. Gorbachev v. Yeltsin, 22 Criminal L. Reporter. 1064 (4th Cir. 1993).
 d. Gorbachev v. Yeltsin, 22 Criminal L. Reporter. (BNA) 1064 (4th Cir. Jan. 21, 1993).

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