

Sara Mayeux

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

Vanderbilt Law School, Nashville, Tenn.

Professor of Law	2024-
FedEx Research Professor	2023-24
Associate Professor of Law	2019-24
Assistant Professor of Law	2016-19
History Department (courtesy appointment)	2017-

University of Pennsylvania Law School, Philadelphia, Pa.

Sharswood Fellow and Lecturer in Law	2014-16
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Harvard Law School, Cambridge, Mass.

Berger-Howe Legal History Fellow	2013-14
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CLERKSHIP

Hon. Marsha Berzon, Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals , San Francisco, Calif.	2012-13
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EDUCATION

Stanford University, PhD, History (2016)

Stanford Law School, JD (2011)

Princeton University, AB, History, *summa cum laude* (2005)

PUBLICATIONS

Book

Free Justice: A History of the Public Defender in Twentieth-Century America
(University of North Carolina Press, 2020)

Prizes: David J. Langum, Sr. Prize in American Legal History
Vanderbilt University Chancellor's Award for Research

Reviewed in (selected): *New York Review of Books*, *The Nation*, *Washington Monthly*,
Journal of American History, *American Journal of Legal History*,
Reviews in American History, *Law & Society Review*,
Michigan Law Review, *Criminal Law and Criminal Justice Books*

Other mentions (selected): *The Atlantic* (discussed in "Ideas" essay)

Podcasts/appearances: NPR Throughline, New Books Network, Ipse Dixit,
Bayard Rustin Center Power Hour, Q&A with Chapter 16

Articles, Essays, and Book Chapters

* denotes peer-reviewed

“The Mob Lawyer’s Constitution,” *Journal of American Constitutional History* 1, no. 4 (2023) *

“Catholicism and the Ongoing Struggle to End the Death Penalty,” in *Death Penalty in Decline: A Half Century of Change*, ed. Austin Sarat (forthcoming, Temple University Press, 2024)

“‘Make All the Laws You Want’: The Catholic Left against Legal Liberalism, circa 1968,” *Journal of Law and Religion* 38, no. 2 (2023) *

“The Federal Courts and Criminal Justice,” in *Approaches to Federal Judicial History*, ed. Gautham Rao, Winston Bowman, & Clara Altman (Federal Judicial Center, 2020)

“Youth and Punishment at the Roberts Court,” *University of Pennsylvania Journal of Constitutional Law* 21, no. 2 (2018)

“‘An Honest But Fearless Fighter’: The Adversarial Ideal of Public Defenders in 1930s and 1940s Los Angeles,” *Law and History Review* 36, no. 3 (2018) *

“The Idea of ‘the Criminal Justice System,’” *American Journal of Criminal Law* 45, no. 1 (2018)
Reviewed at *Jotwell* by Jonathan Simon, “Time to Rethink the Idea of System”

“What *Gideon* Did,” *Columbia Law Review* 116, no. 1 (2016)
Received the Cromwell Article Prize for best legal history article of the year by an early career scholar

“Federalism Anew,” *American Journal of Legal History* 56, no. 1 (2016) (with Karen Tani)

“Ineffective Assistance of Counsel Before *Powell v. Alabama*: Lessons from History for the Future of the Right to Counsel,” *Iowa Law Review* 99, no. 5 (2014)
Cited by the Iowa Supreme Court in *State v. Young*, 863 N.W.2d 249 (Iowa 2015)

“The Origins of Back-end Sentencing in California,” *Stanford Law and Policy Review* 22, no. 2 (2011)

“The Case of the Black-Gloved Rapist: Defining the Public Defender’s Role in the California Courts, 1913-1948,” *California Legal History* 5 (2010)
First prize, California Supreme Court Historical Society Student Writing Competition

Scholarly Book Reviews, Invited Responses, etc.

“Insights for U.S. Law Professors in the History of Cuba,” review of Ada Ferrer, *Cuba: An American History*, *Jotwell*, January 2024

“Historicizing the War(s) on Drugs across National (and Disciplinary) Boundaries,” review of edited volume *The War on Drugs: A History*, *Jotwell*, April 2023

Review of Madeira and Schaffer, *The Defender: The Battle to Protect the Rights of the Accused in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania History: A Journal of Mid-Atlantic Studies*, forthcoming 2023

Review of Wendell Bird, *Criminal Dissent: Prosecution under the Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798*, *Journal of the Early Republic*, Spring 2021

“Debating the Past’s Authority in Alabama,” invited forum response on Robert W. Gordon, *Taming the Past: Essays on Law in History and History in Law*, *Stanford Law Review*, May 2018

Review of Rosen and Mosnier, *Julius Chambers: A Life in the Legal Struggle for Civil Rights*, *Journal of Southern History*, August 2018

Review of Carolyn Strange, *Discretionary Justice: Pardon and Parole in New York from the Revolution to the Depression*, *Law and History Review*, November 2017

Review of Felice Batlan, *Women and Justice for the Poor: A History of Legal Aid, 1863-1945*, *H-Law*, March 2016

Review of Susannah Sheffer, *Fighting for Their Lives: Inside the Experience of Capital Defense Attorneys*, *H-Law*, November 2013

Popular Press Book Reviews, Op-eds, and Public Writing (selected)

“And a Public Defender for All,” commentary on the confirmation of Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson, *Inquest*, April 2022

“Lives Ruined for Petty Crimes,” review of Alexandra Natapoff, *Punishment Without Crime, Reason*, July 2019

“How We Learned to Love the Bill of Rights,” review of Gerard Magliocca, *The Heart of the Constitution*, *Bunk*, February 2018

“Why Felon Disenfranchisement Doesn’t Violate the Constitution,” *Bunk*, December 2017

“Law and Order, Philadelphia Style,” interview with Tim Lombardo, *Bunk*, November 2017

“Litigating the Line between Past and Present,” *Bunk*, September 2017

“*Gideon v. Wainwright* in the Age of a Public Defense Crisis,” *Talk Poverty*, May 2016;
reprinted by *The Nation*

“Harlem’s Drug Warriors,” review essay on histories of the war on drugs, *Reason*, January 2016

“The Dark Side of Police Reform,” review essay on new histories of policing, *Reason*, June 2015

“Cruel, Unusual, and Crowded,” review essay on California’s prison crisis, *Reason*, March 2015

Review of Marie Gottschalk, *Caught: The Prison State and the Lockdown of American Politics*,
The Chronicle Review, December 2014

“The Case for Abolishing Juvenile Prisons,” interview with Nell Bernstein, *The Aul*, Sept. 2014

“Progress and Execution,” review essay on the history of punishment, *Public Books*, May 2014

“Redefining Rape,” interview with Estelle Freedman, *The Hairpin*, October 2013

“Newt and the Ninth Circuit” (short item on Newt Gingrich), *The Nation*, Jan. 9/16, 2012

“Obstructing Justice” (short item on Obama’s judicial appointments), *The Nation*, June 13, 2011

“We Can’t Afford Whitman’s Prison Plan” (op-ed), *Sacramento Bee*, July 9, 2010

Blogging, 2009-12: wrote the Prison Law Blog, as well as guest blog posts for *The Atlantic*, *The American Prospect*, NPR affiliate KALW, and various other sites

OTHER EXPERIENCE

Federal Public Defender, Northern District of California, San Francisco, Calif.

Summer Law Clerk 2009

Public Defender, City and County of San Francisco, San Francisco, Calif.

Summer Intern 2008

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, N.Y.

Editorial Coordinator for Internal Communications 2006-07

FELLOWSHIPS, GRANTS, HONORS

- 2023-24 FedEx Research Professorship, Vanderbilt Law School
- 2023 Hall-Hartman Outstanding Professor Award, Vanderbilt Law School (voted by students, received for First Amendment Constitutional Law)
- 2020-21 Vanderbilt Strong Grant, Vanderbilt University
- 2019-20 Provost Research Studio Grant, Vanderbilt University
- 2017-18 Junior Faculty Teaching Fellowship, Vanderbilt University
- 2015 J. Willard Hurst Institute in Legal History, University of Wisconsin-Madison
- 2014 Miller Center National Fellowship, University of Virginia (declined)
G.J. Lieberman Fellowship in the Humanities, Stanford University (declined)
Littleton-Griswold Legal History Grant, American Historical Association
Graduate Research Opportunity Grant, Stanford University
- 2009-10 Public Interest Fellowship, Stanford Law School
- 2009 Morris L. Cohen Fellowship, Harvard Law School (research grant)
- 2005 Joline Prize, Princeton University (best senior thesis in U.S. history)
- 2004 Combe Prize, Princeton University (best junior history research paper)
Koren Prize, Princeton University (best performance in junior history coursework)
Stone-Davis Prize, Princeton University (senior thesis research grant)
- 2003-04 Shapiro Award for Academic Excellence, Princeton University (2003 and 2004)

SCHOLARLY CONFERENCES AND WORKSHOPS

Paper Presentations

“The Mob Lawyer’s Constitution”

University of Notre Dame Law School Symposium, April 2023

Vanderbilt Law School Faculty Workshop, March 2023

University of Southern California Law School Faculty Workshop, December 2022

Columbia Law School Criminal Legal History Roundtable, July 2022

“‘Make All the Laws You Want’: The Catholic Left against Legal Liberalism, 1968”

(and other iterations/titles)

University of Florida Law School Faculty Workshop, April 2022 [*Zoom*]

Loyola University of Chicago Law School Faculty Speaker Series, April 2022

College of William & Mary Law School Faculty Workshop, February 2022 [*Zoom*]

Vanderbilt University Legal History Colloquium, April 2021 [*Zoom*]

University of Virginia Law School Faculty Workshop, November 2020 [*Zoom*]

Book talk on *Free Justice: A History of the Public Defender in Twentieth-Century America*
Indigent Defense Research Association, hosted by the Deason Criminal Justice Reform
Center at Southern Methodist University, January 2021 [Zoom]

“The Catholic Left and the Constitutional Tradition,” proposal for new project
University of Illinois Law School Constitutional Workshop, April 2020 [Zoom]
American Society for Legal History Pre-conference, Boston, Mass., November 2019

Free Justice, presentations of various draft chapters and excerpts
American Bar Foundation Legal History Roundtable, May 2019
University of Chicago Constitutional Law Workshop, November 2018
American Society for Legal History Conference, Las Vegas, Nev., October 2017
Tulane Law School Faculty Workshop, April 2017
Indiana University Law School Faculty Workshop, February 2017
Emory University Law School Faculty Workshop, February 2017

“Debating the Past’s Authority in Alabama”
Stanford Law School Conference Celebrating Bob Gordon’s *Taming the Past*, January 2018

“Age, ‘Adolescence,’ and the Limits of Punishment”
Vanderbilt Law School Criminal Justice Roundtable, November 2017
Southeastern Association of Law Schools, Boca Raton, Fla., August 2017
Brooklyn Law School Junior Scholars Roundtable on Criminal Procedure, July 2017

“Ethnicity and Identity at the Los Angeles Public Defender’s Office, 1914-1946”
Association for Law, Culture, and the Humanities Conference, Stanford, Calif., March 2017

“The Cold War Public Defender Idea”
Vanderbilt University History Department Americanist Seminar, November 2016
Stanford University History Department U.S. History Workshop, March 2016

“Why Criminal Justice Reform Stalled in the Deep South: The Case of the Public Defender”
Southern Historical Association, Little Rock, Ark., November 2015
CrimFest!, Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law, July 2015

“Public Defenders in the Tough-on-Crime Era”
American Society for Legal History, Washington, D.C., October 2015 (also organized panel)

“The ‘Progressive’ Public Defender in Los Angeles, 1914-1949”
University of Michigan Legal History Workshop, September 2015

“The Progressive Era Public Defender Idea”

Stanford University History Department U.S. History Workshop, March 2015

Harvard Law School Legal History Workshop, February 2014

“Getting *Gideon* Wrong”

University of Pennsylvania Law School Faculty Workshop, February 2015

“Administrative Constitutionalism in the Criminal Courts: Implementing *Gideon*”

Policy History Conference, Columbus, Ohio, June 2014 (also organized panel)

“Car Trouble: Adolescence, Automobility, and the Law, 1890-1930”

Law and the Child Symposium, University of Minnesota Law School, June 2014

“Protecting the Poor from ‘Shysters’ and ‘Legal Vermin’: Remaking the Right to Counsel, 1882-1932”

American Society for Legal History, Miami, Fla., November 2013

“Ineffective Assistance of Counsel before *Powell v. Alabama*”

Iowa Law Review Symposium, University of Iowa Law School, October 2013

“The Case of Isabella Nitti and the Transformation of the Right to Counsel”

Western Association of Women Historians, Berkeley, Calif., May 2012

Scholarly Panels—Invited Comments

New Voices in Criminal Law Symposium, paper commenter, University of Memphis School of Law, April 2024

“Reimagining Public Defense,” panel commenter, Law and Society Conference, San Juan, Puerto Rico, June 2023

“Status, Discrimination, and the Market in American Law, 1960-1990,” panel chair/commenter, Society for U.S. Intellectual History Conference, February 2022 [*Zoom*]

American Society for Legal History Conference, Boston, Mass. Invited panelist for author-meets-readers book panel for Sarah Seo, *Policing the Open Road*, November 2019

History of the Federal Judiciary Conference, Federal Judiciary Center, Washington, D.C., April 2016. Panelist on federal courts and individual rights

American Historical Association, Atlanta, Ga., January 2016. Panelist for roundtable on the fortieth anniversary of *Gregg v. Georgia* and the future of the death penalty

INVITED TALKS AND PANELS (selected)

2024 National Association of Women Lawyers podcast, May 2024. Invited panelist on *United States v. Rahimi*, the Second Amendment, and the Supreme Court’s use of history

Vanderbilt University Carpenter Program in Religion, Gender, and Sexuality, March 2024. Invited panelist on religious freedom challenges to state abortion bans post-*Dobbs*

2023 Vanderbilt Law School If/When/How, November 2023. Moderated panel on the use of history in judicial opinions and *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization*

Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, October 2023. Invited in-person guest lecturer for program on freedom of speech for high school social studies teachers in Oklahoma City

Retro Report in the Classroom, June 2023. Invited guest lecturer for series of three webinars on teaching about Supreme Court history, attended by ~120 high school teachers

National Humanities Center, February 2023. Invited guest lecturer for webinar on teaching about the Bill of Rights, attended by ~350 K-12 teachers

2022 Tennessee Department of Human Services, October 2022. CLE Supreme Court annual review for lawyers employed by the state of Tennessee

Nashville Bar Association, March 2022. CLE presentation on the cultural life of the Constitution, in conjunction with the touring play, *What the Constitution Means to Me*

Vanderbilt Law School Dean’s Office, American Constitution Society, and Federalist Society panel on the retirement of Justice Stephen Breyer, March 2022

Defender Association of Philadelphia Black History Month Panel [Zoom], February 2022. CLE panel on race and public defenders in conversation with Judge Ted McKee (3d Cir.)

“Last Negroes at Harvard” podcast/Zoom session with members of the Harvard class of 1963 [Zoom], January 2022. Informal book talk/Q&A on *Free Justice* and public defenders

2021 National Legal Aid and Defender Association Annual Conference [Zoom], November 2021. Invited panelist on “Federal Support of Public Defense: Existing and Future Opportunities”

- Tennessee Public Defender Conference, October 2021. Presentation for CLE credit on *Free Justice: A History of the Public Defender in Twentieth-Century America*
- Bayard Rustin Center for Social Justice Power Hour [*Facebook Live*], February 2021.
Discussed indigent defense and public defenders with ~250 live viewers
- 2020 Tennessee's Anti-Protest Law: A Panel Discussion [*Zoom*], Vanderbilt Law School, October 2020. Moderated panel on recent Tennessee legislation and the First Amendment
- Alumni/Faculty Panel on the Supreme Court, Princeton University Reunions [*Zoom*], May 2020. In conversation with Judges Denny Chin (2d Cir.), Henry Kennedy (D.D.C.), et al.
- 2018 Practicing Public Interest Law in the South Conference, Vanderbilt Law School, October 2018. Moderated panel on bail reform
- Supreme Court Preview Panel, Vanderbilt Law School Board of Advisors Meeting, April 2018
- 2017 Federal Public Defender/CJA Panel Attorneys Lunch & Learn, Nashville, Tenn., November 2017. CLE presentation on the history of indigent defense
- Supreme Court (P)review Panel, Vanderbilt Law School, October 2017
- Social Justice and the Legal Profession Series Indigent Defense Panel, Vanderbilt Law School, September 2017. Moderated panel on defense careers featuring four public defenders
- Federal Public Defender, Nashville, Tenn., June 2017. Invited talk on the history of indigent defense for law student and undergraduate summer interns
- 2016 Supreme Court (P)review Panel, Vanderbilt Law School, November 2016
- Practicing Public Interest Law in the South Conference, Vanderbilt Law School, September 2016. Moderated panel on privatized probation and debtors' prisons
- Earlier Penn Law Advanced Training Program for the Thai Judiciary, May 2015. Taught sessions on the right to counsel and the Fourth Amendment exclusionary rule
- Tooling Up for Digital Humanities Workshop, Stanford University, April 2011. Invited panelist on managing a digital scholarly identity
- Princeton Club of Northern California, October 2010. Invited talk on California prison crisis

SERVICE TO THE FIELD

Legal History Section Editor, *Jotwell* (website with reviews of new legal scholarship), 2023-
American Society for Legal History

Cromwell Foundation Book Prize Committee, 2023-

Projects and Proposals Committee (chair), 2022-23

Projects and Proposals Committee (member), 2020-22

California Supreme Court Historical Society, Student Writing Competition Judge, 2020

Justice Section Editor, *Bunk* (history web portal based at University of Richmond), 2017-18

Editorial Board, *Western Legal History* (journal of Ninth Circuit Historical Society), 2016-23

SERVICE TO THE UNIVERSITY

University Faculty Athletics Committee, 2024-

Stanton First Amendment Clinic Visitor Hiring Ad Hoc Committee, 2022

Law School Faculty Appointments Committee, 2020-21, 2017-18, 2016-17

VLS Community Racial Justice Book Club co-facilitator, 2020-21

VLS Social Justice Reading Group co-facilitator, Spring 2018, Spring 2017

Legal History Colloquium participant, 2016-

PEDAGOGICAL DEVELOPMENT

Online Course Development Institute, Vanderbilt Center for Teaching, July 2020

Junior Faculty Teaching Fellowship Program, Vanderbilt Center for Teaching, 2017-18

This CV last updated: July 2024