



Boyd Briefs: November 21, 2013

## From Dean Dan

I am just back this morning from a trip to the University of Nevada, Reno to talk with roughly 70 undergraduates interested in attending law school. At the event we featured students and alumni who went to UNR for their undergraduate degrees and Boyd for law school, and who highlighted the great experiences they had at each school. We are fortunate to have first-rate universities in different parts of the state whose students are drawn for good reason to Boyd, the state's law school, and we look forward to more and more collaboration. Many thanks to Nicole Scott, UNR '01, '11 MA, and Boyd '14; Casey Stiteler, UNR '12 and Boyd '15; Ashley Nikkel, UNR '09 and Boyd '12; and Eric Eden, Director of Admissions. At UNR I want to thank the Provost Kevin Carman and Jim Richardson, Foundation Professor of Sociology and Judicial Studies and Director of the Grant Sawyer Center for Justice Studies, for making this very productive trip possible.

Dan

Dean & Richard J. Morgan Professor of Law  
daniel.hamilton@unlv.edu  
[facebook.com/DeanDanHamilton](https://www.facebook.com/DeanDanHamilton)



## FACULTY SPOTLIGHT: Elizabeth MacDowell

Elizabeth MacDowell is a faculty member who personifies the William S. Boyd School of Law's innovative clinician-scholar model. On the one hand, she is the director of the Family Justice Clinic, helping students one-at-a-time develop the skills and judgment to become successful, ethical professionals. In this capacity she draws heavily on her practical experience, including six years running her own law firm. Yet on the other hand, this clinician is also a sophisticated and provocative scholar. And in this capacity her research focuses on issues that span matters of race, class, gender, domestic violence, access to justice, and the impact of criminalization on low-income families.

Professor MacDowell recently published *Theorizing from Particularity: Perpetrators and Intersectional Theory on Domestic Violence*. In this article MacDowell argues that intersectional theory in the domestic violence context has overlooked what is essentially an additional dimension of the analysis. Intersectional theory studies the ways in which the experiences of individuals are shaped by the interaction of multiple identity categories. The core insight of this theory is that focusing solely on issues of, say, race ignores other important differences—such as gender. Intersectionality captures the notion that regimes like "racism" or "sexism" do not act independently of one another but rather tend to "intersect" in important ways. As MacDowell says, intersectional theory "render[s] visible those experiences obscured by examining single categories of subordination alone." And naturally, race and gender are but two examples of a number of other identity categories.

Professor MacDowell's article suggests that in the context of domestic

violence, the relational analysis of intersectional theory should also consider the perpetrator. In other words, she says that there is a third dimension that is being overlooked. Her article uses two illustrative cases to show the ways in which conventional approaches to intersectional analysis of victims' experiences cannot explain results, while her third dimension (i.e., considering the perpetrator) explains those outcomes.

Professor MacDowell's work earns both attention and grants. The American Association of Law Schools recently named her a Bellow Scholar for her empirical study (with Emily Troshynski of UNLV) of domestic violence self-help clinics. She is also engaged in empirical research funded by a \$25,000 Faculty Opportunity Award.

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## STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: Casey Stiteler

As an 11-year-old living in Washoe Valley, Nev., Casey Stiteler couldn't wait to move on to bigger and better things than his elementary school had to offer. Eager for the new challenges middle school had in store, he was undaunted by headaches he began to experience daily in October 2000. "I'm just allergic to taking out the trash," he would joke with his parents. The cause, in fact, was something far different.

Casey was found to have a brain tumor. Surgery to remove it took place a mere day after diagnosis, and a year of intense chemotherapy and high-dose radiation therapy followed. In the end, Casey beat the odds, emerging with a "sense of responsibility to help those around me, a desire to challenge myself, and an understanding that every experience is a new opportunity to learn."

Recalling the depression and boredom he experienced during his hospitalization, he created Casey's Project Ltd. in 2004. The goal: to convince local companies to provide toys and entertainment equipment to pediatric wards in Reno and Carson City. Casey's Project continues strong to the present, always managed by its namesake president despite his attention to countless additional endeavors since its founding.

While an undergraduate at the University of Nevada, Reno, Casey threw himself into studies and student life, getting the most out of every minute. He served on the executive board of the UNR student government four years, culminating in his election as student body president. Here at Boyd, Casey is staying true to form, performing strongly academically, earning Nevada Law Journal membership, and serving as an Academic Success Program student mentor.

For Casey, it seems that law school has provided an ideal vehicle for his "love of working with others in creating and critically evaluating policies and programs to benefit (his) community."

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## ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: Terry Johnson '11

Terry Johnson '11, or "TJ" as he is known to the Boyd community, is a member of the three-person Nevada Gaming Control Board. The powerful state board, which licenses and regulates the gaming industry, was previously comprised entirely of UNR graduates. Johnson said he has enjoyed being a Rebel among the 'Pack, proudly representing his alma mater to the state's largest industry. When he was appointed to the post in November 2012, he also became the first Boyd School of Law graduate to serve on the Gaming Control Board.

By the time Johnson came to Boyd, he was fairly well-established in his public service career in Nevada. He had already served as the State Labor Commissioner for five years, followed by serving in former Governor Kenny Guinn's cabinet. During his tenure as Labor Commissioner, Johnson received the Nevada Taxpayers Association Good

Government Award in 2003. In 2004, In Business Las Vegas magazine named him one of Southern Nevada's "Rising Stars." "I always saw law school as an added benefit to what I was already doing," Johnson said. "It helped me better understand some of the nuances of public service and regulatory law I may have missed along the way."

In addition to his regular duties, Johnson finds time to help persons in the community in need of legal representation. He has accepted pro bono cases from the Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada and Nevada Legal Services. Last month, Nevada Legal Services honored him with its Pro Bono Attorney of the Year award. "We all have a duty to lend our legal abilities to those who need but cannot afford representation," said Johnson. Maintaining a pro bono caseload of between three and five cases at a time, Johnson said he finds this type of work one of the greatest rewards of becoming an attorney.

"It was nothing short of a blessing to even be able to attend law school," said Johnson. "The fact that I was able to attend one of the best law schools in America and then continue to be of service to the public has made it all the more meaningful."