By David Nichols
Gavel Co-Editor-in-Chief

In late October, I was privileged to attend a lecture from none other than Professor Emerita Jane M. Picker, who spoke in Fenn Tower. Her lecture was titled, Litigation and Social Change: Developing Women’s Rights in the Twentieth Century.

Professor Jane M. Picker herself changed the world when she argued LaFleur v. Cleveland Board of Education before the United States Supreme Court in 1973. For those of you that have not studied Constitutional Law yet, LaFleur was the case that challenged mandatory maternity leave for teachers and set a precedent for later pregnancy issues across the country. She was also a founder of the Women’s Law Fund in 1972, which she served for many years as president. The Woman’s Law Fund was the first of its kind, a nationally known organization that assisted plaintiffs in precedent-setting cases involving discrimination in employment, housing, education and government benefits.

Picker has dedicated her career to advocating for equality. She has represented plaintiffs in major employment cases throughout the country on behalf of female police officers, firefighters, teachers and union workers. She has also represented students who sought the right to participate in academic and sports programs, from which they were denied equal access on the basis of their sex. Picker has even litigated issues concerning the protection of American women.

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The Gavel is Hiring!!

The Gavel will be hiring new editors for Spring and Fall of 2012!

Requirements:

- 2.5 GPA
- Full Time Enrollment in Cleveland-Marshall Law Program
- Advanced Writing/Editing Skills

Gavel Editors will be compensated with Scholarships that will apply toward tuition.

Interested?
Email gavel.csu@gmail.com
Supreme Bar Review Invites Students to Free Exam Review

By Marc D. Rossen
C-M Class of 1994
Supreme Bar Review Founder and Director

We look will be looking for new writers for the current school year!
Interested in being an Editor-in-Chief? Contact the Gavel staff at gavel.csu@gmail.com

WHEN? Saturday, December 3, 2011, 9 AM to 3:30 PM
WHERE? Cleveland-Marshall Law School
- First Year Classes - Room #11
- Upper Level Classes - Room #12

FIRST YEAR SUBJECTS (Room #11):
- Torts – Prof. Stephen Lazarus - 9:00 AM - 10:15 AM
- Contracts – Prof. Matthew Green  - 10:30 AM - 11:45 AM
- Property - Prof. Browne Lewis - 12:45 PM – 2:00 PM
- Civil Procedure - Prof. Kevin O’Neill - 2:15 PM - 3:30 PM

UPPER LEVEL SUBJECTS (Room #12):
- Criminal Procedure – Prof. Jonathan Witmer-Rich - 9:00 AM - 10:15 AM
- Constitutional Law – Prof. Stephen Lazarus - 10:30 AM - 11:45 AM
- Evidence - Prof. Kevin O’Neill - 12:45 PM - 2:00 PM

This event is free and open to all law students.
Attendees receive FREE sample outlines!

-- FREE food and refreshments! (pizza lunch will be served)

-- FREE prize drawings at each review session! Winners can choose from one of the following Supreme Bar Review prizes: First Year Review Outlines, Upper-Level Review Outlines, MPRE Review (includes video lecture)
For more information about Supreme Bar Review visit: SupremeBarReview.com

We hope to see you there! Good luck with Finals Preparation!

SUPREME BAR REVIEW

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It’s November, which means the semester is well under way and in fact will be coming to a close soon. November also marks the time during which 1Ls can begin to utilize the Office of Career Planning. The National Association for Law Placement (NALP) mandates that Career Planning Offices not provide career services to first year law students until November 1st of their first year. Well 1Ls, the time has come…you can now utilize our office to begin planning your legal career through law school and beyond. If you are not a 1L, keep reading, as this article is applicable to every student, with any amount of experience, in any stage of law school.

Your goal as a law student should be to gain as much substantive legal experience as possible before you graduate. Law school is different from undergrad and other academic programs in that legal employers will expect you to have plentiful legal experience on your resume by the time you graduate. Also, practicing law is very different from being a student in law school. Experience is crucial to landing that first permanent, PAYING position.

C|M|LAW is known for producing law students who have gained practical experience and are ready to hit the ground running after graduation (and passing the bar, of course). C|M|LAW offers an impressive externship program, clinics, and Office of Career Planning, if we don’t say so ourselves! No matter where your interests lie, we can help you start your career planning now. For those of you that aren’t sure what you want to do, we can be equally beneficial.

Our office offers resume and cover letter reviews, interviewing and networking tips, career related programming and events, and personalized counseling among other valuable resources and tools. We are here to make sure you are where you need to be, every step of the way, as you navigate through law school. If you are a 1L, start talking to us now. We just introduced ourselves in your 1L classes so you know who we are. Now, here is a snapshot of what you should be thinking about as you move forward:

- Get your resume updated and in legal format and have a counselor from our office review it.
- Meet with a counselor in the OCP to discuss what you should be doing over the Winter Break in order to plan for the spring semester and coming summer. (stay tuned for our article in next month’s publication for some great ideas and tips). An email will be sent to you at the beginning of November containing log on information for your Symplicity Student Account. Sign up to attend a Symplicity training session (to be held November 9th and 10th) by logging onto Symplicity, clicking on the Events tab, and then clicking on the RSVP button next to the session you would like to attend.
- Prepare for spring On Campus Interviewing (OCI) during which some legal employers will recruit 1Ls for summer positions.
- And of course, focus on school. You are about to take your first round of law school final exams. Grades will play an important part in shaping your job prospects.

To the rest of the student body reading this, no matter where you are in your law school career, it is NEVER too late. Visiting our office is the first step to take in pursuing your career goals.

We look forward to meeting and working with all of you!

Would YOU like to write a column about politics, law school life, or anything else during the 2011-12 academic year? Email gavel.csu@gmail.com to stake your claim!

Would YOU like to publicize your organization’s events? Make an announcement? Or write an incredible reflection about a conference you attended? WE CAN HELP! Email gavel.csu@gmail.com.
In the Arts: Cleveland State University hosts a national poetry slam

By David Nichols

This month, the Gavel had a chance to speak with Cleveland-Marshall’s Visiting Clinic Professor Maya Simek. Prof. Simek received her J.D. from Cleveland-Marshall in 2010 after getting her Masters of Social Services Administration from Case Western Reserve University. As a student, she has worked for the Equal Rights Advocates and for the Honorable Judge Holfi Gallagather in the Cuyahoga Court of Common Pleas. As an attorney, she has also worked for the Cleveland Legal Aid Society.

In addition to her legal work, Prof. Simek is a social worker with extensive experience throughout the city of Cleveland. Not only is she teaching Cleveland-Marshall students in the Employment Law Clinic, she also works as a Medical Case Manager for the Neva Luz Urban Resource Center where she assesses the needs of individuals living with HIV/AIDS. Equally significant, Prof. Simek is currently facilitating a new legal clinic with the help of several Cleveland-Marshall students based on the Community Lawyering Model.

What do you enjoy most about being an attorney?

I really love that as a lawyer, you have the ability to help people in so many ways. There are a lot of people who do not have access to resources that will enable them to utilize the law to fix their problems. Law affords attorneys the power to assist people both at a macro and micro level. The law also provides lawyers with multiple ways to effectuate change in the lives of others. In what ways would you characterize a good attorney?

Well... ethical adherence aside, the best characteristics of a good lawyer, in my opinion, are heart and compassion. A good lawyer believes in what he or she is doing. Also, tenacity to help you get through some of the rough cases.

How are you enjoying being a professor at your alma mater Cleveland-Marshall?

I absolutely love it. Having seen the program from both sides, as a student and faculty-member, teaching here has definitely been an amazing experience. It is so great to be a part of the community here.

Are there any tips you have for students currently preparing to take the bar?

First of all, do not underestimate the power of a study partner. Having someone there to help you keep focused was very important for me. I call it having an accountability buddy. It really works to just have someone around to keep you on task.

You are both an attorney and social worker. Can you describe some of the ways that social work and legal work intertwine?

I firmly believe that social work and the law go hand in hand. Social work affords you with the ability to learn how to connect with people and communicate effectively with them. It also helps you to provide resources to people who need them. In these ways, it is very similar to work that lawyers do for their clients.

Throughout your legal career, you have been involved in many community service groups. What advice can you give to students who want to incorporate their legal knowledge to better their communities?

I would say that where ever you are, you should familiarize yourself with the means and resources that are available to people. It will never depend on what area of law you specialize in. As a lawyer, there are always ways that you can help people use these resources or, in the alternative, you are at least able to point people in the right direction so that they can obtain help elsewhere. It isn’t difficult. There are tons of opportunities for students or lawyers to give back to the community. Many of these opportunities are facilitated by the University. There are also a number of local lawyers that participate in pro bono activities and these often take place in combination with a variety of local agencies and public services organizations. There are any number of ways to get involved.

What’s the coolest non-legal book you have read recently?

Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close’ by Jonathan Safran Foer.

You are obviously involved in a whole lot of different activities right now. What advice can you give regarding time management for law students?

First of all, never underestimate the ability online websites have to disrupt your daily activities. Secondly, do not forget to take some time away at least once a week to ensure that you are keeping yourself well-rounded as a person. I am a firm advocate of surrounding yourself with friends and people who aren’t in law school. For example, I would sometimes study in a coffee shop. It gives you a chance to be around people who aren’t at the same stress level as you are. Keep friends around that can keep you focused and relaxed. When you work hard, it is beneficial to give your brain a break.

Pictured Above: Local poet McCarthy recites a poem to a classroom during the slam.

Of course it is difficult to get around as a law student. We have books we have to memorize, internships we have to apply for, clinics taking up all of our leisure time. As weary as the lifestyle can be, I find that my mental health requires finding some time to decompress. Whether it be reading or writing, there is always something that you can do to help yourself relax. There are a lot of different activities right now. You are obviously involved in a whole lot of different activities right now. What advice can you give regarding time management for law students?

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Pictured Above: Local poet McCarthy recites a poem to a classroom during the slam.
Advice to study by: What is the best way to outline in order to prepare for final exams?

Different people have different learning styles and are able to ‘master’ information in varying increments. One of the misapprehensions about law school (and maybe about learning in general) is that an outline is this thing with definitive rules and that once you write it down on paper it’s permanent and unchangeable – even if it’s later discovered to be incorrect. An outline is no more than a processing of information that enables each individual to put some organization to what he/she has learned. It is a tool to organize an individual’s thoughts rather than this creation (looking something like Gilbert’s) that has every conceivable correct answer to a test question. To that end, it’s best to both write an outline during the semester as you’re going along and reorganize that outline at the end of the semester. During the semester, take a step back every once in a while and organize what you think you’ve learned (even if it doesn’t seem to be a whole lot), and then when the semester is over, try to organize the larger picture of the full semester’s material. Additionally, there’s nothing wrong with organizing your material in conjunction with a commercial publication (such as a Hornbook or Gilbert’s outline) just so long as you use the materials only to clear up what you might be confused about rather than to eliminate the work involved in creating your own outline.

I might note that I have seen a variety of ways that students have used in preparing for exams. I, personally, had only a sketchy one-page outline of each course that I have seen a variety of ways that

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f rom d is c r i m i n a t i o n b y A m e r i c a n e m p l o y e r s o v e r s e a s.
In addition to her worldwide activism, Professor Picker was a much-
loved faculty-member at our own
Cleveland-Marshall College of Law, where she taught the first course ever on
Women and the Law. Not only did she
teach students in the classroom, she was the
founder and director of CMLaw’s
Fair Employment Practices Clinic. She
was also the co-founder of the Russian
U.S. Legal Education Foundation. She has additionally served on the Advisory
Committee of the ACLU’s Women’s
Rights Project and on its Litigation
Committee, and similarly served on
the Cleveland Executive Committee
of the NAACP. Therefore, when I say
that a living legend came and spoke
on campus, this is no exaggeration.

The lecture was what you would
expect from such a legendary speaker and
celebrated feminist. It was nothing less
than inspiring. The introductory speaker
was none other than the plaintiff of the
La Fleur case, Jo Carol Nesset-Sale, who
described her appearance as a 30 year
homecoming (she had proudly attended
CMJLaw in 1974). In her touching
introduction, Ms. Nesset-Sale spoke about
the power and value of pro-bono work,
which she said exemplified the character
of great lawyers like Professor Picker,
lawyers who would not yield to challenges
and who pushed the boundaries of legal
principle for the sake of promoting
fairness and advancing civil rights.

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In addition, the following courses cover
tidbits, projects, and ideas
Please send your interesting
about you and your work!
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and ideas
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Seven Profound yet Easy Reads for Law Students who Don’t Have Time for Moby Dick

David Nichols
Co-Editor-in-Chief

#1. Sula by Toni Morrison

One of the great champions in feminist literature, Sula is basically the coolest protagonists of all time. Although its author is famous for her hugely epic (and often depressing) novels about the Black American Identity throughout American history, Sula is a short novel about the relationship between two young girls who reconnect in adulthood after a traumatic accident occurs mythically altering the history of their small Ohio town. While Nel chooses the path of being a conventional wife and mother, Sula chooses to become an outsider and game-changer. If you haven’t read it, read it. Toni Morrison will have you holding tissues, but she is probably the best writer of the last century.

#2. We the Animals by Justin Torres

A brand new book by a brand new author, Animals reads like someone’s performance art project. A very short novel with a 7 year old narrator, this novel conveys the harsh beauty of growing up bi-racial. The narrator and his two young brothers make the most of their surroundings by dancing, arguing and otherwise fighting their hunger in Brooklyn, New York City. The chapters are short; each one depicts a small snapshot of a moment of poetic nostalgia. The tales are often littered with poetic rhythm (similar to the writings of a young Sandra Cisneros). If you need something to help you drift away from the fussiness of finals week, help yourself by reading We the Animals.

#3. When Will Jesus Bring the Pork Chops? by George Carlin

If you can survive the offensive nature of his monologues, the late George Carlin’s writing is a nature’s gift to cynical law students. This book qualifies as sheer humor. It is not formatted in any traditional sense of essays, linear chapters or chronological sequence. Instead, Pork Chops is the hysterical ramblings of a late master of the English language and an utterly brilliant stage entertainer. Something you don’t need a bookmark for, basically. It works to bring a quick laugh at those difficult moments between commercial law flash-cards when you need it the most. Raw and hilarious.

#4 Slow Man by J.M. Coetzee

I discovered Coetzee during a conversation with a literature nerd in Madison, Wisconsin. We were standing among shelves upon shelves of unorganized second-hand books at a closet in the middle of a campus strip (I think it was called: “Used Book Store” or something equally creative). I was vacillating my love for Haruki Murakami (an author you will meet later in this review sheet) and he recommended that I read Life and Times of Michael K. Since, I have become sincerely obsessed with the man’s work, most recently the outstanding Slow Man. This novel is about an old man, Paul, who loses his leg during a bike accident and crashes on his Croatian nurse, a married woman he employs to care for him after the crash. Things get really crazy when a novelist Elizabeth Costello appears randomly at his door and decides to involve herself in Paul’s personal life. You get the sense that Costello (a protagonist in another Coetzee novel) is strangely omnipotent and beginning to exercise some creative authority over the escalating plot. Coetzee’s style of writing has complex meaning, but is generally frank, and produces easily digestible pages. Perfect reading for a student sitting on one of those uncomfortable stools in Chipotle who is catching a quick lunch.

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#6. Something Wicked This Way Comes by Ray Bradbury

It’s autumn time in Cleveland. The wind is destroying your umbrella. The upswept sidewalks stuff dead leaves in your shoes. The city is changing colors. I read Something Wicked every year around this time. It is a magical tale of two kids in the Midwest country around Halloween who visit a mysterious old-fashioned festival. The boys experience the nightmarish spectacle, whose actors include the Dust Witch and the Illustrated Man. Mr. Bradbury, the old mastermind of fantasy and macabre, writes like a possessed poet blending his monstrous love of libraries, lightning rods and circus side-shows with ridiculous visual imagery. Like many of his other works, Something Wicked is adolescent fiction written for imaginative adults craving raw escapism. Does that sound like you during finals period?

#5. Sputnik Sweetheart by Haruki Murakami

Egan has been around for a while, although her name is suddenly familiar due to her immensely popular and impressive new novel A Visit From the Good Squad (with its one chapter famously composed on Microsoft PowerPoint). The Keep is an earlier novel that is less of a head-scratcher. Its dreamy narrative revolves around two cousins who meet for the first time since an awkward childhood prank at one of the cousin’s newly purchased haunted castle. Somehow this story mirrors a coinciding tale involving a writing instructor’s relationship with a prison detainee. The Keep ends up being an indescribable experience by one of the hippedst authors in America. It’s suspenseful and moving and doesn’t hog the brain-cells you may need during the stretch of final exams.

#5. Sputnik Sweetheart by Haruki Murakami

I could spend loads of newspaper surface exclamining how drastically unique the write Haruki Murakami is. He’s a middle-aged champion marathon runner from Japan who was a nightclub manager most of his life, read Raymond Chandler and decided to try his hand at creative composition. He’s basically nuts. His novels are elaborate mixes of the mundane and the unexplainable. Watch out for talking cats and stopped elevators. Complex and post-modern, existential, Kafkaesque, subconscious stories that reverberate your own senses and imagination. Yet despite these weighted words, Sputnik Sweetheart is relatively light. It’s funny and romantic. It is adequately simplistic without sacrificing its subtle sophistication. In other words, it won’t squeeze your brain. In fact, Sputnik Sweetheart is about two college students, one of them in love with the other. It chronicles their journeying, their journaling and their telephone conversations from old-style telephone booths.
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