MIT Computational Law Report

Release Notes - 3.1

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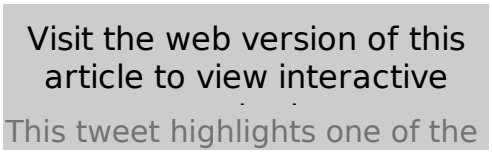
The concept of Release Notes is one used by those developing software or hardware products as a means to test for bugs, to provide updates about things that are fixed, and to describe the way a platform has since been developed. Here at the *MIT Computational Law Report*, we ascribe to this notion. In an effort to highlight updates made to our site, features we have added, and all the work done by the great work done by those in the Computational Law community. It is with great excitement that I get to talk about what some of those changes are below.

Collections

First, you probably will notice that the design of the site is a little bit different than it was before. As a publication, we believe it is important to eliminate artificial barriers placed on legal education and access by exploring new methods of academic scholarship.



The value of information is relational. As it is collected from different sources, organized in different ways, and combined with other information, there is a new opportunity to make ideas more accessible. In this same vein, the future of law and academia looks as though each will likely depend on the new tools currently used throughout the rest of society to collect, organize, and share information. At a more personal level, and as someone heavily influenced by the pioneering work of the Bauhaus school of design, one of my personal missions since joining as Editor in Chief was to make this publication a place to experiment with new ideas around publishing, pedagogy, and to practice for the futures that are yet to be invented.

> *For an example of how Collections are used by other publications, the work of Harvard Data Science Review and Journal of Design Science are great examples*

As with other features, this first instance of Collections will be used as an experiment to see what we like and what we don't like. Each Collection will be available in a drop down part of the navigation bar. In the future, one of our hopes is to use Collections to provide additional value to readers - for example, creating collections that organize content based on the level of review that went into each piece of content.

Columns

The next thing you may have noticed when checking out this updated version of our site is a new space for Columns. The goal of Columns is to provide continual insight about specific topics within Computational Law. In this release, the Columns have only been contributed by our internal team. This was on purpose and primarily serves two functions. First, we wanted to see what the workflow was like and get an idea for it before expanding to external collaborators. We are working to bring in external collaborators as columnists, but that will be for another day.

> *If you wish to nominate any columnists, feel free to do so in the Comments section of this Pub*

Second, we wanted to use this as a chance for everyone to get to know some of the great people that make all this work possible.

Release 3.1

Our digital interactions with mobile devices, browsers, sensors, app stores, and other service providers represent a vast departure from the rights and protections that developed after previous technological advances. In ***Rebuilding Respectful Relationships in the Digital Realm***, Elizabeth Renieris explores new strategies to better balance the power of digital interactions.

Each of the tools that we use informs the type of outcomes that can occur. These technological biases need to be accounted for in each of the technologies that we use. Renita Murimi's ***When Humans Judge Other Humans Using Machines*** develops an analytical framework to study the role of human and machine perceptions of intentions and the resulting outcomes in the decision-making process.

In recent years, the machine-readability has become a popular topic in law and technology circles. ***Drafting X2RL: A Semantic Regulatory Machine-Readable Format*** expands on the existing work on this literature as Patrick McLaughlin and Walter Stover walk through a new language, X2RL, and the potentials afforded by transforming from a syntactic language to a semantic one.

Editors

All this work we have done would not be possible but for the contributions of a wonderful team of people that are both formally and informally involved with building this computational law future together. In this release, however, we are specifically

highlighting Columns from our editors. In coming releases, however, we will be highlighting different segments of this broader community.

Andrew Domzalski

I can honestly say that the MIT Computational Law Report would not be anywhere near what it is without the mostly unsung work of Andrew Domzalski. Since the very beginning of when our publication formed, Andrew has shown up to everything we have done, ground through articles with a knack for copy editing and research that has elevated our body of works to great heights. The only proper lawyer among us, Andrew also provides a bridge between where we can be and where traditional legal practices are at this moment.

Visit the web version of this article to view interactive content.

Andrew's column harkens to the need for, as Jonathan Askin would describe it, *weird* lawyers.

While Andrew's background and skillset does have all the hallmarks you would expect of a traditional lawyer, his ability to synthesize new concepts from existing legal scholarship and research is something that sets him apart from just about everyone I know. His ability to see the connection between the conception of *in Robotam* jurisdiction and the law of Artificial Intelligences and Autonomous Entities is the type of thinking that will be demanded by the proliferation of new technologies. In this way, I believe Andrew's column will be great for demonstrating the different ways that law, as it is now and as it has always been, is an innovation.

link to column

Megan Ma

I met Megan with Dazza at the first part of 2020, while she was visiting Harvard Law School as part of her PhD at Sciences Po, ahead of the 2020 instance of the IAP Computational Law Course. As a student of that course, Megan's work was incredibly thorough and highlighted a capacity to read through a complex set of ideas, distill them into their core insights, and organize them in ways that created new value for the translation of legal documents into programmatic documents.

Visit the web version of this article to view interactive content.

For a simple, but accessible intro to the notion of machine translation, this lecture is really helpful.

Megan's been a spectacular contributor to the Computational Law Report as a student, author, and now as an editor and columnist. Her work will focus on the bringing across of ideas from the present into the future. In addition to being a must-read for fans of machine translation (looking at all you Douglas Hofstadter fans out there), this column will also be helpful in safeguarding the institutional body of knowledge that lawyers have developed and transforming it into forms that will increase the impact of law.

link to column

Wassim Alsindi

I met Wassim at the Cryptoeconomic Systems Summit at MIT in 2019 and was immediately struck by his breadth of knowledge. In addition to being knowledgeable about the technical aspects of blockchain and crypto, he also had developed a novel framework for classifying legal issues in the same subject — his series on Tokenspace remains a critical read for everyone in the space who is interested in adapting law to new technologies.

Visit the web version of this article to view interactive content.

Epistemic trespassing can provide new means of examining ourselves. This TED Talk by Jessy Kate Schingler demonstrates an example of the concept.

I am particularly excited for Wassim to join because his column will discuss a notion he has coined through the 0xSalon community called Epistemic Trespassing (i.e., the trespassing between different academic and professional disciplines that reveals new opportunities for partnership, growth, and mindfulness in the application of technology to law). As a PhD in *ultrafast supramolecular photophysics*, and as someone who has led working groups on everything from the algorithmic indifference of technology, memes as academic discourse, and the game theory of tokenization, Wassim's column will doubtless be an exciting ride for everyone seeking to broaden their horizons.

link to column

Media

Law no longer exists in a vacuum, locked in paper, and only accessible to a few. Led by our Executive Director, Dazza Greenwood, there will be an increased focus on building out rich media content for the *MIT Computational Law Report*. There is now a Media tab in the navigation bar that can be used to access this new page. Within this new Media page, we will serialize these new forms of content to serve as bridge to subject matter experts, in order to keep us all progressing forward.

link to Media page

Podcasts

The way that legal content is consumed is increasingly digital and available in different formats. Chief among these formats are podcasts. In the inaugural episode of *The law.MIT.edu Podcast* with Dazza Greenwood leads conversations about with Tiemae Roquerre, David Horrigan, and the Honorable Tanya R. Kennedy, Associate Justice, Appellate Division, First Department, New York State Supreme Court.

Idea Flow

In addition to producing content, one of the underlying goals of this publication is to lead conversations about and convene experts in Computational Law. To that end, we have quietly launched *Idea Flow,* a monthly community-building call. These calls bring together smart people with the aim of generating a novel *Idea Flow* among key stakeholders in the community and attempt to break down and understand what the myriad combinations of law and technology mean for the way we organize and work together.

> *If you would like to sign up to follow along, fill out this form!*

Additionally, these Release Notes documents will also be used to catalog work that we have done in past courses, lectures, and events.

Conclusion

Finally, I want to say thank you to everyone who has read down this far. The Computational Law space would not exist without your interest and willingness to co-create this future with us.

— Bryan
