Memorandum

To: Interested parties

From:
Frank Bennett

Subject:
Maintenance infrastructure for Indigo Book and the JM Indigo Book style

Date:
April 11, 2020

Overview

Indigo Book (IB) specifies citation forms for use in writing about US law. The guide must be updated from time to time, both to extend its scope of coverage, and to reflect periodic changes in the citation fashion world. The JM Indigo Book style (JM-IB style) for Jurism is a machine implementation of the IB citation rules, used to generate context-sensitive citations in user documents and bibliographies. When the IB guide is updated, the code of the JM-IB style must also be revised.

While both IB and the JM-IB style ultimately serve the same audience—authors of legal text—their maintenance draws on different skill sets: while IB describes the (possibly handwritten) human-readable form of citations, the JM-IB style is expressed in the CSL-M style language[1] used to automate that output. Given the complexity of legal citation conventions, separate maintenance of the two resources is burdensome, with significant replication of work.

This memo outlines an integrated approach to IB and JM Indigo Book updates, with a view to streamlining the maintenance of both.

Document view

In the HTML view of the IB text, citation examples would be decorated with link markup, shown in the example below.

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[1] CSL-M is short for "Citation Style Language for Juris-M," and extension of the CSL grammar recognized by Zotero and other fine reference management tools.
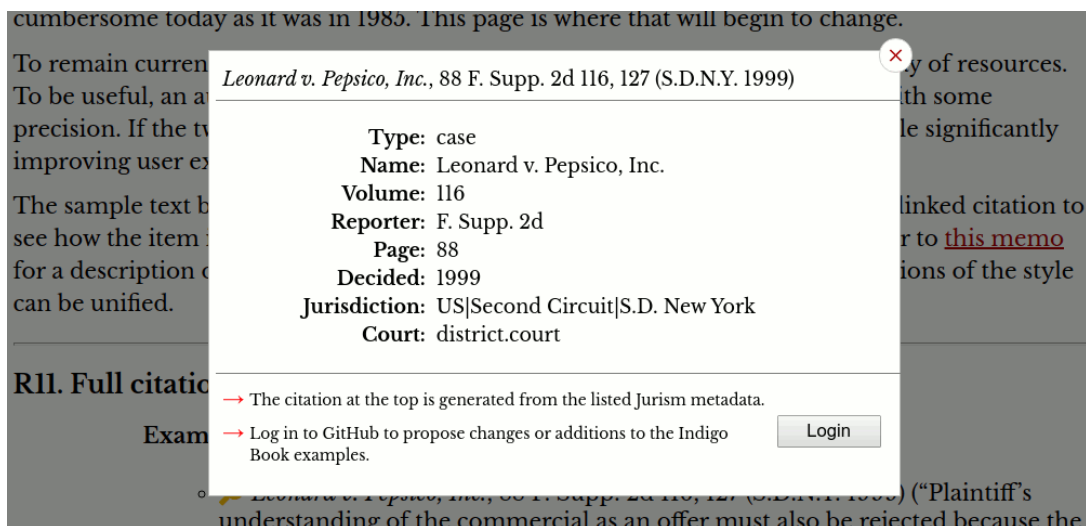

R11. Full citation

    Examples:

- 🔍 *Leonard v. Pepsico, Inc.*, 88 F. Supp. 2d 116, 127 (S.D.N.Y. 1999) ("Plaintiff's understanding of the commercial as an offer must also be rejected because the Court finds that no objective person could reasonably have concluded that the commercial actually offered consumers a Harrier Jet."), *aff'd*, 210 F.3d 88 (2d Cir. 2000).
- 🔍 *Toolson v. N.Y. Yankees, Inc.*, 346 U.S. 356 (1953) (per curiam) (affirming baseball's exemption from the scope of federal antitrust laws).

(Under the hood, citations are each marked up with an identifer in the format specified in Appendix 2 below.)

Feedback popup

Clicking on the link opens a popup showing the Jurism fields from which the citation is generated (this is illustrated in the linked demo page).
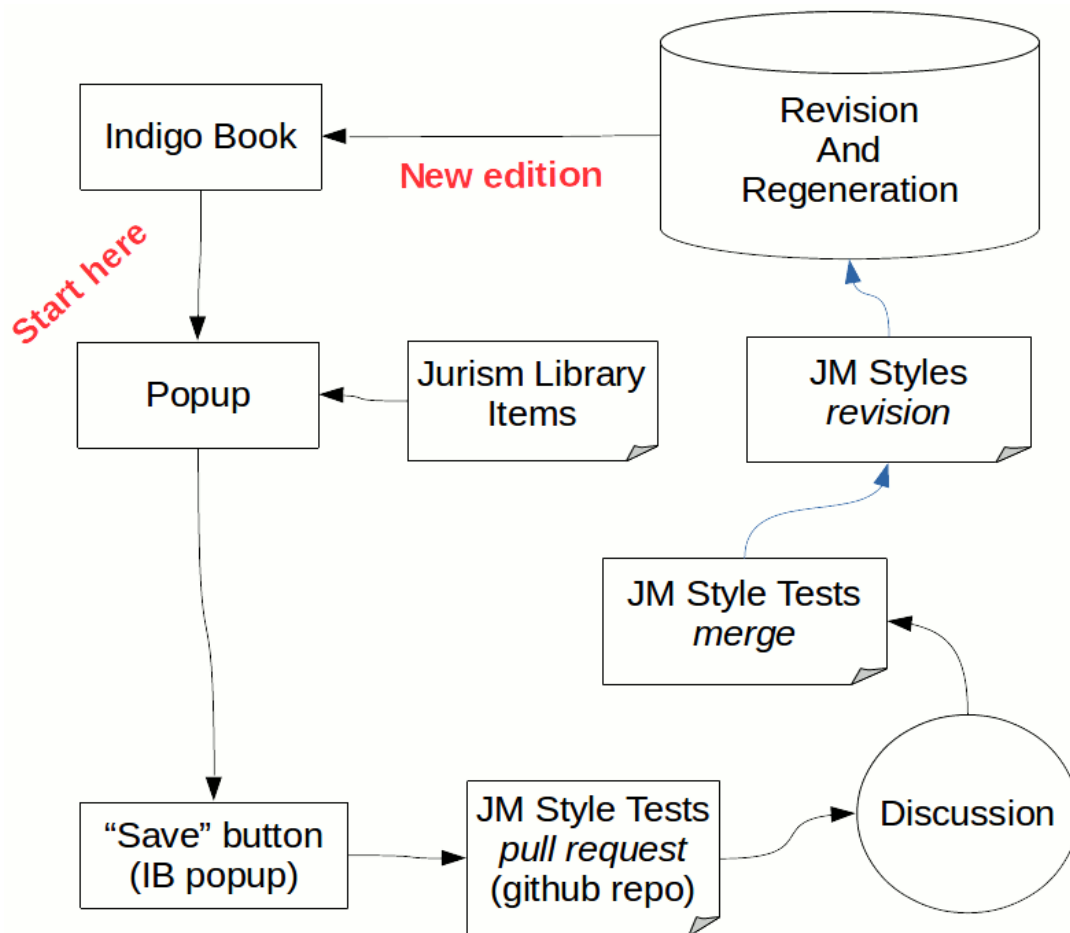

Editorial workflow

To casual readers, the popup thus just shows a simple quick reference, listing the Jurism metadata needed to produce a correct citation. For logged-in users, the popup offers a self-explanatory mechanism for suggesting changes to the IB guidelines and the JM-IB style.

Clicking the "Save" button opens the suggestion for review by an editorial panel, leveraging the version control and discussion infrastructure of GitHub to manage discussion and disposition. The workflow is illustrated in the Appendix 1 below.

Appendix 1: Workflow

The moving parts in this diagram may need some explanation.

Jurism Library Items

Each of the examples in the Indigo Book text will have a corresponding item in a companion library online. This will be a standard `zotero.org` shared library (such as this one), editable through a Jurism client by editors with appropriate permissions, and accessible via the Zotero API.

Popup

The popup links written into the IB text will call for item metadata over the Zotero API using JavaScript activated by clicking the link, and use the returned values to build the popup view.

JM Style Tests

Each item in the Jurism library will have a corresponding test fixture, stored in a GitHub project. The tool for generating and running these fixtures (`cslrun`, provided by the Node package citeproc-test-runner) has been developed.

"Save" button

The "Save" button will recompose a test fixture, and file it as a "pull request," a proposed change to the existing fixture, via the GitHub API, accessible to logged-in users.
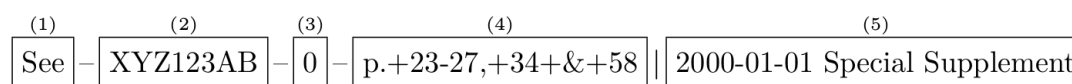
Discussion

GitHub pull requests are associated with a tracker, where the proposed change can be discussed, possibly modified, and either accepted for merge or rejected. The tracker is similar to an ordinary discussion forum. By leveraging this infrastructure, we avoid the need for maintenance of bespoke editorial support tools specific to IB and JM-IB.

Update
　　From time to time, proposed citation changes that have been discussed and merged can be folded into the IB text for release as a new edition, together with any edits to the IB text itself. The update would be automated by a separate tool, run independently of the workflow for proposed changes by a citation-maintenance editor.

Appendix 2: Citation ID format

Citation IDs are set on the `name` attribute of citation spans in the text, and consist of three to five elements.

(1)		(2)		(3)		(4)		(5)
See	–	XYZ123AB	–	0	–	p.+23-27,+34+&+58	|	2000-01-01 Special Supplement

Required elements

1. **Prefix signal**
　　Signals are set from a controlled list. The available signals are: **none**, **eg**, **accord**, **see**, **seealso**, **seeeg**, **cf**, **contra, butsee**, and **seegenerally**.

2. **Item key**
　　The item key matches the key of an item in the `jsti-indigobook` shared library.

3. **Position**
　　The position marker must be an integer between one and three, where **0** is first reference (full form), **1** is *id.*, **2** is *id.* with a pinpoint locator, and **3** is a subsequent reference.

Optional elements

4. **Pinpoint**
　　The optional pinpoint reference is written freehand with "+"-style URI encoding, using the shorthand labels recognized by `citeproc-js`.

5. **Supplementary locator elements**
　　Supplementary elements may be appended to the locator with a vertical bar divider. If the first string following the divider parses as 0000-00-00, it is used as `locator-date` in citation input. All other content is set on the `locator-extra` variable.