

JOHN NIDIRY

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EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY OF MAINE SCHOOL OF LAW, Portland, Maine
J.D., *cum laude*

May 2006

- *Ocean and Coastal Law Journal*, Case Note and Comment Editor, 2005-2006; Staff Editor, 2004-2005
- Prisoner Assistance Clinic, 2005-2006
- Legal Resources Centre (LRC), Cape Town, South Africa, Intern, Summer 2005
 - Awarded Maine Association for Public Interest Law fellowship to serve as intern at South Africa's premier human rights organization
- Independent Study, 2005-2006
 - Undertook research and writing project analyzing seminal cases interpreting South Africa's constitutional right to access adequate housing, after assisting in class action litigation designed to address Cape Town's housing crisis, as legal intern for LRC

BOWDOIN COLLEGE, Brunswick, Maine
B.A., History, *magna cum laude*

May 2000

- Honors thesis, 1999-2000: comparative analysis of police/community conflict and urban unrest in Detroit, Michigan and Belfast, Northern Ireland in late 1960s
- Sarah and James Bowdoin Scholar; Dean's List
- Coursework focused on race and colonialism

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

UNIVERSITY OF MAINE SCHOOL OF LAW, Portland, Maine

Aug. 2022-present

- Associate Professor of Law, September 2024-present
 - Teach Legal Research, Analysis, and Communication (LRAC) I & II
 - Supervise LRAC Teaching Assistants
 - Teach Upper-Level Criminal Law Practice seminar
 - Co-teach legal writing component of Perspectives on Equality, & the First Year Curriculum
 - Develop curriculum for and co-teach Lawyering Skills course sessions on legal writing with clinical faculty
 - Supervise upper-level independent student writing projects

- Visiting Professor of Legal Writing, August 2022-August 2024
 - Taught Legal Research, Analysis, and Communication (LRAC) I & II
 - Developed curriculum for and led LRAC session on using elements of narrative to examine critical perspectives in legal writing (Spring 2023)
 - Developed curriculum for and co-taught legal writing component of Introduction to Race, Racism, and U.S. Law (Fall 2023)
 - Co-taught LRAC session on client-centered lawyering with clinical faculty (Spring 2023)
 - Co-taught Lawyering Skills course session on client-centered lawyering for upper-level clinic students (Spring 2023)
 - Guest lecturer for Students for the Sixth Amendment group (April 2023) and Clinics at Maine Law (July 2023), focusing on capital defense representation

AREAS OF TEACHING INTEREST AND RESEARCH

- Legal Research and Writing; Lawyering Skills; Criminal Procedure; Death Penalty Law; Habeas Corpus; Race and the Criminal Legal System

LEGAL EXPERIENCE

FEDERAL CAPITAL HABEAS PROJECT, Greenbelt, MD
Staff Attorney

Oct. 2006-July 2022

- First attorney to join Project Director, a nationally renowned capital habeas expert, to assist in establishing nationwide program of the federal public defender system tasked with ensuring federal capital defendants pursuing post-conviction relief under 28 U.S.C. § 2255 and other remedies receive representation of the highest quality
- Represented clients in federal capital post-conviction proceedings
 - Served as lead counsel in *United States v. Lawrence* (S.D. Ohio), a federal capital post-conviction case, and as co-counsel in other federal capital post-conviction cases
 - Directed case investigations, strategy, research, and writing
 - Coordinated team of attorneys, investigators, and interdisciplinary experts
 - Drafted and edited pleadings for every stage of post-conviction process, in connection with litigation in federal district courts, circuit courts of appeals, and United States Supreme Court
 - Drafted and edited clemency petitions addressed to executive branch
 - Served as principal line editor and proofreader on team of attorneys
 - Collected, analyzed, and synthesized records pertaining to clients' life histories
 - Provided written reports to federal judges overseeing case budgets

- Provided training, consultation, and other intensive litigation support to attorneys representing individuals under federal death sentence in post-conviction proceedings
 - Trained appointed counsel on mechanics of federal capital post-conviction process and various unique issues arising in federal capital post-conviction cases, on case-by-case basis and at Federal Capital Habeas Project’s annual conferences
 - Reviewed, edited, and provided constructive comments on draft pleadings
 - Produced model pleadings and other training materials on common issues arising in capital post-conviction litigation
 - Conducted case-specific legal research and broad, cross-jurisdictional survey-style research
 - Drafted case-specific pleadings
 - Met regularly with death-sentenced individuals represented by other attorneys, requiring careful navigation of confidentiality and conflict-of-interest issues
- Supervised and taught law students, defense investigators, and paralegals in connection with research and writing projects
- Monitored policy developments and advocated for policies that protect interests of death-sentenced prisoners
 - Drafted and edited white papers for federal judges and other reports for Administrative Office of the United States Courts, and legislative hearing testimony

PUBLICATIONS

John Nidiry & Ruth Friedman, *Long Overdue: The Need for an Examination of the Specter of Racial Bias in the Federal Death Penalty System*, 67 HOWARD L.J. 225 (2024) (co-authored article on racial bias in the administration of the federal death penalty)

John Nidiry & Michael Meyers, *Our Public Schools Are Still Separate and Unequal*, 41 SOCIETY 12 (2004) (co-authored publication addressing the legacy of *Brown v. Board of Education*, 347 U.S. 483 (1954))

John Nidiry & Michael Meyers, *Kenneth Bancroft Clark: The Uppity Negro Integrationist*, 62 ANTIOCH REVIEW 265 (2004) (co-authored publication about Dr. Clark’s ground-breaking social science research on harmful effects of segregation on children, and the evidentiary support it provided for the U.S. Supreme Court’s *Brown v. Bd. of Educ.* decision)

Opinion, *CUNY Trustees: Let Free Speech Flourish*, NEWSDAY, Oct. 19, 2001 (authored op-ed defending students and faculty members who were labeled “seditious” and threatened with censure by university trustees for speeches delivered at anti-war teach-in in wake of 9/11 terrorist attacks)

SERVICE & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

UNIVERSITY OF MAINE SCHOOL OF LAW, Portland, Maine

August 2022-present

- Faculty Governance and Personnel Committee, 2026-present
- Appointments Committee, member, 2025-present
- Community, Connection, and Belonging Committee, member, 2025-present
- Admissions Committee, member, 2024-2025
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee, co-chair 2024-2025, member 2022-2025
- Faculty Advisor, Black Law Students Association, 2023-present

LEGAL WRITING INSTITUTE, JAILHOUSE LAWYER INITIATIVE

August 2025-present

Assist Legal Writing Institute's Pro Bono Committee with development of "Legal Methods and Research" manual for individuals in jails and prisons, in collaboration with Jailhouse Lawyer Initiative

FEDERAL CAPITAL HABEAS PROJECT, Greenbelt, Maryland

August 2022-present

- Consult with legal teams in federal death penalty cases
- Submitted *Response to U.S. Department of Justice Request for Information (RFI) Regarding the Manner of Execution Regulations, 28 C.F.R. Part 26* (Nov. 2022), addressing questions posed by the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) during the federal rule-making process in connection with agency's proposed changes to execution-related regulations

MAINE INSIDE OUT, Lewiston, Maine

Feb. 2019-Dec. 2024

Member of Board of Directors for organization that supports incarcerated and formerly incarcerated youth; engages in leadership development, mutual aid, and community dialogue through youth-created theater productions; and models transformative justice and restorative justice practices as alternatives to incarceration

PORTLAND ADULT EDUCATION, Portland, Maine

Feb. 2018-May 2022

Writing Tutor/Mentor for two individuals; taught one individual, who had basic English-speaking skills, essay writing, grammar, spelling, and vocabulary, and supported his pursuit of employment aspirations and other life goals; also taught graduate student, who recently emigrated from East Africa, how to organize research and write term papers

UNIVERSITY OF MAINE SCHOOL OF LAW, Portland, Maine

Oct. 2018-Sept. 2020

Mentor in Mentor/Mentee Program for student during her second year and third year of law school; advised and supported student with career goals, reviewed and edited student's cover letters and CV

SELECTED PROFESSIONAL PRESENTATIONS

Youth Justice Society & Students for the Sixth Amendment

April 2025

Served on panel, organized by University of Maine School of Law student groups, about career pathways to criminal law practice

Faculty Scholarship Roundtable

Oct. 2024

Presented research findings to University of Maine School of Law faculty and discussed research trajectory following publication of *Long Overdue: The Need for an Examination of the Specter of Racial Bias in the Federal Death Penalty System*, 67 HOWARD L.J. 225 (2024)

Youth Justice Society

March 2024

Presented on connection between youth justice and capital punishment for event organized by University of Maine School of Law student group

Clinics at Maine Law

July 2023

Presented on capital defense representation to clinical students and faculty

Students for the Sixth Amendment

April 2023

Presented on capital defense representation for event organized by University of Maine School of Law student group

Annual Capital § 2255 Training Conference, Miami, FL

May 2019

Federal Clemency Process—co-presented on panel with former Acting U.S. Pardon Attorney on mechanics of federal clemency process

Annual Capital § 2255 Training Conference, Philadelphia, PA

May 2017

Execution and Clemency-Focused Litigation—co-presented on panel with other capital habeas practitioners on federal execution date-setting protocols, clemency regulations, and creative legal challenges pursued in state jurisdictions

Annual Capital § 2255 Training Conference, Philadelphia, PA

July 2015

Federal Clemency: How it Works, and Doesn't—co-presented on panel with other capital habeas practitioners on federal clemency process and how to mount a successful clemency campaign

Annual Capital § 2255 Training Conference, New Orleans, LA

May 2014

Trauma & The Prison Experience—co-presented on panel with individual formerly incarcerated on death row and psychologist with trauma expertise about the deleterious effects of solitary confinement

Annual Capital § 2255 Training Conference, Indianapolis, IN

May 2011

Putting Together a Clemency Campaign—co-presented on panel with other capital habeas practitioners on nuts and bolts of effective clemency strategies employed in state jurisdictions and how they might be adapted to the federal system

Annual Capital § 2255 Training Conference, Indianapolis, IN

May 2011

Inside the Federal Capital Clemency Process—co-presented on panel with two attorneys who represented capital clients in the federal capital clemency process

Annual Capital § 2255 Training Conference, Indianapolis, IN

May 2010

Making Experts a Part of the § 2255 Team—co-presented on panel, consisting of mental health expert, capital habeas practitioner, and clinical social worker, that discussed practical and strategic considerations in working with mental health and other mitigation experts

Annual Capital § 2255 Training Conference, Indianapolis, IN

May 2009

Persuasive Pleading: Presenting Your Changed Picture as a Compelling Story In All Your Pleadings—co-presented on panel of capital habeas practitioners discussing strategies for using § 2255 motions and other pleadings as vehicles for advancing compelling narratives throughout the duration of § 2255 proceedings

PROFESSIONAL LICENSES, ADMISSIONS, & MEMBERSHIPS

Maine, admitted 2026

Massachusetts (inactive), admitted 2007

United States Supreme Court, admitted 2010

United States District Court for the District of Maryland, admitted 2013

United States District Court for the District of Columbia, admitted 2019

United States District Court for the Southern District of Ohio, admitted 2021

Maine Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, 2026-present (member)

Legal Writing Institute, 2022-present (member)