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Mike Widener
Rare Book Librarian and Lecturer in Legal Research

Mike came to the Yale Law Library in 2006, after 14 years as Head of Special Collections at the Tarlton Law Library, University of Texas at Austin. He loves acquiring books and manuscripts for the collection, and sharing them with students, faculty, staff, alumni, and anyone else who is interested in using the collection for research, or is simply curious about the history of books. Every year he looks forward to attending the Boston Antiquarian Book Fair in the Fall and the New York Antiquarian Book Fair in the Spring, where he can see rare books and book dealers from around the world.

Mike’s special interest has been illustrated law books. He is curating a major exhibition, “Law’s Picture Books: The Yale Law Library Collection,” scheduled for September 13-November 18, 2017, at the Grolier Club in New York City. Co-curating the exhibit is Mark Weiner (Yale Law School Class of 2000).

Mike was inspired to change careers by his wife Emma, who held several important library jobs in her native Mexico City, including librarian to the Office of the President of Mexico. Emma curated a recent Law Library exhibit, “Murder and Women in 19th-Century America,” and is occasionally Mike’s volunteer assistant.

Mike is a 5th-generation Texan. When he retires in a few years, he and Emma may return to the Austin area, or maybe join their son and daughter-in-law in Recife, Brazil, or maybe do both!