

Mid-point of Sex Crimes Internship!

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Hi everyone! I'm mid-way through my internship at the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Sex Crimes Division. I am progressing through my 5 Learning Objectives successfully, I would say that so far I have been able to do something for each of the 5 goals I set for myself.

My first goal was to learn about the best ways to interview victims and I was able to sit in on an interview with a District Attorney while she interviewed victims of sexual abuse within the LA County Jail. It was an odd series of interviews because all of the victims were inmates of the jail. I consider myself lucky to have seen those victims interviewed, because I got to see the DA interview victims who she was very different from. My second goal was to learn about the qualifications needed for the

District Attorney's Office to prosecute a sex crime. I have been able to learn about this goal by reviewing cases and recommending whether or not I think they should go forward. The biggest hurdle to getting a case filed is getting in touch with the victim and getting the victim on board with pursuing the case. If the victim does not want to go forward with a case the office will drop it. My third goal was to apply things that I learned in Sally Kenney's Politics of Rape course to my internship. I am constantly thinking about the readings and discussions we had in the class, especially as I am reviewing new cases. The knowledge I received from the course has been particularly helpful in terms of cases where the victim is a female college student. My fourth goal was to reconnect with attorneys from the District Attorney's Office who have mentored me in the past. I could probably do better with this, but overall being in the same building that I worked in last year has been great, because it means I run into people I worked for last year. My final goal was to see if I could handle prosecuting sex crimes and I believe that I could. I have a long time before I have to decide which aspect of law to pursue, but after working in the Sex Crimes Division this summer I feel even more inclined to pursue this field. I can definitely see and understand that Sex Crimes is not for everyone, but it is something that I feel I could prosecute if I decided to do that type of law. The best way for me to monitor my growth has been just to talk to my supervisor and gain more responsibilities. I think that it is also helpful to think about my goals and progress by discussing them in this blog.

My current project is redacting medical records for an underage victim and summarizing any statements she made that were recorded in the medical records. It is tedious, but it is very important. It is a lot of fun to review cases and either decline them or assign them for a further interview. It is almost like a puzzle because we have to look at the laws and make sure the police reports cover the elements of the crime before we can move forward with an interview. It is nice, because unlike most projects, reviewing cases does not usually take more than an hour so after completing a bunch in one day it feels like a lot of work was accomplished. The biggest project I worked on was a power point presentation that will be used by a district attorney during his opening and closing arguments at trial. I had to put together police reports, statements, 911 calls, photos, and other evidence. I really enjoyed that project, because it will actually serve a very important function in the case.

In general the District Attorney's Office has a lot of women, so I think it is helpful for me to see the way women work while balancing whatever home life they have. My boss gets up at 4am every morning as a way to take care of everything at home and to get her work done. It seems that there are more male judges than female judges, and sometimes the attorneys talk about how that can be difficult.

The skills I am building in the internship will be great wherever I work. The interns and the attorneys all have diverse backgrounds but common interests. I feel that there is so much I could learn from any of them. It is especially helpful to be around older interns who are all in law school, because they have a lot of advice to give that I need right now. Additionally, being comfortable in an office and in court is a valuable skill.

Here is a picture of my beautiful lobby! I have yet to run into LA County District Attorney Jackie Lacey, it's rumored she has a private elevator!