Kitty Preyer and Her Books

Karen S. Beck

Boston College Law School

Follow this and additional works at: http://lawdigitalcommons.bc.edu/rbr_exhibit_programs

Part of the Archival Science Commons, Legal Commons, Legal Education Commons, and the Legal History, Theory and Process Commons

Digital Commons Citation

http://lawdigitalcommons.bc.edu/rbr_exhibit_programs/5

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Daniel R. Coquillette Rare Book Room at Digital Commons @ Boston College Law School. It has been accepted for inclusion in Rare Book Room Exhibition Programs by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ Boston College Law School. For more information, please contact nick.szydlowski@bc.edu.
Kitty Preyer and Her Books

FALL

2006

http://www.bc.edu/lawlibrary

Daniel R. Coquillette Rare Book Room
Boston College Law Library
In 2005, Kathryn Conway ("Kitty") Preyer bequeathed her magnificent collection of early English and American law books to the Boston College Law Library. Closely mirroring her scholarly interests, Kitty’s collection is particularly strong in early American law books published before, and shortly after, the American Revolution.

A noted historian of American jurisprudence, Kitty was Professor of History at Wellesley College, where she taught American history from 1955 to 1990. She began collecting rare law books to save herself the trouble of traveling to libraries to conduct her research – and the addiction grew from there. Interested in the way “real people” engaged with the law and law books, Kitty collected books that often were well-used and well-worn. Sometimes she sent them off to the “hospital” to be repaired, occasionally having them rebound in the Italian marbled paper that she loved so well. Examples of both beautiful and “ratty” (her words) bindings are on display in this exhibit.

All books on display are gifts of Kathryn Preyer. The Boston College Law Library is deeply grateful to Kitty Preyer for bequeathing her collection to us.

This exhibit was curated by Karen Beck, Curator of Rare Books, who is grateful for contributions by Bob Preyer, Filippa Anzalone, Mary Bilder, Morris Cohen, Dan Coquillette and John Gordan. The catalog was designed by Ann F. McDonald.

“Kitty Preyer and Her Books” will remain on view through early December 2006.

DANIEL R. COQUILLETTE RARE BOOK ROOM HOURS
Monday – Friday 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Kitty Preyer and Her Books

"I was a bookish child and one entranced by my father's tales – whether true or fanciful – of the participation of family forebears in notable events of the nation's past. Perhaps it is not surprising that my professional career became that of historian. Over the course of time my scholarship turned toward American legal history in the early national period following the American Revolution.

Book collecting began when I happened upon, for a modest price, a first printing of a famous 17th-century English trial, long a personal favorite. Shortly after this happy occurrence, I acquired an 18th-century American edition of Beccaria's 'Essay on Crime and Punishment,' a work central to my scholarship at the time. I thereby freed myself a bit from the constraints of doing my research in the special collections of law libraries. The bug had bitten!

My broad interest as a legal historian lies in the various ways in which English law became altered in the post-Revolutionary United States and the means by which knowledge about the law spread to an audience far beyond that of bench and bar. My collection parallels these interests as the examples shown, I hope, will illustrate."

-Kahryn Conway ("Kitty") Preyer, 2002

A Few of Her Favorite Things

Giles Jacob. Law Grammar; or Rudiments of the Law. 3rd ed. London, 1754

"Well, I am just thrilled with my little Law Grammar on which I have spent so much (for me, anyway)! A very small volume, designed for students, it has a homemade leather binding . . . you would be horrified but I am delighted." - Letter from Kitty to John Gordan

James Parker. Conductor Generalis, or, The Office, Duty and Authority of Justices of the Peace. New York, 1788

"The office of Justice of the Peace was central to the English system of justice and equally important in the American colonies. Such legal manuals as this one set out the duties of the justices and supplied forms necessary to their work such as those for recognizances and warrants. An important and popular genre, the manuals were based on English sources and included relevant local statutes. I was delighted to find this post-Revolution copy still in its 'frontier' binding." - Kitty Preyer, 2002

Commenting on the book's home-sewn "frontier binding," Kitty wrote, "I feel sure I am the only person who would pay real money for this but I love it!" - Letter from Kitty Preyer to John Gordan

". . . I am one of the participants in the Grolier Club's 'New Members Collect' exhibit . . . I had earlier said that my books need to be displayed open to show text because their covers are simply old, very worn with use, truly ratty. Given all this, it may turn out that I will be demoted from my membership in that august Club." - Letter from Kitty Preyer to Morris Cohen, May 14, 2000
CESARE BECCARIA. AN ESSAY ON CRIMES AND PUNISHMENTS. 2nd American ed. Philadelphia, 1778

This is one of the first law books Kitty bought. She eventually owned Beccaria’s essay in several English, Italian and American editions.

A COVER GIRL AT LAST!

BOSTON COLLEGE LAW LIBRARY. EXHIBIT CATALOG: COLLECTORS ON COLLECTING. Newton, MA: 2002

In 2002, the Daniel R. Coquillette Rare Book Room featured an exhibit of eight book collectors and the books they loved. For this exhibit Kitty lent eight of her favorite law books, many of which are on exhibit.

Kitty is featured on the cover of the exhibit catalog, along with two other contributors, Jim Rogers and Dan Coquillette. Although she was initially reluctant to sit for a photo, eventually her qualms diminished enough for her to send a copy of the catalog to friend and fellow book collector John Gordan with a sticky note on which she proudly wrote: “A Cover Girl at last!”

“Kitty Preyer sparkled like the Venice she loved. Every colleague and student was inspired by her enthusiasm, her pure love of learning and teaching. Like Chaucer’s Clerk of Oxenford “She would gladly learn and gladly teach.” She touched my life, and those of so many others. We are all in her debt. To have her books is truly special!”

- Dan Coquillette

GILES JACOB

“Toward the mid-1990s Kitty’s interests enlarged from the contents of the old books to the books themselves, how they were made and by whom, how they were distributed and to whom, and who read them and why.”

- John Gordan

One of the authors who fascinated Kitty most was Giles Jacob. In 2001 she attended a conference in London entitled “Publishing the Law,” and spoke about two of her favorite books, the Conductor Generalis and Jacob’s Every Man His Own Lawyer.

EVERY MAN

His own LAWYER:

A Summary of the Laws of England, in a New and Instructive Method, under the following Heads,

V I Z.

1. Of Artificers, and Servants, and all such persons, as are not Members of the Commons of England.
3. Of the Laws and Statutes of London, and the Trade of the City and suburbs.

All of them are plainly treated of, that all Manner of Persons may be particularly acquainted with the Laws and Statutes, containing Civil and Criminal Affairs, and know how to defend themselves and their Estates and Fortunes, as all Calls whatsoever.

The first Edition, corrected and improved, with many Additions, from Lord Bacon, Grotius, Montesquieu, and with the Queen’s Laws now in 4. Vol. 6 included.

- Giles Jacob

NEW YORK

Printed by HUGH GAIN, Printer, Bookbinder and Stationer, at the Bible and Crown, in Hanover-Square, MDCCCLXXIV
"Kitty's paper on several English law publishers was infused with valuable insights from her collecting experience and with her irrepressible enthusiasm for the books she collected and for their makers. Both her law books and their printers were unforgottably brought to life. I can not now think of Giles Jacob without remembering Kitty's talk about him."

- Morris Cohen


GILES JACOB. EVERY MAN HIS OWN LAWYER. London, 1757 (shown closed).

GILES JACOB. EVERY MAN HIS OWN LAWYER. 1st American ed. NY, 1768.

"These titles illustrate an appealing new genre in law publishing, the self-help manual. Jacob, a prolific compiler of practical works for lay readers, saw his publications as a way to preserve English liberty through a common understanding of the law.

“The first American edition of Every Man His Own Lawyer was not reprinted in the colonies until thirty years after the first English edition. Although the title page announces it to be from the seventh English edition, “corrected and improved,” the seventh edition was not actually published in London until 1772. Hugh Gaine, the printer and bookseller, reprinted from the sixth edition and substituted his own title page after changing the edition and date, doubtless to present the volume to his customers as "brand new." I was happy to come upon this example of one of the tricks of the booksellers’ trade in colonial America.”

- Kitty Preyer, 2002


BLACKSTONE IN AMERICA

An overarching theme in much of Kitty Preyer’s scholarship – and her book collecting – was the development of American law in the earliest days of our country. Where did we get our laws, and how did we adapt those laws to make them our own? The reception of Blackstone’s Commentaries in America is an illustrative example.

William Blackstone’s Commentaries on the Laws of England is one of the most influential works in the history of Anglo-American law. Immediately popular when first published in England in 1765, the Commentaries quickly appeared in numerous editions around the world.

The first American edition of the Commentaries was published in Philadelphia in 1771 by Robert Bell, who financed the work by taking advance subscriptions for it. Instantly in demand, over 1,500 copies were printed, and 839 individuals, libraries and booksellers were listed as initial subscribers.

At first, the American editions were exact reprints of the English editions. The first American edition was reprinted line for line from the fourth Oxford edition of 1770. Later, American lawyers and commentators saw a need for a version of the Commentaries that addressed American legal practice, both nationally and locally.

Kitty carefully collected books that documented these transitions. Her Blackstone collection begins with a direct reprinting of an English edition, and ends with books based upon the Commentaries but addressing the legal cultures of individual states.
EARLY AMERICAN EDITIONS


This fairly early American edition was reprinted directly from a London edition that contained the last corrections made by Blackstone before his death.

WILLIAM BLACKSTONE. COMMENTARIES ON THE LAWS OF ENGLAND. 4 vols. Portland, ME: 1807

This American edition was reprinted from a London edition that featured Blackstone's final corrections along with notes and additional commentary by Edward Christian, an English judge and legal scholar. As with the previous set of Commentaries, no attempt was made to adapt the text to American legal culture. Nevertheless, it is a testament to the Commentaries' far-reaching effect - as well as the continuing importance of English law - that American lawyers still eagerly purchased new editions of Blackstone as soon as they appeared.

BLACKSTONE'S AMERICAN SUCCESSORS


While great interest remained for the editions of Blackstone discussing English law, demand soon arose for an American version of the Commentaries. In 1803, St. George Tucker, a judge and law professor at William and Mary, published what has come to be known as "Tucker's Blackstone." Written for Virginia practitioners, this work included "short tracts upon such subjects as appeared necessary to form a connected view of the laws of Virginia, as a member of the federal union."

Volume 1 is opened to an Appendix wherein Tucker analyzed the Commentaries in light of the American legal system and provided citations to American authorities.


"Brackenridge was a lawyer, newspaper editor, and author of the satirical novel Modern Chivalry. He wrote this, among other legal works, while a Justice of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court. He had originally planned a complete edition of a "Pennsylvania Blackstone" in the manner of St. George Tucker. Tucker's edition of the Commentaries, replete with notes of reference to the Constitution and laws of the United States and Virginia, had been published in Philadelphia in 1803. Abandoning the more ambitious goal, Brackenridge published here only the notes prepared for it. Nonetheless, Law Miscellanies did become known as the 'Pennsylvania Blackstone.'”

- Kitty Preyer, 2002

"Bursts of national pride through the decades following independence were accompanied by efforts to reform or reject parts of the inherited English law. In 1807 a Kentucky statute prohibited in the courts of the Commonwealth even the mere mention of British laws passed since independence. Written by a Kentucky lawyer, Humphreys' compendium of local law became known as the 'Kentucky Blackstone.'"

- Kitty Preyer, 2002


While not referring to Blackstone by name, Swift surely studied the Commentaries before sitting down to draft his System of the Laws of Connecticut. Volume 1 is opened to the contents page, which shows that the arrangement of his System is quite similar to that of the Commentaries.

Volume 2 is displayed closed to show its binding. The set has been rebound in the Italian marbled paper that Kitty loved so much.

THE ORIGINS OF CRIMINAL LAW IN AMERICA: THE FOUNDERS LOOK TO ITALY AND ENGLAND

One focus of Kitty Preyer's scholarship was the development of American criminal law in colonial times and in the early days after the Revolution. She wrote several articles on this topic in the 1980s in which she examined how our criminal law originated, and how it evolved over time.

In colonial times, the criminal laws of the thirteen colonies resembled those of England. Yet almost immediately, the laws began to change to reflect local custom and circumstance, with each colony adopting unique practices.

After the Revolution, the Founders looked abroad for inspiration as they crafted a new American legal culture. Two of the countries they looked to were Italy and England.

In several articles, Kitty examined the writings of Italian and English jurists, and discussed how their ideas were received and adapted by the Founders. She owned many of the works examined in her articles. One of her first purchases was the second American edition of Beccaria's Crimes and Punishments, shown elsewhere in this room.

CESARE BECCARIA'S ESSAY ON CRIMES AND PUNISHMENTS

First published anonymously in Tuscany in 1764, Beccaria's celebrated work quickly became known throughout Europe and the New World – so quickly, in fact, that the first English edition was published in London in 1767, and by December of the same year, Beccaria was being quoted by the Virginia Gazette in an article about the best way to prevent the crime of dueling.

George Washington, John Adams and Thomas Jefferson all were familiar with Beccaria's work, and it influenced their thinking about crime and punishment in early America.

Beccaria emphasized that certainty of the law and infallibility of enforcement, rather than harshness of punishment, promised the most successful way to deter crime.

Kitty owned early English, American and French editions of Beccaria's Essay.


This volume is opened to the beginning of Chapter 1. Note the intricate printed ornaments and initial capitals on this page.


This delightful little book measures only 3 x 5 inches. It is displayed closed to show its gilt spine and attractive binding.

**Other Early Criminal Law Commentators**

In addition to Beccaria, Kitty wrote about several other Italian and English criminal law theorists and their influence on the development of criminal law in colonial and post-Revolutionary America. Kitty owned, and wrote about, works of the Englishmen Henry Dagge, William Eden, Samuel Romilly and Thomas Madan, and the Italian Leopold, Grand Duke of Tuscany. As Kitty demonstrated in her writings, all of these authors influenced the direction criminal law was to take in the early days of our republic.


This book is beautifully printed, and bound in striking bright blue boards (exhibited closed).

Thomas Madan. Thoughts on Executive Justice, with Respect to Our Criminal Laws. London, 1785 (exhibited closed).

Unlike Beccaria, Madan advocated making the criminal law more stringent.


Impressed by the writings of Beccaria, Leopold adopted many of his proposed reforms. Leopold claimed that these reforms, including milder penalties, certainty of punishment and speedy trials had reduced the number of crimes in Tuscany.

This volume has been rebound in marbled paper.

Samuel Romilly. Observations on the Criminal Law of England, as it relates to capital punishments, and on the mode in which it is administered. London 1810.

Kitty liked to carefully research her books before purchasing them. Tucked inside this slim volume, and shown here, is a page of her closely written notes about the book, its author and his relation to other commentators such as Beccaria.


This work features a number of essays on topics such as property, covenants and courts. The book begins with a long essay on criminal law.

At the bottom of the title page, a previous owner (certainly not Kitty!) wrote: "A learned work, but abounding with Provincial Barbarisms."
LAW STUDY AND TEACHING

It is fitting that Kitty Preyer collected books on legal education, since she spent much of her own life teaching and inspiring everyone she met – inside and outside the classroom. Besides shedding light on the history of early American legal education, Kitty's books also provide raw data about a subject of great interest to her: the publication, distribution and use of law books. Several of the works shown here, including those by David Hoffman, contain lists of books that their authors believed all young law students should read. By studying these lists we can learn which legal works were held in high esteem in their day.

DAVID HOFFMAN. A COURSE OF LEGAL STUDY; RESPECTFULLY ADDRESSED TO THE STUDENTS OF LAW IN THE UNITED STATES. Baltimore, 1817.

DAVID HOFFMAN. A COURSE OF LEGAL STUDY, ADDRESSED TO STUDENTS AND THE PROFESSION GENERALLY. 2nd ed. 2 vols. Baltimore, 1836 (shown closed).

David Hoffman was a Professor of Law at the University of Maryland. The breadth of his law course can be seen on pages 32-33 of the first edition, which is opened to the General Syllabus, or overview of the course. Volume 1 of the second edition features a section not present in the first edition: "A Student's Resolutions." Among Hoffman's 30 resolutions are these:

19. To avoid useless knowledge; at the same time to be very sure that it is useless.
21. To dress fairly in the fashion, but never beyond my means, and studiously to shun foppery.

[Illustration is from Field's Blackstone discussed on next page.]

BARRON FIELD. AN ANALYSIS OF BLACKSTONE'S COMMENTARIES ON THE LAWS OF ENGLAND, IN A SERIES OF QUESTIONS, TO WHICH THE STUDENT IS TO FRAME HIS OWN ANSWERS BY READING THAT WORK. New York, 1822.

Kitty owned two copies of this work, which purported to teach students the principles in Blackstone's Commentaries by asking such questions as: "What is law, in its most general and comprehensive sense?" – followed by references to the page numbers in the Commentaries where the answers could be found. The copy on display here has been rebound in the beautiful Italian marbled paper that Kitty loved. It is open to a sketch of a soldier that an early owner had penciled in – probably instead of studying Blackstone.


This beautifully bound little book is an early example of the Socratic method known and (occasionally) loved by American law students today. Here, the teacher and student pose questions to each other as a way of teaching and learning the law.


This book is exhibited closed to show its magnificent binding. Note the tooling on the front cover and the gilding on the spine.

Readers of Wood's work will be relieved to read on the title page that the book was "Composed for the Use of some Persons of Quality."

Wright packed a lot of useful information into one slim volume which, despite its title and place of publication, is directed squarely to the English law student. After the usual advice on temperance, hard work and study habits, the author recommends that the student begin not with Blackstone or Wood's Institutes, but by studying International law writers such as Grotius. He concludes with sections on the duties of attorneys, and reminders to exercise daily.


Much like Kitty Preyer did in her own work, Story looked back to the earliest days of our country and examined the history and laws of the colonies and states before the Constitution was adopted.


This work appears somewhat like an abridged version of Story's Commentaries on the Constitution, intended for "the use of the higher classes in common schools." Story dedicated it to "the schoolmasters of the United States whose meritorious, though often ill-requited labors have conferred lasting benefits on their country, by the promotion of sound learning, pure patriotism, and Christian piety."

The book is exhibited closed to show its beautiful leather binding and handsome spine.


Walker was a professor in the Law Department of Cincinnati College, and a former pupil of Joseph Story, to whom he dedicated his book. Like Blackstone and James Kent, who came to be known as the "American Blackstone," Walker's book grew out of the law lectures he delivered at Cincinnati College. In fact, as can be seen in the table of contents, the book appears to be simply a compilation of his lectures.


DuPonceau was Provost of the Law Academy. His book contains much the same material as Story's little Constitutional Class Book. DuPonceau intended his work "for the benefit of youth, of the general reader, and of foreigners."

Justice of the Peace Manuals in England

Exhibited here are some of Kitty Preyer's very favorite books: her beloved Justice of the Peace manuals, also known by the title Conductor Generalis. These books were written to guide laypersons required to carry out legal duties, such as justices of the peace, sheriffs and jury members.

Kitty was interested in the way "regular" people learned, used and interacted with the law, and she collected many works on that subject, some of which are shown here.


As the title implies, many local justices of the peace had to perform their duties in small villages, where neither they nor anyone else necessarily had any legal training. Dalton wrote his work "for the better help of such Justices of Peace as have not been much conversant in the studie of the Lawes of this Realme."

Published more than 100 years apart, these two copies feature clean, attractive printing and, on the 1635 edition, a striking engraved title page.

[All three illustrations are from the 1635 Edition of Countrey Justice.]
A LITTLE DETECTIVE STORY –
 OR, WHO SAYS IT’S BORING TO BE A LIBRARIAN?

WILLIAM NELSON. OFFICE AND AUTHORITY OF A JUSTICE OF PEACE, ALSO THE
DUTY OF OTHER PARISH OFFICERS WITH PRESIDENTS OF INDICTMENTS AND

This well-worn copy must have passed through many hands before Kitty
found it. By the time it arrived at Boston College, it had no front or back
covers, and no title page. Thus, it took a bit of detective work to figure out the
author, title and edition of the work.

After skimming through the book, we figured it was some type of justice
of the peace manual, almost surely written for English, not American,
audiences. At the end of the Preface, the author’s initials W.N. gave us the
cue we needed to dig into some old bibliographies of English legal works.
There we found references to Nelson’s work.

But which edition? Here modern technology saved the day. We searched
in the database Eighteenth Century Collections Online, which provides
images of pages scanned directly from the books. We looked at several
ditions of Nelson’s work until we found that the 10th edition matched our
copy. Mystery solved!

Kitty Preyer was a master bibliographical detective herself, as can be seen
in the text accompanying the books by Giles Jacob shown elsewhere in this exhibit.

JUSTICE OF THE PEACE MANUALS IN AMERICA

One of the major focal points of Kitty Preyer’s scholarship is the way
laws and legal systems were put into place and used in “real life.” As a
historian, she examined the way our legal culture originated and evolved in
the early days of our country.

While the thirteen colonies were subject to the laws of England, the
colonists quickly added their own local practices and customs into the mix –
and Kitty was quick to point out that these customs varied greatly among
the colonies, resulting almost immediately in a multilayered legal system with
great local variation.

After the Revolution, these practices continued, and it is not surprising
that they were reflected in some of the first law books published in America.
The ever-popular justice of the peace manuals were quickly adapted to suit
local and state practice, as these examples show.

RICHARD BURN. AN ABRIDGMENT OF BURN’S JUSTICE OF THE PEACE AND PARISH

This book provides a fascinating example of the tension between English law and colonial
practice shortly before the Revolution. The book is inscribed by Greenleaf: “To His Majesty’s
Justices of the Peace, in the Province of the Massachusetts-Bay, in New-England.” Writing
from his office in downtown Boston, Greenleaf notes in the Preface that “the circle of a justices
business in [England and Scotland] is vastly extensive, and is founded chiefly on acts of the
British parliament, which can never have any relation to this colony . . . .”

CONDUCTOR GENERALIS, OR, THE OFFICE, DUTY AND AUTHORITY OF JUSTICES
OF THE PEACE, HIGH-SHERIFFS, UNDER-SHERIFFS, GOALERS, CORONERS,
CONSTABLES, JURY MEN, OVER-SEERS OF THE POOR, AND ALSO THE OFFICE OF

This simple, well-used copy shows Kitty’s engagement with her books.
Here, she went through the book page by page, commenting on its condition
("p.176-190 badly stained") and transcribing the early writing she found within. The
book is opened to page 296, where the writing “Elizabeth Drummond was born
March 6 Day 1741” appears upside down.
THE "VIRGINIA JUSTICE" AND "NEW VIRGINIA JUSTICE"

Like their neighbors to the north, southern colonies (and later, states) felt the need for law books that addressed local conditions. Here are three examples of justice of the peace manuals adapted to Virginia laws and customs: one written shortly before the Revolution and two written about twenty years thereafter.

RICHARD STARKE. THE OFFICE OF A JUSTICE OF PEACE. Williamsburg, 1774.

The writer of the Preface asserts: "The Publick, I am satisfied, do not stand in Need of many Arguments to prove how much a proper Treatise on the Office and Authority of Justices of Peace was wanted in this Colony. There is no Book on this Subject in Being, properly adapted to our Laws and Constitution . . . ."

WILLIAM WALLER HENING. THE NEW VIRGINIA JUSTICE, COMPRISING THE OFFICE AND AUTHORITY OF A JUSTICE OF THE PEACE, IN THE COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA. Richmond, 1795.

Comparing his work with earlier efforts, Hening writes in the Preface: "Doctor Burn's Justice published in England, and Mr. Starke's in Virginia, have long afforded considerable assistance to our Magistrates. But as the former was calculated for the meridian of the country in which it was written, and the latter was published during our subjection to a regal government, and before our laws had acquired any degree of stability . . . some other guide was indispensably necessary."

The book is opened to a long (19-page) list of subscribers who ordered Hening's book before it was even published. The vast majority of subscribers were Virginians, including Thomas Jefferson, but a few hailed from Kentucky, Ohio and Philadelphia. Several subscribers ordered multiple copies, some as many as thirteen. Subscription lists such as these are fascinating because they provide evidence about the publication, purchase, distribution and migration of early law books – and about the people who used them.

The book is opened to the subscribers whose names begin with H-J. "Thos. Jefferson, Monticello" is listed in the right column on page 2.
Kathryn Conway ("Kitty") Preyer (also known as Kathryn Turner early in her academic career) was born in 1924. She received her A.B. from Goucher College in Towson, Maryland, and her M.A. and Ph.D. degrees from the University of Wisconsin. A noted legal historian, her dissertation was entitled "The Judiciary Act of 1801."

Kitty spent nearly all of her academic career as a Professor of History at Wellesley College— from 1955 to 1990— during which time she taught a wide range of American history courses and seminars. She served as Chair of the History Department from 1971 to 73, and was named Professor Emeritus in 1990.

In 1981-82 she was awarded a fellowship from the National Endowment for the Humanities; she also received fellowships from Harvard University and the Harvard Law School.

In 1984, the American Society for Legal History awarded Kitty the Surrency Prize for a "scholarly work deemed the most significant contribution to the history of law or constitutionalism." She won the prize for her 1982 article "Penal Measures in the American Colonies," which was published in the American Journal of Legal History. Her articles appeared in major scholarly journals. Always, her scholarship bridged the gap between law professors and historians, and drew upon the best traditions and practices of both.

Kitty was active in many professional organizations, including the American Society for Legal History, the Organization of American Historians, and the Massachusetts Historical Society. She served as Vice-President of the latter from 1980 to 1995. She was elected Honorary Fellow of the ASLH in recognition of her service and support of the organization.

She was a member of the Grolier Club in New York, where she exhibited her books. She served on the editorial advisory board of the Documentary History of the United States Supreme Court—a multi-volume collection of documents relating to the early history of the Court.

Kitty's philanthropic activities included supporting programs for adult literacy, poverty and civil liberties. Kitty and her husband Bob were world travelers— Venice was her favorite. Kitty Preyer passed away on Patriot's Day in 2005. Everyone who knew her loved her, and we all miss her terribly.