Lee Burgess: Welcome back to the Law School Toolbox podcast. Today, we are celebrating our 400th episode with a look back at some of our favorite podcasts. Your Law School Toolbox hosts are Alison Monahan and Lee Burgess, that's me. We are here to demystify the law school and early legal career experience, so you'll be the best law student and lawyer you can be. We're the co-creators of the Law School Toolbox, the Bar Exam Toolbox, and the career-related website CareerDicta. Alison also runs The Girl's Guide to Law School. If you enjoy the show, please leave a review or rating on your favorite listening app. And if you have any questions, don't hesitate to reach out to us. You can reach us via the contact form on LawSchoolToolBox.com, and we'd love to hear from you. And with that, let's get started.

Alison Monahan: Welcome back to the Law School Toolbox podcast. Today, we're celebrating our 400th episode with a look back at some of our personal favorite episodes. Yes, this is totally subjective. Well, I have to say, putting this list together was really a trip down memory lane. There is a lot of good stuff in the back catalog, and it's really weird when you start reading all these back episodes to see COVID suddenly pop up and then dominate the conversation for quite literally years. It is definitely quite a time capsule. There's some stuff in there. We have stuff from the early Trump days, where we were interviewing... Remember that one we did where we were talking to lawyers at the airport?

Lee Burgess: Oh, that's true. Yes. For the travel ban, yeah.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, the travel ban lawyer stuff. I was like, "Wow, this is really taking me back."

Lee Burgess: I had forgotten about that episode. That's such a really interesting episode though. Lawyers on the ground. Yeah.

Alison Monahan: Yeah. No, there's a lot of stuff in there actually. We talked to some really interesting people. We're obviously not going to cover all 400 things that we've done in the next 20 to 30 minutes, but no, there's actually some really good stuff in there. We talked to an attorney who's transgender. There's a lot of great stuff, which I'd kind of forgotten we did. I'm like, "This is really good."

Lee Burgess: I did a mayor. I talked to a mayor once.

Alison Monahan: True.

Lee Burgess: Yes.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, you talked to a lot of interesting people.

Lee Burgess: I did.

Alison Monahan: So anyway, in addition to these, there's a great supply of back content on interesting people that definitely I would recommend browsing through.

Lee Burgess: Totally. And then we have a new birthday present announcement. I guess it's a birthday present to us. I don't know.

Alison Monahan: To everyone else.

Lee Burgess: To everyone else. But we have decided to move into the YouTube space, and we are launching the Law School Toolbox YouTube channel, which is going to have content that's similar to the podcast, but also a lot of bonus content as well. So, if you enjoy YouTube, please go over to our channel and subscribe. YouTube folks know that's very important. So subscribe. And then you will find out all of the cool stuff that is on YouTube. And if you have suggestions, you can let us know about content you would like to see. So we're branching out, we're doing something new.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, definitely. Some of you might even be already watching this on YouTube. Thank you, subscribe.

Lee Burgess: Yes, thank you.

Alison Monahan: But yeah, we're going to have some new playlists, we're going to have some exclusive content, we're going to start recording more of this stuff on video. So hey, check it out. Alright, well, let's jump in.

Lee Burgess: Yes. So, we thought we'd start with pre-law and new law students, because I'm sure that a number of people who are watching or listening to this are thinking about starting law school in just a few weeks. So, it's top of mind.

Alison Monahan: Exactly.

Lee Burgess: So, we wanted to go back and do some early episodes on this, which are still really relevant. And the first one is podcast episode number 38: Can You Really Afford Law School? And gosh, this is such an important question that we see.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, that's why I picked it.

Lee Burgess: Yeah, we see come up. Talking about money is so critically important. So, if you're thinking about taking out law school loans, or if you already have filed for those loans and signed for them, this one is for you. You want to really understand what the financial considerations are for before, during, and after law school. And we have a follow-up episode on that that's with the founder of You Need A Budget, where we talk about law school loans too. That is probably

in the 300s, I can't quote that. We'll link to it in the show notes, I can't quote what number that is. But it's also a really kind of fascinating dialogue about school loans and what are the long term ramifications of those loans. So, I really think this is something that can't be discussed enough.

Alison Monahan: I agree. And I think it's something people just don't totally conceptualize. So, I think if you are considering law school, definitely make sure that it is something that makes financial sense for you, because otherwise it can be really disastrous. So that was why I put this one very top of our list. I also picked another episode I think people who are starting law school might kind of want to bookmark, called The October Freakout.

Lee Burgess: Every year, every year.

Alison Monahan: Every year, every year. So, this is an evergreen episode. It was one of the early ones we did at number 15, but you can just refer back to it year after year. So, there's this thing that happens to most people, or many people in law school in October, where you really just kind of freak out.

Lee Burgess: Yeah.

Alison Monahan: It's where reality kind of starts to set in.

Lee Burgess: You're six weeks in, seven weeks in, yeah.

Alison Monahan: Exactly. The weather's starting to get worse, you're starting to get less light, and all the excitement's sort of gone. You're like, "Oh, okay." You're not nervous so much about reading a case, you kind of understand it. But now midterms are kind of looming on the horizon and you start to realize, "I don't know what to do with all this material."

Lee Burgess: Yeah. Ooh, Legal Writing assignments start coming due. Oh my gosh.

Alison Monahan: Yeah. Legal Writing, exactly. So you've got everybody who's Type A, they've been keeping up, they're like, "I've got all this material I've been reading in class, but I don't know what to do with it." So this is what The October Freakout is about, because this is actually very normal. And it's kind of a path, a piece of the path, I guess you could say, through your development as a law student. So, bookmark this episode and when this feeling hits, you can go and listen to it. I remember having a total meltdown in October. I remember because the end result of this was – I'm sure I talk about this in the episode – but, a 2L was basically like, "You need to take a break and go take a walk. It is a beautiful fall day in New York City. Go to Central Park, walk around, look at the beautiful trees. This is not that big of a deal. You will figure this out."

Lee Burgess: Yeah.

Alison Monahan: And I took that advice, and I remember that afternoon of kind of walking through the perfect New York fall day, and looking at the trees changing and being like, "Oh, okay, I'll regroup and start again tomorrow."

Lee Burgess: Oh yeah. And it's usually that three-day weekend in October – that's pretty much when it happens. It's always Fleet Week in San Francisco.

Alison Monahan: Oh God, that's the worst. The Blue Angels. I hate the Blue Angels.

Lee Burgess: I know. I have a very vivid memory of walking around the park with the Blue Angels loudly roaring overhead. I always know what weekend it is, because it was Blue Angels weekend in San Francisco. So, it happens to almost everyone. So you just want to, yeah, kind of listen to that episode, skim the transcript, save it. Mark it on your calendar, that that three-day weekend is probably going to be tricky.

Alison Monahan: Although, to be fair, we do have to fess up some of these early episodes don't yet have transcripts.

Lee Burgess: Oh, good point.

Alison Monahan: Because we didn't always do a transcript.

Lee Burgess: Sorry, I know. We got better with age.

Alison Monahan: Yeah. I think we've got about 70…

Lee Burgess: Okay, sorry.

Alison Monahan: Yeah. If anyone actually really wants a transcript for accessibility reasons, send us an email, we'll get you a transcript. Some of them have them. We've been adding them, but they don't all have them. Sorry.

Lee Burgess: Oh, but I think the YouTube videos would have closed captioning, so at least you could watch it that way. Yeah, so that's something. But good point, yes. We will get you a transcript if you'd like one. Okay, so after The October Freakout, you start to feel like the exams are coming. And this is honestly one of my favorite episodes that we have done – it's called Take an Exam with Us. And I wish everyone would listen to it, because it's so much fun to listen to us literally walk through an exam question. It's just the best. So I highly recommend everyone listen to it.

Alison Monahan: This is definitely an underutilized episode. We know this because we know how many people download these things. And I can tell you not enough people are downloading episode 22.

Lee Burgess: It's so good. I mean, we weren't necessarily as great of podcasters, but the content is really, really good. So, it's worth listening to.

Alison Monahan: Yeah. I just think this is what you need, basically, as a first-semester law student, is someone to actually show you how you do this, and this episode does that. So everyone should go and listen to it. I don't even think that should be up for debate. It should be our most popular episode, and it's not.

Lee Burgess: It should. I know, yes. Please help our data on that. Dive into episode number 22 and we're going to see it skyrocket in popularity. Alright, so those are for our pre-laws and new 1L law students. And then we have a series that I think is pretty much of value for all almost anyone, about strategies for different learning styles. These folks do listen to. I know, because when we talk to prospective students, oftentimes bar studiers and law students reference these and say that they've taken the… We link to a test that's not a super intense test, but something that you can kind of do as a diagnostic. But I think it is really interesting to stop and think about what kind of learner you are. So we have episode 144 is Tips for Auditory Learners, we have episode 145, which is Tips for Kinesthetic Learners, and episode 146: Tips for Visual Learners. And I think one of the things that I've learned from talking to a lot of people about these episodes is that oftentimes you don't fall into one of these buckets. Oftentimes you might lean a little more towards this or that, or you struggle with studying certain subjects in one way. But I think what's interesting is to just create awareness about these different ways that we process information. And then you can experiment based on the suggestions in these episodes, and see what gives you the best results. And so much of early law school is experimentation about what you think you should be doing.

Alison Monahan: I agree. I think nobody is all one way or the other. It's not like if I say I'm a visual learner… Yeah, I have a preference for that, but it doesn't mean that's the only way I learn. I read things, I listen to things – those are all helpful. So yeah, I think if someone wants to listen to all of these episodes, I think there are nuggets in each one of them that probably would resonate, particularly for certain types of things. For memorization for example, something kinesthetic might actually help people. Envisioning walking around, or even physically walking around – that's just going to engage a different type of the brain, versus just trying to black knuckle or white knuckle it through, like, "I have to memorize this, I have to memorize this." So, I think just having all these pieces in your toolbox for the different things you need to learn and be able to do in law school, can be super helpful.

Lee Burgess: Yes. And I think the other thing that's interesting about these different kinds of activities that we attribute to these three learning styles is that some of them might also correspond to lessening distraction. So, when you were talking about walking around, I've definitely heard the argument of the walking meeting, which you and I have done many, many, many times. Or sometimes I will take business calls when walking outside. And you realize that then you have n*o* computer, no text message, no messages interrupting you, and you are very present in a different way. Even though you are taking a visual stimulation by being outside, it is a very different brain processing. It's been kind of fascinating. I've been doing this more and more, about how much more I might retain from a phone call done by removing myself from my desk. Whereas if I'm at my desk, it is almost guaranteed that I'm going to be interrupted while I'm doing some sort of call. Even if I get the ping and I ignore it, I've still gotten the ping. I don't know, I think there're some interesting things in here. Distraction has become something that we've talked so much more about, that some of these different tips may… I don't know, it's something to consider how they relate to how focused you can be.

Alison Monahan: I think that's true. And I can even see someone listening to a "Listen and Learn" episode of the podcast – which we'll talk about later – while walking around, something like that. And a lot of people tell us they do that – they listen while they're commuting or whatever it is. But yeah, something about walking, I think particularly, there are lots of walking meditations and things that people do. And there's just a different way of processing when you're moving, particularly through some sort of natural setting, that I think people could use. For example, I recall that single afternoon in New York City walking and looking at the trees in a way that like I don't recall any other day that year, probably.

Lee Burgess: Yeah, that's totally true. So, it's worth experimenting. And I think in this very distracted world that we're in, which it gets more and more distracting, that it's interesting to try and utilize different techniques to just create as much focus as you can. Because I think a lot of this discussion of learning styles is really about how you can remain focused and retain information.

Alison Monahan: Definitely.

Lee Burgess: So, you just have to experiment.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, well, on that note, let's move on to a set of episodes around some common questions we get. And the first one of these is about distraction, essentially at its core, which is, should you use a laptop in your law school classes, which is episode 161. And I know people may recoil in horror the idea that the answer to this question could possibly be "No", but it might be "No." You might just want to leave your laptop at home.

Lee Burgess: It really might be "No." I just got, a little while ago, one of those new Kindle Scribes, which is for note-taking, because I wanted to be able to take my notebook everywhere with me, basically. You can have an abundance of information, more than I could have in my notebook. And so I've started kind of handwriting meeting notes again, where I'd kind of been doing more typed meeting notes. And it is great, because the Kindle Scribe doesn't have anything else to offer me. I'm not going to read a book or listen to Audible while I'm in a meeting. Those are my only other options. So I do like that it's pretty much like, "Here is your notepad that's gray" – it's not particularly visually stimulating – "and you should take notes on it." And you could export those notes, you can do different things with them. But it's been a great reminder of the importance of separating ourselves from the entire world that is available on our laptops. It is really Captain Distraction. Maybe the phone is worse, but I don't know. I definitely would get distracted by my laptop in law school, and that is when we had wired Internet, my first year. You had to plug your laptop in. I mean, it all got worse once we got Wi-Fi, because then you didn't even have to make an affirmative choice to enter the Internet. It was just everywhere.

Alison Monahan: Yeah. We would have group chats going on with 50 people in a 150-person class, and people would just be busting out laughing for no apparent reason, because someone was making a joke in the chat. I mean, it was really bad. We were not paying attention.

Lee Burgess: All of us did. Yeah, I have friends planning their weddings, and we're texting back and forth pictures of weddings. Not appropriate.

Alison Monahan: Right. People are shoe shopping, all that stuff. But yeah, I think there's a strong argument that you should at least listen to this episode and consider maybe not bringing your laptop, or at least turning off the Wi-Fi, as crazy as that sounds. People can wait an hour.

Lee Burgess: Yeah. And the other problem is the typing, because we've got this kind of court reporter situation, where students end up just typing so furiously fast, and they're trying to write down everything that's being said in class.

Alison Monahan: This girl I was stuck next to, yeah... We had assigned seats in this one class, and this person next to me was literally transcribing every single lecture. And I was just like, "This is crazy. This is crazy, and this is driving me crazy. This is not helpful for you, you are not focusing. You are just like..."

Lee Burgess: Right, you're not putting that information into your brain. They've done studies on stuff like this. You don't retain that information. It's just input through your ears and out through your fingers, and you're not thinking about it or creating long-term memory about it. So it's not the most efficient use of your time. It's

not the same as digesting information and synthesizing it into something that you write down – that's a totally different experience.

Alison Monahan: Right, which it helps to handwrite.

Lee Burgess: Yes.

Alison Monahan: So anyway, think about it. Maybe bring yourself the... What was it, the Kindle Scribe?

Lee Burgess: The Kindle Scribe. It's really cool. The pen is really nice, and you don't have to...

Alison Monahan: We're not being paid for this.

Lee Burgess: I'm not. I just like it. And my husband loves it, he has one too. We have dueling ones. I don't know, I'm super into it. I take it to meetings at my kid's school. I'm just going to say one more thing about it, because I think it's cool. You can have different notebooks. So from a student perspective, you could have a notebook for each class, so your notes can continue on in each class, and then you could export them electronically, if you wanted to view them on some sort of different machine. So, you can really go in and say, "Now I'm in Crim Law, and here's my Crim Law notebook." I don't know, I think it's pretty cool.

Alison Monahan: It's a really good idea.

Lee Burgess: Yeah. It's fun, new technology. Anyway, I'm off my Kindle Scribe soapbox. I guess I can… I don't know, I think I'll ruin my setup if I go get it. I was like, "I should go get it", but then I forgot. Man, this YouTube thing is going to be totally different. I was like, "I'll just grab it", and then, "No, then my mic's going to go crashing to the ground. It's going to be terrible, so I won't."

Alison Monahan: Well, maybe we could do a little episode later on: Lee's Kindle Scribe and how it can work in law school.

Lee Burgess: Totally, perfect. New YouTube episode, stay tuned.

Alison Monahan: Stay tuned.

Lee Burgess: Stay tuned. Okay. Alright, so another thing that almost everybody seems to ask us about is study groups.

Alison Monahan: Should you join a study group?

Lee Burgess: Should you join a study group? Episode 167.

Alison Monahan: Well, I'm not even sure I want to talk about study groups. Just go listen to this episode.

Lee Burgess: I know. Episode 167. The short answer is, it depends. It's a lawyer answer. It depends.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, it depends.

Lee Burgess: Yeah.

Alison Monahan: Listen to the episode, make your own choices. Alright, moving on.

Lee Burgess: Moving on. Oh, I still love this one too – episode 158: What to Wear (And Not to Wear). We're talking law school fashion and it's really a fascinating episode to think really about law school fashion, and where you get things and what you really need, and what women need and men need, and non-binary people need.

Alison Monahan: What if you're non-binary?

Lee Burgess: I know. It's really just about how you want to present yourself, and it is part of the legal profession, is how you present yourself. And I know you just went and did meetings in New York. Also, it's where you are, right? New York legal culture is different than California legal culture. And so, you also have to be aware of where you are. But I know you were...

Alison Monahan: Yeah. We had to go do business casual type stuff in New York City, and I literally pulled things out of my closet that I'm pretty sure I had not worn since I was a lawyer, because I'm like, "Well, if I need to do professional dress, New York City, I have that look." It's just not something that I've worn in California for the last number of years.

Lee Burgess: Yeah, especially between COVID and all of the...

Alison Monahan: Right, exactly. I was like, "Wow, I didn't realize I even owned this. I love this outfit."

Lee Burgess: I know, right?

Alison Monahan: Not suitable for the Bay Area at all, but perfect for New York City.

Lee Burgess: Exactly. I also think it's interesting, especially with the big secondary clothing markets now, like Poshmark and different ways that you can rent wardrobes or you can buy them secondhand. The ability to build yourself a wardrobe is not always as expensive and intimidating as it used to be, but like most things, it's still going to take time. So you will need to allocate time to this problem.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, no, I actually found a whole bunch of really nice Thomas Pink shirts that I think I wore a few times each. I'm like, "Oh, maybe I'll put these on Poshmark. Maybe someone else wants them."

Lee Burgess: I know.

Alison Monahan: I'm never going to wear them again.

Lee Burgess: Exactly, I know. I've sold stuff on Poshmark, and it is great. And you can even get things with tags on them, and pay a fraction of the price. Shoes.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, I found stuff in this closet that still had the tags on and the tags had a big number. And I'm like, "Yeah, I never should have bought this. I've never worn it. Maybe someone else will appreciate it."

Lee Burgess: I know, it's totally true. So, you want to get creative and think about this stuff early, because you don't want to be trying to scramble to purchase a suit right before OCI. You don't want to scramble to try and find clothes.

Alison Monahan: No, that's a nightmare, trust me. Been there, done that.

Lee Burgess: Yeah, it's not a good experience.

Alison Monahan: Plan ahead.

Lee Burgess: Plan ahead. That's a great summer activity, to just try and get your wardrobe together.

Alison Monahan: Absolutely.

Lee Burgess: Okay, so this might be the exact opposite of talking about what to wear. It's talking about the Bluebook.

Alison Monahan: It's like trying to drop a little fun one in before we get to the Bluebook.

Lee Burgess: I like that, I like that. It's like Poshmark to the Bluebook.

Alison Monahan: The Bluebook – dun, dun, dun!

Lee Burgess: I know. But you've got to love it, you've got to learn it. We actually like talking about it. We teach courses on it, I know that we get excited about it. It's a special thing that people...

Alison Monahan: It's weird.

Lee Burgess: …on the Law Review... It's weird. But someone on our team has a Bluebook T-shirt, so just saying.

Alison Monahan: Oh wow.

Lee Burgess: I know.

Alison Monahan: I think when we did the first one of these, which was number 170, we were like, "Can we possibly talk about the Bluebook for an entire episode?" And then, hey, we did another one, at 304. So yes, we can talk about it for at least two episodes. So, if you need an introduction...

Lee Burgess: Yeah, because we've actually created a decent amount of content about the Bluebook. But it's really helpful, because it becomes very important, and you need to understand what it is and how to use it and how you get comfortable with it. And also the stakes of not understanding it and making mistakes, which can really cost you in your Legal Writing classes, your write-on to the Law Review. So, it's something not to be ignored.

Alison Monahan: I agree, and I think it's something a lot of schools don't do a great job at. They just kind of present you the Bluebook and maybe a little bit of like, "Here's how you use it." But they don't tell you, "You need to tab this, that makes it so much easier. Maybe you want to use a paper version versus the online", all these different things. Also, the reality is, you probably use like 5% of the Bluebook on a regular basis.

Lee Burgess: Totally.

Alison Monahan: And then sometimes people are like, "Oh, I have to sit down and go and read the whole thing." No, you don't need to do that. I guarantee you there are retired lawyers who've never looked at most of the pages of the Bluebook.

Lee Burgess: No, no. And I think that it kind of depends on what your research area is, but the international treaty... There're sections on international treaties.

Alison Monahan: There's all kinds of stuff.

Lee Burgess: Everything's in the Bluebook, pretty much.

Alison Monahan: Yeah. Literally everything is the goal.

Lee Burgess: Yeah. You don't want to start at rule one and just roll through the whole book; that is just not the best bet. You want to understand heavily-cited things, like cases and statutes and periodicals, and now PDFs and electronic sources. And

then the one thing that gets a little tricky is the Bluebook has a lot of tables. And those tables are very rich with information, but they also have all these abbreviations that you would never guess would be abbreviations. And you just have to get very comfortable with being willing to check everything. Now, if you do edit on the Law Review, you will start to memorize some of it, which makes it at least faster to say, "I know that there is an abbreviation for that word." But in the beginning it is laborious, because you do have to go reference, reference, reference. But it does make you more comfortable with it.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, and you want to tab that table so you can just be like, "Oh, I need the abbreviations table. Look, it's the green one. Done." Yeah, so anyway if you are being introduced to the Bluebook, go listen to podcast 304: Introduction to The Bluebook. It also has a transcript, you can read it. Alright, well, another key area that we have a few different episodes on that I think people struggle with a lot, is the memorization aspect. And in law school you might have closed book exams, the bar exam is obviously a closed book exam. So, we have a couple that I pulled out – 196, which is just sort of general memorization techniques, and then I think you talked with Gabe recently about spaced repetition.

Lee Burgess: Yes. And I think this idea of being smart about how you memorize is discussed in almost every other type of thing that you're learning. We always talk about some languages. Who's the guy who always sends out the study hacks, who learns the languages really fast?

Alison Monahan: Oh, I forgot his name, but yeah. Yeah, I can't remember his name.

Lee Burgess: Yes, we'll try and look up his name and link to it in the show notes. But a lot of people talk about the speed at which you learn languages and memorizing other things. And then you get to law school and you realize that you are kind of learning and memorizing a foreign language in a lot of ways, because there are terms of art and you're just doing rote memorization. It's like, "Oh, there's a four-prong test for this. What are the four prongs?" So, figuring out how you memorize is very important. And for a lot of us who were Liberal Arts majors in college, you didn't memorize huge amounts of information. I was a Psychology Media Studies major. I don't think in my last couple of years of law school I memorized much. I went to seminars, I wrote papers, I did a thesis, I talked a lot. But I didn't have a list of things that I had to know, like my friends who were in OChem. They were memorizing all the time.

Alison Monahan: I was doing Sociology, but I was also doing Chemistry, so yeah, I had kind of both. But the worst grade I ever got was second semester of Organic Chemistry, where I decided not to bother memorizing stuff, because I didn't want to go to med school anymore.

Lee Burgess: Yeah. But that didn't turn out very well.

Alison Monahan: Did not turn out well, but I just needed a passing grade, and I got that passing grade barely. But yeah, memorization is its own thing, so check out 196. We've got some creative evidence-based ideas. And then at 369, you spoke with Gabe Teninbaum about his spaced repetition product, which is something you can actually get. But also, the concept of spaced repetition you can employ on your own.

Lee Burgess: And I think the thing about spaced repetition is that some people think it sounds really new, but it's definitely not new. And it's what Duolingo and Babbel and all of these language apps are using, that almost all of us have used – not necessarily well, but we've almost all logged into them at one time or another. And it is this idea of consistent but short bouts of memorization, and kind of triggering your memory over and over and over again. You can use that in law school, and there's some really interesting science behind this. So I think his podcast episode is great. I think his tool's great for those who want to invest in the tool, but you don't have to invest in the tool. You can invest in paper and a pen.

Alison Monahan: Exactly.

Lee Burgess: And basically do the same thing for yourself.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, just like anyone who's ever done Duolingo will never forget the word for "apple", because they just tell you over and over and over. In whatever language you're studying they make you use the word "apple". And you're like, "Why are we still talking about apples?" But you will never forget.

Lee Burgess: I know, "apple" and "boy". It's always like, "The boy eats this. The boy lives here. The boy did..."

Alison Monahan: Yeah, or the apple. It's like, "Why are we always eating apples? Can't we have a pear or something?"

Lee Burgess: So funny. Yeah, so it's very interesting, and the science behind some of this stuff is really fascinating.

Alison Monahan: Yeah.

Lee Burgess: Alright. Well, as we kind of round out our favorites list, anyone who has listened to us talk over the last 399 episodes…

Alison Monahan: Which is a lot...

Lee Burgess: …will know that we love practice. Which is a lot. Thanks for listening. We love practice, and so episode 213 is Why Practice is So Important in Law School. We talk about the importance of doing practice questions and getting feedback on your writing in preparation for exams. I guess my one takeaway for you is, don't let your first practice exam be your final exam.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, I think those are words to live by. It's not going to go well. You have to make yourself do the actual practice before you get to the exam. And it's hard, but you've got to do it.

Lee Burgess: It's hard, and sometimes very humbling.

Alison Monahan: Very humbling.

Lee Burgess: It makes you feel crummy, but it's super important.

Alison Monahan: Yeah. Speaking of practice, in October of 2019, just before the world changed…

Lee Burgess: Oh, the before times.

Alison Monahan: Exactly, in the before times.

Lee Burgess: When we worked at a co-working space.

Alison Monahan: Oh my God, can you even imagine? There were like 50 people in one room, from all over.

Lee Burgess: Oh my gosh. We're going to talk about our "Listen and Learn" series, which is super popular, and we came up with that in a co-working space, sitting together.

Alison Monahan: Full of random strangers.

Lee Burgess: Very tiny table. A very tiny table...

Alison Monahan: Crammed in together.

Lee Burgess: No distance.

Alison Monahan: Drinking, eating, they had a cafe. Oh my gosh.

Lee Burgess: I know.

Alison Monahan: Well, it's a wonder anyone survived.

Lee Burgess: I know, yeah. But we did come up with the idea for our "Listen and Learn" series, which I didn't know it was going to be so popular, is incredibly popular, both on the Law School Toolbox and the version we have over at the Bar Exam Toolbox. And we thought about why folks like it. People talk to us about these episodes on the phone all the time.

Alison Monahan: All the time.

Lee Burgess: Write to us of these episodes all the time. And I think people love it so much because it's practical application of the law, which I think is something that often doesn't happen in your law school classes. And it's in bite-sized chunks. These episodes are typically 15 minutes. And I think that so often the idea of wrestling with a fact pattern, it feels really daunting to take that on. But what we basically say is, here's a nugget of law. Here's just a little bit, a snack. And then we're going to go do a few fact patterns and we're just going to show you how we apply that law to some fact patterns. And you're going to start to appreciate that law to fact connection, which is the analysis piece that so many students struggle with, especially in their first year. And I think these are just easy to digest, because you're not biting off that much. You're really talking about one small area of the law. And then you're just like, "Oh, okay, now I have a better understanding of stop and frisk, because I just did three hypos on stop and frisk." And I think this model of the "Listen and Learn" episodes, you can take it into your own study and do the same thing for yourself, and say, "I'm studying bankruptcy. What is a chunk of law, and can I get a practice question to test myself on that chunk of law?" You're going to be incredibly successful on your exams.

Alison Monahan: I agree. So, the first one we did was on the Commerce Clause, very small.

Lee Burgess: So exciting.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, that's 215. And they just really start from there, and you see more and more and more of them because people just really like to listen to them. If you have any suggestions for episodes that you would like covered that we haven't already done, shoot us an email, maybe we'll make one for you.

Lee Burgess: Exactly. We have a whole list of topics that folks have asked us to cover. And so, we're always open for suggestions because we've done a lot of them. I have no idea how many of them, but I have recorded a lot of those.

Alison Monahan: It's a lot. I think it's approaching 100 at least at this point.

Lee Burgess: Yeah.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, so that's a lot. But there are a lot of topics. So, send us your favorites, send us what you're struggling with.

Lee Burgess: The law is very dense.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, exactly. We do get ones where we're like, "Ooh, rule against perpetuities. Is anybody going to want to draft that one?"

Lee Burgess: Exactly.

Alison Monahan: But we always make it work.

Lee Burgess: Yep.

Alison Monahan: Well, before we wrap up, a few career-related episodes we like. And I actually talked to Sadie Jones about her favorites. I know a couple that we think are really fun are The Secret Life of Law Firms, which is episode 159, where if you have any interest in working in BigLaw, highly recommend you check this out. Large law firms are very weird places in a lot of ways.

Lee Burgess: Know what you're getting into.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, know what you're getting into. Know the culture, understand how this works. Definitely worth checking out. Even if you're just curious, or you're a script writer and you want to know how BigLaw works – great episode for you to check out.

Lee Burgess: Yeah, totally.

Alison Monahan: Yeah. We've got some top interview questions. Again, these are the most common questions that we get about job interviewing. So, if you have questions going into OCI, or going into this fall recruiting season, check out 175. We'll talk all about job interviews. And one that I threw in that we've done relatively recently is 255, which is The Dos and Don'ts of Writing Samples. So I think the writing sample can definitely...

Lee Burgess: Ooh, that's a good one.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, it's one of those things that can just trip people up. And again, there's not a ton of great information. Your school's probably like, "Yeah you need a writing sample", and I was like, "Okay, well..."

Lee Burgess: Like, "What is that? What should we..."

Alison Monahan: Can I use something for my summer job? Answer maybe, but you need to get permission for that. Well, can I use my memo? Sure, but do you want to give them 20 pages? Probably not, you want to cut it down. Can you get help editing it? Do you need to edit? Should it be what you turn in? We answer all of these questions for you. So, if you need to do a writing sample, tune in to 255. And with that, I think we're at the end of our list.

Lee Burgess: Yeah, that's a fun list.

Alison Monahan: I know, I had fun putting it together actually. I'm glad you liked the choices.

Lee Burgess: Thank you. Well, we are kind of the same person at this point in our professional journey of partnership. So, we pretty much agree.

Alison Monahan: I actually would be curious if you went through all 400, what would your list look like? But yeah, even Sadie, she sent me those and I was like, "Oh those are great. Yeah, I love those."

Lee Burgess: I know. Yeah, I think they're pretty much the same. I think the only one that I also get a lot of comments about is our episodes on accommodations.

Alison Monahan: I almost put those on, yeah.

Lee Burgess: Yeah, and that is something that listeners reference to me a lot.

Alison Monahan: True, it's a good point.

Lee Burgess: That it makes them think about getting accommodations and how to work with your school, and just thinking ahead on issues like that. So, if that is something that resonates with you… And remember that accommodations can be for all sorts of reasons, not just ADHD or anxiety. We're talking about breastfeeding or pregnancy or...

Alison Monahan: Physical stuff.

Lee Burgess: A medical condition. Physical stuff.

Alison Monahan: Back pain.

Lee Burgess: Yeah. Carpal tunnel, tennis elbow. I mean, there's lots and lots of stuff. So, that is probably one of the only things I would add to your very complete list.

Alison Monahan: True. I actually did intend to put those on and just forgot by the time I got to the end of all 400.

Lee Burgess: Because we're the same person. It's fine, it's fine. Well, I think this is an awesome list. And I am just actually really grateful that so many people have listened to the last 399 episodes. This podcast is something really special, and I didn't know it was going to be when we started it. So it's been a really fun journey.

Alison Monahan: No, we did not understand that we would have literally millions and millions and millions of downloads, which is what's happened. So, we do really appreciate everyone listening. We look forward to seeing you guys on the podcast. Maybe you can see us on YouTube.

Lee Burgess: That's right.

Alison Monahan: But yeah, we really appreciate you joining us for this and all other 399 episodes.

Lee Burgess: Yeah. Don't forget to check out the YouTube channel and subscribe.

Alison Monahan: Definitely. If you enjoyed this episode of the Law School Toolbox podcast, please take a second to leave a review or rating on your favorite listening app. We would really appreciate it. And be sure to subscribe so you don't miss anything. If you have any questions or comments, including some "Listen and Learn" suggestions, please don't hesitate to reach out to Lee or Allison at lee@lawschooltoolbox.com or alison@lawschooltoolbox.com. Or you can always contact us via our website contact form at LawSchoolToolbox.com. Thanks for listening, and we'll talk soon!

RESOURCES:

Law School Toolbox YouTube channel
"Listen and Learn" series
Podcast Episode 83: Lawyers in Action – The Airport Immigration Crisis
Podcast Episode 150: A Conversation with Visla Rudiger, a Transgender Attorney
Podcast Episode 91: From Lawyer to Entrepreneur to Mayor!
Podcast Episode 38: Can You Really Afford Law School?
Podcast Episode 383: Talking About Money with Jesse Mecham, Founder of You Need a Budget
Podcast Episode 15: The October Freakout
Podcast Episode 22: Take an Exam with Us
Podcast Episode 144: Tips for Auditory Learners
Podcast Episode 145: Tips for Kinesthetic Learners
Podcast Episode 146: Tips for Visual Learners
Podcast Episode 161: Should You Use a Laptop in Law School Classes?
Podcast Episode 167: Do You Have to Join a Study Group in Law School?
Podcast Episode 158: What To Wear (And Not To Wear)

Podcast Episode 170: Let's Talk About the Bluebook
Podcast Episode 304: Introduction to the Bluebook
Podcast Episode 196: Memorization Techniques For Law Students
Podcast Episode 369: Using Spaced Repetition for Your Law School and Bar Exam Studies
Podcast Episode 213: Why Practice is So Important in Law School
Podcast Episode 159: The Secret Life of Law Firms (w/Sadie Jones)
Podcast Episode 175: Top Interview Questions with Ex-BigLaw Recruiter Sadie Jones
Podcast Episode 255: The Dos and Dont's of Writing Samples (w/Sadie Jones)
Podcast Episode 72: Seeking Accommodations in Law School and on the Bar Exam (with Dr. Jared Maloff)
Podcast Episode 220: More on Accommodations in Law School (w/Elizabeth Knox)
How to Learn a Language in Record Time, by Scott H. Young