

Njeri Mathis Rutledge

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EDUCATION

June 1996 **Harvard Law School**, J.D. Cambridge, Massachusetts
Harvard Civil Rights-Civil Liberties Law Review – technical editor

June 1993 **Spelman College**, B.A., Atlanta, Georgia
Magna cum laude; English

BAR ADMISSION

Nov. 1997 Admitted to practice in Texas state courts and federal courts in Texas.

2004-Present **South Texas College of Law Houston, Houston, Texas**

Full Professor of Law

Areas of Scholarly Expertise: Domestic Violence, Criminal Law, Criminal Procedure, Forensic Evidence, Legal Research & Writing, Employment Law & Civil Litigation.

Develop curriculum and teach a variety of legal subjects; research and publish legal scholarship focusing on domestic violence, criminal justice, race and constitutional law; coordinate and teach summer bootcamp program for Black Law Students Association; serve as faculty advisor for various student organizations; mentor students regarding employment, public service vs private practice, writing, and diversity; participate in faculty governance by serving on a variety of committees

2009-2021 **City of Houston Municipal Court – Judicial Division, Houston, Texas**

Associate Municipal Court Judge

Served as an associate judge and magistrate presiding over hundreds of cases through arraignment, show cause, trial and jail dockets. Reviewed and either signed or rejected search warrants; provided magistrate warnings; issued emergency protective orders; interacted with a variety of citizens, defense attorneys, prosecutors, and police officers.

2001-2004 **Harris County District Attorney's Office, Houston, Texas**

Trial Bureau – Divisions: Family Violence, Felony, Juvenile, Justice of the Peace and Misdemeanor

Awards: Recognized for Outstanding Service to Crime Victims – 2004

Prosecuted hundreds of criminal cases; served as sole lead prosecutor in over twenty-five felony and misdemeanor criminal jury trials; supervised and trained prosecutors as Chief Prosecutor in two misdemeanor courts; served as prosecutor in specialized domestic violence and juvenile divisions; performed research and drafted trial briefs and legal memoranda on various evidentiary and procedural issues; represented the State in plea negotiations, trials and hearings; advised crime

victims and law enforcement personnel of pertinent legal issues and prepared them for trial; reviewed and approved criminal charges at police intake; presented cases to the Grand Jury; and handled extensive caseload.

1997-2001 Baker Botts, L.L.P., Houston, Texas

Associate Attorney

Practice Emphasis: General Civil and Labor & Employment Litigation

Represented clients in federal court hearings, federal administrative proceedings, mediations, and arbitrations, negotiated settlements; defended and took depositions, researched, drafted and filed successful summary judgment motions; assisted clients in conducting internal investigations and responding to investigations by state and federal agencies; drafted various opinion letters, motions and trial briefs and assisted with a U.S. Supreme Court brief; conducted discovery and assisted in organizing and responding to discovery in complex civil litigation involving substantial document production; advised clients on various legal issues including non-competition disputes, affirmative action plans, the Occupational Safety and Health Act, Title VII, and union disputes; defended employers against claims of discrimination, sexual harassment, and unfair labor practice charges; represented clients in pro-bono divorce cases through the Houston Volunteer Lawyers Program; served second-chair in federal trial involving Title VII.

1996-1997 Judicial Clerkship for The Hon. John T. Nixon, Chief Judge of the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Tennessee, Nashville, Tennessee

Judicial Law Clerk

Drafted first draft opinions and court orders; conducted extensive legal research on a variety of issues and drafted bench memoranda, conducted charge conferences with attorneys and drafted jury charges.

SCHOLARSHIP

LAW REVIEW PUBLICATIONS

Real Justice for Breonna: Re-Envisioning Knock-And-Announce, (forthcoming) 50 Southwestern Law Review 419 (2022)

Walking the Tightrope: Reflections of a Black Female Law Professor, 43 Campbell Law Review 233 (Spr. 2021).

Employers Know Best? The Application of Workplace Restraining Orders to Domestic Violence Cases, 48 LOYOLA LOS ANGELES LAW REVIEW 175 (2014).

Looking A Gift Horse in the Mouth: Crime Victim Compensation Funds and the Underutilization by Domestic Violence Victims, 19 DUKE J. GENDER L. & POL'Y 223 (2011).

Turning A Blind Eye: Perjury in Domestic Violence Cases, 39 NEW MEXICO LAW REVIEW 149 (Winter 2009) (available at SSRN: http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1162926)

A Time to Mourn: Balancing the Right of Free Speech Against the Right of Privacy in Funeral Picketing, 67 MARYLAND LAW REVIEW 295 (2008) (available at SSRN: <http://ssrn.com/abstract=984055>)

OPINION ARTICLES AND OTHER PUBLICATIONS

Note, the list below represents a small sampling. For Complete and current list of opinion writing and articles, please see <http://njerirutledge.com>

Supreme Court Nominee carries an exhausting burden as a Black woman, USA Today March 21, 2022 available at <https://www.yahoo.com/entertainment/exhausting-black-woman-just-ask-090126955.html>

The Ketanji Brown Jackson I Remember is Well Qualified for the Supreme Court, BET March 4, 2022 available at <https://www.bet.com/article/1rjv8c/ketanji-brown-jackson-harvard-classmate-supreme-court-opinion>

[Judge] Ketanji Brown Jackson Has Earned this Moment to Make History, The Hill February 26, 2022 available at <https://thehill.com/opinion/judiciary/595856-ketanji-brown-jackson-has-earned-this-moment-to-make-history>

What Judicial Diversity Does and Does Not Mean, The Hill February 17, 2022 available at <https://thehill.com/opinion/judiciary/594226-what-judicial-diversity-does-and-does-not-mean>

No Knock Warrants Conversation from Town Square with Ernie Manouse, <https://www.houstonpublicmedia.org/articles/shows/town-square/2022/02/11/419114/no-knock-warrants-are-they-worth-the-risk-should-they-go-away/>

Legendary actor Sidney Poitier portrayed Black men with the dignity they have off screen, USA Today January 9, 2022 available at <https://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/voices/2022/01/09/sidney-poitier-actor-civil-rights/9148902002/>

Jury finds Ahmaud Arbery's murderers guilty. But the racist defense arguments still sting, co-authored with Geoff Corn, USA Today November 24, 2021 available at <https://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/2021/11/24/ahmaud-arbery-killers-defense-racist/8751036002/>

Why the Ahmaud Arbery Case Verdict Was Clearly the Right One, BET online November 24, 2021 available at <https://www.bet.com/article/pygd1v/ahmaud-arbery-verdict-why-verdict-was-right-opinion>

Why the Kyle Rittenhouse Trial Was Little More Than A Controlled Circus, BET online November 22, 2021 available at <https://www.bet.com/article/xl7uv4/kyle-rittenhouse-shooting-trial-controlled-circus>

Powell taught me to put USA over GOP, USA Today October 19, 2021 in print page 7A; online October 18, 2021 available at <https://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/voices/2021/10/18/colin-powell-black-republicans-appreciation/8509213002/>

Overturing Bill Cosby sex assault conviction is difficult to accept, but the right decision, USA Today July 1, 2021 available at <https://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/2021/07/01/bill-cosby-sex-abuse-conviction-rape-overtured-prosecutor/7824554002/>

Tweens are too young for their own Instagram platform, USA Today May 21, 2021 available at <https://news.yahoo.com/don-t-tweens-daughter-own-090053119.html>.

Crime Victim Compensation Funds and Police Violence, co-authored with Valena Beety, USA Today May 4, 2021 available at – <https://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/2021/05/04/victim-compensation-funds-should-include-police-violence-witnesses-column/4923404001/>

Black Prosecutors Inspired Trust and Hope in the Derek Chauvin Trial, USA Today April 28, 2021 – available at <https://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/2021/04/28/derek-chauvin-trial-black-prosecutors-inspired-hope-trust-column/4869377001/>

The Country Needed a Guilty Verdict, but the Laws Still Need to Change USA Today April 20, 2021- available at <https://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/policing/2021/04/20/nation-needed-guilty-verdict-chauvin-case-but-laws-still-need-change/7309175002/>

Don't kill the lawyers, but sanction quite a few, co-authored with Rachel VanLandingham, Medium, December 14, 2020, available online at: https://medium.com/@judgenrutledge/dont-kill-the-lawyers-but-sanction-quite-a-few-c4ef9c2bf2b5?source=friends_link&sk=62bfc3f21721a160b0e18bc4a747280f

A Call for More Black Prosecutors essay published in Meeting at the Table: African American Women Write on Race, Culture & Community (DownSouth Press November 2020).

'Kamala-mala-mala: ' If her first name is supposedly so difficult to say, try 'Sen. Harris', USA Today, October 21, 2020, available online at: <https://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/voices/2020/10/21/kamala-harris-name-pronunciation-david-perdue-trump-race-column/5992734002/>

'The end of the beginning' in the search for justice for Breonna Taylor, co-authored with Geoff Corn, The Hill, September 30, 2020, available online at: <https://thehill.com/opinion/criminal-justice/518709-the-end-of-the-beginning-in-the-search-for-justice-for-breonna>

'Grand jury made the right call in Breonna Taylor case, co-authored with Geoff Corn, USA Today, September 24, 2020, available at: <https://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/2020/09/24/breonna-taylor-grand-jury-indicted-one-officer-wanton-endangerment-column/3515532001/>.

Black in America: I Normalized Racism, USA Today Weekend Edition September 18-20, 2020 at 7A; also available online as *I thought I never experienced racism. Then I realized I just normalized it*, September 15, 2020, available online at <https://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/voices/2020/09/15/racism-every-day-black-women-column/5793258002/>.

SCHOLARLY PRESENTATIONS

Panelist, *The Importance of Judicial Diversity*, Duke University School of Law, April 4, 2022

Panelist, *Merging the law, OpEd Writing and Critical Race Theory*, Fordham Law School Race Law and the Public Intellectual Series, September 28, 2021.

Panelist, *Visible Invisibility*, sponsored by the South Texas College of Law Houston Women's Law Society, webinar, October 29, 2020

Panelist, *Say Her Name: Breonna Taylor A Day Long Symposium: Panel Two - Procedural Problems*, sponsored by the University of Kentucky J. David Rosenberg College of Law, webinar, October 23, 2020. The recording is available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jAZItZvQQms&list=PLyvr9skdvgVNbr20TeLqieppGEG3jgi4v>.

Panelist, *Allyship & Racial Justice*, sponsored by the Houston Young Lawyers Association, webinar, September 29, 2020. The recording is available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WLB1feYEhHs&list=PLyvr9skdvgVNbr20TeLqieppGEG3jgi4v&index=2&t=1749s>.

Panelist, *Black Lives Matter & Racial Justice*, sponsored by the South Texas College of Law ACLU, webinar, September 23, 2020.

Panelist & Moderator, *Teaching with Technology*, at the Lutie A. Lytle Black Women Law Faculty Workshop and Writing Retreat, July 2018.

Panelist, *Creating Your Academic Business Plan*, at the Lutie A. Lytle Black Women Law Faculty Workshop and Writing Retreat, July 2017.

Panelist, Eighth Public Meeting of the Judicial Proceedings Panel on Victim Compensation and Restitution in Washington, D.C., March 2015 minutes and report available at https://jpp.whs.mil/Public/docs/04-Meetings/20150313/20150313_Minutes_Final.pdf and <https://jpp.whs.mil/public/docs/08-Panel Reports/02 JPP Rest Comp Report Final 20160201.pdf>.

Presenter, *Puzzles—A Teaching Tool for Reinforcing Organization*, at the Rocky Mountain Legal Writing Institute Conference, March 2015.

Panelist, *Law School Success 101: How to Best Prepare for and Make the Most of the Entire Law School Experience*, at the Tenth Annual National Black Pre-Law Conference and Law Fair, October 2014.

Panelist, *Overview of Roles: The Structure of the Legal Academy: Responsibilities and Skills*, The Southeast/Southwest People of Color Legal Scholarship Conference sponsored by SALT and Thurgood Marshall School of Law (February 2014).

Paper Presentation, *Employers Know Best? The Application of Workplace Restraining Orders to Domestic Violence Cases* at the Southeast/Southwest People of Color Legal Scholarship Conference, Thurgood Marshall School of Law, February 2014.

Presenter, *Students Gone Wild: Tips for Handling Negative Student Interactions*, Southeast Regional Legal Writing Conference sponsored by Savannah Law School (April 2013)

Presenter, *Students Gone Wild: Tips for Handling Negative Student Interactions*, at the Biennial Legal Writing Institute Conference (May 2012)

Panelist, *The Challenges and Rewards of Law School, and How to Best Prepare for a Successful Law School Experience*, at the Eighth Annual National Black Pre-Law Conference and Law Fair, November 2012.

Paper Presentation, *Looking A Gift Horse in the Mouth – Victim Compensation Funds and the Underutilization by Domestic Violence Victims* at the Lutie A. Lytle Black Women Law Faculty Writing Workshop, Thurgood Marshall School of Law, June 2011.

Panelist, *Racial Disparities in Law School*, for Thurgood Marshall School of Law Diversity Day program in April, 2011.

Panelist, *Endless Possibilities: The JD Examined*, at the Rocky Mountain Regional Black Law Students Association Convention, February 2011.

Panelist, *Family and Career Trajectories of the Female Attorney*, at the Rocky Mountain Regional Black Law Students Association Convention, February 2011.

Panelist, *Addressing the Law School Admission Test (LSAT) Achievement Gap: Keys to Excellent Preparation for Earning the Scores that Law Schools Expect from Competitive Applicants* at the Sixth Annual National Black Pre-Law Admissions and Preparation Conference and Law Fair, November 2010.

Panelist, *The Challenges and Rewards of Law School, and How to Best Prepare for A Successful Law School Experience*, at the Fifth Annual National Black Pre-Law Admissions and Preparation Conference and Law Fair, October 2009.

Paper Presentation, *Looking A Gift Horse in the Mouth – Victim Compensation Funds and the Underutilization by Domestic Violence Victims* at the Lutie A. Lytle Black Women Law Faculty Writing Workshop, at University of Seattle College of Law, June 2009.

Panelist and Presenter, *Dealing with False Allegations and Recanting in Custody Evaluations and Testimony*, at the Association of Family & Conciliation Courts Domestic Violence Conference, October 2008.

Paper Presentation, “*Turning A Blind Eye: Perjury in Domestic Violence Cases*,” at the South Eastern Association of Law Schools (SEALS) New Scholar’s Conference, July 2008.

Paper Presentation, “*Turning A Blind Eye: Perjury in Domestic Violence Cases*,” at the Lutie A. Lytle Black Women Law Faculty Writing Workshop, University of Denver, Strum College of Law, June 2008.

Panelist, *Demystifying American Legal Education: How Law School is Radically Different from Your Undergraduate Education*, at the Third Annual National Black Pre-Law Admissions and Preparation Conference and Law Fair, October 2007.

Panelist and Presenter, “*Do the Courts & Police Protect? Mandatory Arrest: A Necessary Evil*” at the Second Annual Domestic Violence Conference: Battered Mothers & Witnessing Children: Failure to Protect & Conceptions of State Accountability, University of Denver Strum College of Law, March 2007.

Paper Presentation, “*A Time to Mourn: Balancing the Rights of Privacy Against the Right of Free Speech in Funeral Picketing*” at the Mid-Atlantic People of Color Scholarship Conference: Watching Privacy Disappear, University of Richmond School of Law, January 2007.

Paper Presentation, “*Liar, Liar: Perjury & the Battered Woman*,” at the Mid-Atlantic People of Color Scholarship Conference: Watching Privacy Disappear, University of Richmond School of Law, January 2007.

INTERNSHIPS

- Sum. 1996** **Baker Botts L.L.P., Houston, Texas**
Performed general legal research and writing in Trial and Labor and Employment departments.
- Fall 1995** **Suffolk County District Attorney’s Office, Child Abuse Unit, Boston, Massachusetts**
Performed legal research for Assistant District Attorneys; observed child-witness interviews, hearings and trials; assisted with trial preparation.
- Fall 1995** **United States Attorney’s Office-Major Crimes Division, Boston, Massachusetts**
Performed legal research for Assistant United States Attorneys and drafted memoranda.
- Sum. 1995** **Bass Berry & Sims, Nashville, Tennessee**
Performed general legal research and writing.
- Sum. 1995** **Jenkins & Gilchrist, Dallas, Texas**
Performed general legal research and writing.

- Fall 1994** **Hale & Dorr Legal Services Center for Harvard Law School, Jamaica Plains, Massachusetts**
Represented clients in uncontested divorce proceedings; drafted court documents, conducted discovery in contested proceedings.
- Sum. 1994** **U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit, The Hon. Martha Craig Daughtrey, Tennessee**
Performed legal research and drafted bench memoranda; assisted with reviewing *en banc* petitions.
- Sum. 1994** **Tuke Yopp & Sweeney, Nashville, Tennessee**
Performed general legal research and writing in Trial Department.
- Sum. 1993** **Davidson County Public Defender's Office, Juvenile Division, Tennessee**
Interviewed clients; attended settlement meetings and court hearings; took cross-examination notes for attorneys; and conducted research.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Member: National Creditor's Bar Association; Texas Creditor's Bar Association; American Bar Association (Criminal Law Division), Association of Legal Writing Directors; Association of Women Attorneys; The Downtown Group; Hispanic Bar Association; Houston Bar Association; Houston Bar Association Auxiliary; Houston Lawyer's Association; Legal Writing Institute; National Association of Black Journalists; National Association of Hispanic Journalists.

Houston Bar Association, Hay Center Committee (2019-present); Speaker's Bureau former *co-chair*, (2003-2004)

National Black Prosecutor's Association former *State Representative* (2003-2004)

Texas Criminal Defense Lawyers Association – Law School Committee (2019-present)

LAW SCHOOL COMMITTEE SERVICE

Student Appeals & Discipline Committee (2020-present – Chair), 2006-2009; Admissions Committee (2016-2018); Diversity Committee (2007-present; Chair: 2015-2016; 2017-2018; Spr. 2011); Environmental Stewardship Committee (2016-2018; Co-chair 2013-2015; Orientation Committee (2011-2009 Co-chair); Scholarship Placement Incentive Committee (2009); Retention Committee (2008, 2007); Financial Aid Committee (2016-2018, 2007-2011); Faculty Advisor Christian Legal Society (2005-2015); co-Faculty Advisor Black Law Students Association (2004-present); Faculty Advisor Womxn of Color Collective (2020-present); Faculty Advisor First Gen Law Students (2020-present)

CIVIC ACTIVITIES

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Alpha Kappa Omega Chapter – various committees
Election Protection Attorney Volunteer through the Lawyers for Civil Rights Committee and the Texas Civil Rights Project – worked in command center to help escalate issues involving voter suppression and intimidation; answered hotline calls from public regarding voting questions; assisted with amicus brief regarding petition to discard over 120,000 ballots in Texas casts through drive-thru voting procedure

Win With Black Women

Ivy Educational & Charitable Foundation – various committees

Jack & Jill of America, Houston Chapter- Membership Co-Chair; and various other committees

The OpEd Project, Alumni Ambassador and Fellowship Coach
USA Today Opinion Columnist and member of Board of Contributors
Wheeler Avenue Baptist Church - AWANA & Children's Ministry Volunteer