

RHODA PIERRE CATO

[*rhoda.cato@famu.edu*](mailto:rhoda.cato@famu.edu)
[*quilled.cato@gmail.com*](mailto:quilled.cato@gmail.com)

EDUCATION

J.D.

Texas Southern University School of Law, Houston, Texas, 1987

B.A.

Loyola University, (Communications) New Orleans, Louisiana, 1977

ADDITIONAL TRAINING

Texas Municipal Education Center Judicial Training

- Administering Magistrate Warnings, Austin, Texas 1997
- Towing Ordinance Enforcement, Lubbock, Texas, 1998
- Dangerous Animals, San Antonio, Texas 1999
- Juvenile Curfew Laws, San Antonio, Texas 2000
- Case Updates, Austin, Texas 2001
- Truancy Law Enforcement, Austin, Texas 2002
- Magistrate Warnings and Foreign Nationals, San Antonio, Texas 2003
- TV Justice and Courtroom Reality (Ethics), San Antonio, Texas 2004

Movie Makers Academy, Houston Community College, 2001

- 13 week filmmaking course featuring movie scriptwriting, directing, and production training.
- Completed a feature length film “Red, White, and the Blues”.

Digital Storytelling, University of Central Florida, Orlando, Florida

- 20 hour, iMAC, hands-on production workshop, demonstrating how to combine various media sources including still images and video with voice-over narrative and special effects, to create an original video presentation that tells a complete 2-3 minute story. 2006

Center for Digital Storytelling, Berkeley, California

- Week long Facilitator Intensive Training, that explored the principles, methods, software tools, and curriculum issues that experienced technology educators must consider when leading digital storytelling processes. 2009

Professional Development:

- Workshop for New Law Teachers, AALS, Washington, D.C., 2007;
- Southeast/Southwest People of Color Legal Scholarship Conference, 2007
- National Business Institute Seminar, What Family Court Judges Want You to Know, Orlando, Florida, 2008;
- Southeast/Southwest People of Color Legal Scholarship Conference, 2008;
- AALS Evidence Conference: The Future of Evidence:
- How Science and Technology are Changing Evidence Law, Cleveland, Ohio 2008;
- AALS Annual Conference, San Diego, California, 2009;

- Southeast/Southwest People of Color Conference, Phoenix, Arizona, 2009;
- Susan Case, Writing Multiple Choice Law School Examination Questions
- LatCrit XIV, Bethesda, Maryland, 2009;
- National Business Institute, Family Court Judicial Forum, Orlando, Florida 2009;
- AALS Annual Conference, New Orleans, Louisiana, 2010;
- ABA Midyear Meeting, Orlando, Florida;
- 4th Annual Critical Race Studies Symposium, Los Angeles, California, 2010

Film Seminars:

- The Impact of Film on Law, Lawyers, and the Legal System, University of Maryland at Baltimore, 2006.
- What Documentary Films Teach Us about the Criminal Justice System, University of Maryland at Baltimore, 2008.

EMPLOYMENT

Associate Professor, 2006-present

**Florida A & M University College of Law
Orlando, Florida**

Courses Taught:

- Contracts I and II; Interviewing, Counseling, and Negotiations; Juvenile Law; Law and Film; Family Law; Legal Methods I and II.

Committee Work:

- Academic Standards, Curriculum, Admissions, Self-Study, Faculty Senate, Grade Appeals, Chair, spring 2009

Additional Activities:

- Legal Expert—Central Florida News 13, regarding a defense motion seeking recusal of Judge Stan Strickland who was presiding over the Casey Anthony murder case. The story aired at 4 p.m. before the judge granted the motion, the same afternoon. Orlando, FL, April 19, 2010.
- Presenter – 4th Annual Critical Race Studies Symposium, “The Intersectional Praxis of Transformative Law and Radical Reframing in African American Families”, UCLA School of Law, Los Angeles, CA, March 13, 2010;
- Rapporteur – Towards an International Law of Black Women: New Theory, New Praxis, FAMU College of Law, Orlando, FL., March 4, 2010;
- Mock Class Instructor – Discover Law Day, FAMU College of Law, Orlando, FL., February 26, 2010;

- Judge – University of Central Florida Mock Trial Competition, Orlando, FL, February 21, 2010;
- Judge – ABA Student Division National Finals, Negotiation Competition, ABA Midyear Meeting, Orlando, FL, February 5, 2010;
- Panelist – LatCrit XIV, “Transformative Law and African American Families”, American University – Washington College of Law, Washington, D.C., October 2, 2009;
- Panelist – Southeast/Southwest People of Color Scholarship Conference, Race and Family Law, Phoenix College of Law, April 4, 2009, Phoenix, Arizona;
- Faculty- National Association of Hearing Officials, National Conference Workshop Topic: Due Process in Administrative Hearings, November 10, 2008, Orlando, FL;
- Commenter—Latimer-Hawkins Judicial Retreat, Plenary Session, Topic: Overcoming Challenges by Building Strong Relations Between the FAMU College of Law and the Florida September 2008, Orlando, FL;
- News Interview, Channel 13, Topic: Reaction to President-elect Obama’s first press conference, Friday, November 7, 2008;
- Coach - Client Counseling, Negotiations, and Arbitration Teams;
- Panelist - “Judicial Clerkships”;
- Discussion Leader -“The Voting Rights Act”.
- Faculty Participant -“Faculty Development Workshop”
- Faculty Participant-“Academic Development Workshop”
- Faculty Participant-“Reasons Why You Should Study Law”
- Faculty Adviser- Juvenile Advocacy Network

Associate Professor, Summer 2006
Florida A & M University College of Law
Orlando, Florida
Subject: Selected Issues in Family Law.

- Core faculty member and counselor - Legal Education Advancement Program (LEAP). LEAP is an early admissions program offered at Florida A&M University College of Law to students entering their first year of law school.

Visiting Professor, 2005-2006
Florida A & M University College of Law
Orlando, Florida
Subjects: Legal Methods I and II, Juvenile Law, Family Law
Additional Activities:

- Faculty Participant-“ABA Self-Study Committee”
- Faculty Participant-“ABA Accreditation Committee”
- Faculty Participant-“Hiring Committee”

Judge/Magistrate, 1997-2005

Municipal Courts

Houston, Texas

Judge

- Presided over bench and jury trials related to Class C misdemeanor violations of the Texas Transportation Code, Texas Penal Code, and the City of Houston Code of Ordinances
- Conducted evidentiary hearings regarding:
 - dangerous animals
 - stolen property
 - wrongful towing

Magistrate

- Administered statutory warnings to juvenile offenders
- Administered statutory warnings to adult offenders
- Authorized search warrants
- Authorized arrest warrants
- Issued emergency protection orders related to family violence.
- Issued emergency orders related to mental health competency.

Additional Activities:

- Provided in-court training for new judges on handling large dockets and difficult defendants, 1998-2002.

Assistant City Attorney, 1990-1997

Office of the City Attorney

Houston, Texas

Primary Responsibilities:

Sexually Oriented Business Ordinance enforcement attorney

- Facilitated the process of amending Houston’s Sexually Oriented Business Ordinance.
- Provided legal counsel to the Vice Division of the Houston Police Department in their enforcement of Houston’s Sexually Oriented Business Ordinance.
- Represented the Houston Police Department in administrative

appeal hearings resulting from the denial of Sexually Oriented Business permits.

- Defended the enactment and enforcement of Houston's Sexually Oriented Business Ordinance in state and federal district court.

Litigator assigned to the Land Use Division

- Enforced Houston's Dangerous Buildings ordinance.
- Enforced Houston's Minimum Building Standards ordinance.
- Enforced Houston's public nuisance ordinances.
- Provided counsel to the administrative hearing officer for dangerous buildings and junk motor vehicles.
- Provided counsel to the Building and Standards Commission.

Deed restriction enforcement attorney

- Prosecuted deed restriction enforcement actions for the City in state district court.
- Defended the City's deed restriction enforcement action in state district court.
- Interfaced with civic associations regarding deed restriction violations and enforcement.
- Advised city council members regarding deed restriction enforcement.

Law Office of Rhoda Pierre Cato, 1988-1990 Houston, Texas

Areas of Expertise

- Commercial and residential real estate closings
- Commercial and residential real estate litigation
- Immigration matters
- Civil litigation
- Criminal Defense

WORKS IN PROGRESS

- *Perceptual Alchemy: The Powerful Impact of Film as evidence in 21st Century Litigation*
- *Paradoxical Equality: How Civil Rights and Same Sex Marriage Clashed in a Public Relations Battle Over California's Proposition 8*

SELECTED AWARDS, HONORS, AND SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

Educational

- American Jurisprudence Award, Evidence
- American Jurisprudence Award, Torts I

- Heman Sweatt Law Scholarship

Professional

- **The Luney Service Award** – awarded by BLSA, 2009
- **Gene Locke Award** – awarded by the City Attorney, 1997
- **Highest rated municipal judge**– Houston Lawyers Association, 2001
- **Film Credit** – “Red, White, and the Blues”, writer, producer, director, 2001

Community

- Speaker-University of Houston “Project Can Do”, 1998, 1999
- Speaker-Piney Point Elementary School, Career Day, 2002
- Municipal Courts Liaison-Mayor’s “Adopt a School Program, 2002, 2003
- Speaker, Astrodome Dental Career Program, 2004
- Speaker, Ivey Lane Elementary School, Teach-In, 2005
- Speaker, Ivey Lane Elementary School, College Awareness Program, 2006

PROFESSIONAL ADMISSIONS

- State Bar of Texas
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces
- United States Supreme Court