

## **To Our Incoming Law Students:**

Each of you is eager to begin your legal career. Here is a list of suggested books which will give you some insight into the workings of the legal system. Although you are not required to read any of these books, I think you will enjoy and benefit from those that you do read.

You may check out any of the suggested books by visiting the Mabee Legal Information Center or by making arrangements to have a book mailed to you. If you need to have a book sent by mail, please contact Carol Arnold by e-mail: [carol-arnold@utulsa.edu](mailto:carol-arnold@utulsa.edu) and copy (cc) Ruth Whitson: [ruth-whitson@utulsa.edu](mailto:ruth-whitson@utulsa.edu). If you have any questions regarding check-out procedures, please call our Circulation Desk at (918) 631-2404.

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## **General Information About the Law and About Law School:**

**Robert C. Berring and Elizabeth A. Edinger**, Legal Research Survival Manual (2002).

As stated in the beginning Note: "Our goal is to tell you what you need to know to get through the first year of law school, specifically the first semester." At under 100 pages, this book is a quick read.

**Richard Fischl and Jeremy Paul**, Getting to Maybe: How to Excel on Law School Exams (1999).

**Ruta K. Stropus and Charlotte D. Taylor**, Bridging the Gap Between College and Law School: Strategies for Success (2001).

This little gem is published by Carolina Academic Press. As stated in the synopsis on the back cover of this book, *Bridging the Gap*:

- ◆ Explains the "why" of law, providing you with the context necessary to understand why law school is taught in a certain manner.
- ◆ Explains the "how" of the law, setting out a step-by-step process that will help you adapt to the law school setting.
- ◆ Explains the "what" of the law, giving you an opportunity to practice the problem-solving process by providing numerous exercises in a variety of subject matter areas.

This book is well organized, with subjects divided logically, and with charts and examples well-dispersed. It is a book that you should consult throughout your first year of law school.

**Helene Shapo & Marshall Shapo**, Law School Without Fear: Strategies for Success (2d ed. 2002).

This is another good overview of what to expect when you start law school. It addresses many of the same issues covered by *Bridging the Gap*.

**Chris Goodrich**, Anarchy and Elegance: Confessions of a Journalist at Yale Law School (1991).

"... Perhaps would-be students will find an unexpected perspective here, but general readers may find his discussions confusing. However, his examination of precedent cases is truly valuable." (Reviewed in 115 Library Journal, Nov. 1 1990, at 111 by Fern Sikkema)

**Jeremy B. Horwitz**, Law School Insider (2002).

The author states that he adopted a conversational tone in describing his view of the whole law school experience (from choosing a law school to the Bar Exam). Chapter 3 is probably helpful to read now, while the remainder of the book could be read as you proceed through law school.

**Ruth Ann McKinney**, Reading Like A Lawyer: Time-Saving Strategies For Reading Law Like An Expert (2005).

"... Using seven specific reading strategies reinforced with hands-on exercises at the end of each chapter, this book shows how you can read law like expert law students and expert lawyers do —efficiently, effectively, powerfully, and confidently." (From Amazon.com).

**Carolyn J. Nygren**, Starting Off Right in Law School (1997).

**My First Year as a Lawyer** (Mark Simenhoff ed., 1994).

**Herbert N. Ramy**, Succeeding in Law School (2006).

**Susan M. Reinhart**, Strategies for Legal Case Reading & Vocabulary Development (2007).

**Ann L Iijima**, The Law Student's Pocket Mentor: From Surviving to Thriving (2007).

### **Law Reform:**

**Carl T. Bogus**, Why Lawsuits Are Good for America: Disciplined Democracy, Big Business, and the Common Law (2001).

This book challenges the conventional wisdom that the United States is a hyperlitigious society. Blending history, theory, empirical data, and case studies, Bogus argues that while the system can and occasionally does produce "wrong" results, it is quite difficult for it to make flatly irrational decisions. He contends that common law is an essential adjunct to governmental regulation - essential in part because it is not easily manipulated by "big business." [Reviewed in 27 Law & Soc. Inquiry 439, 442 (2002).]

### **Legal Nonfiction:**

**David Currie**, The Constitution of the United States: A Primer for the People (2d. ed. 2000).

**Richard Kluger**, Simple Justice: the History of Brown v. Board of Education and Black America's Struggle for Equality (1975).

**Jonathan Harr**, A Civil Action (1995).

**Anthony Lewis**, Gideon's Trumpet (1964).

A very readable account of how an indigent defendant challenged the constitutionality of the criminal justice system and won! In the case Gideon v. Wainwright, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that all defendants accused of felonies have the constitutional right to be represented by a lawyer. This book also has an excellent explanation of how the Supreme Court goes about deciding a case.

**Daniel Meador**, American Courts (2d. ed. 2000).

From a reader at Amazon.com, "Reading this book won't make you a lawyer, but you will understand exactly what happens in our court systems. . . . It was an invaluable help my first year of law school. . . ."

**Gerald M. Stern**, The Buffalo Creek Disaster (1976).

"This book is exciting, easily read, and clear both as to facts and the legal procedures [surrounding a 1972 dam collapse and the follow-up litigation]. It provides a beginning law student with a refreshing and often positive view of how competent lawyers can use both the substantive law and civil procedure creatively." (Extracted from 37 J. Legal Educ. 378, 382).

**John Grisham**, The Innocent Man: Murder and Injustice in a Small Town (2006).

### **Legal Fiction:**

**Harper Lee**, To Kill A Mockingbird (1960).

NOTE: A survey of the Library of Congress found that this book was "second only to the Bible in being most often cited as making a difference in people's lives."

**Scott Tarrow**, One L (1977).

**Michael Levin**, The Socratic Method: A Novel (1987)

Mr. Levin uses his characters to criticize the Socratic method (it is “an excuse for bullying people. It turns the classroom into a power trip.”)

**Trial and Error: An Oxford Anthology of Legal Stories** (Fred R. Shapiro & Jane Garry eds., 1998).

Contains short stories, essays and excerpts from novels about people confronting the law.

### **Jurisprudence:**

**Joseph R. Grodin**, In Pursuit of Justice (1989).

“Justice Joseph R. Grodin’s slim and eminently readable account of his own career, In Pursuit of Justice, is an unusually valuable variation on previous reflections by appellate judges.” (Reviewed in 103 Harv. L. Rev. 2067, 2073 (1990) by Hans A. Linde)

**Baily Kuklin & Jeffrey W. Stempel**, Foundations of the Law: An Interdisciplinary and Jurisprudential Primer (1994).

**Donald P. Lay**, Law, a Human Process (1996). ]

### **Websites: recommended by Prof. Kate Waits:**

<http://www.onlineasp.org/>

**Extensive site, by Prof. Vernellia R. Randall of the University of Dayton School of Law. Subjects covered include: study habits and study skills; critical thinking/analytical skills; class preparation and participation; exam preparation and exam taking; and law students (including discussion of special issues faced by certain types of law students, including students of color, women, non-traditional students, lesbian and gay students).**

<http://jurist.law.pitt.edu/exams.htm>

**The "Law School Exam" page from the Jurist site - containing a number of free links where different "experts" (including professors) set out their exam-taking suggestions.**

