A frequently asked question is what summer reading will best prepare incoming students for law school. In the best Socratic fashion, the response would be to ask what it is that one wants to read during the weeks before beginning law school. Is it law-related? Maybe it is a “beach” book or sci-fi fantasy or a thriller that calls your name. We generally suggest that the best way to prepare for law school is to arrive relaxed, focused and ready for the hard work that accompanies the study of law. Should reading a law-related book find its way on to your agenda, the list below represents some of the suggestions from the Law School faculty. As you can see, it comprises a veritable smorgasbord of options, ranging from biography to fiction, from legal theory to legal practice, and includes everything in between. Any of these books, depending on your personal tastes, interests and time, are legitimate choices. Happy reading!

**USING LAW: WHAT LAW CAN DO FOR US AND TO US**

**Asylum Denied: A Refugee's Struggle for Safety in America**
by David Nganuri Kenney and Philip Schrag
University of California Press, 2008
A compelling account of a refugee's escape from brutal political persecution in Africa and his legal journey through a U.S. immigration system marred by arbitrary decision-making and bureaucratic indifference.

**The Buffalo Creek Disaster: How the Survivors of One of the Worst Disasters in Coal-Mining History Brought Suit Against the Coal Company--And Won**
by Gerald M. Stern
Random House, 1976

**The Children in Room E4: American Education on Trial**
by Susan Eaton
Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, 2007

**A Civil Action**
by Jonathan Harr
Random House, 1995

**Damages: One Family's Legal Struggles in the World of Medicine**
by Barry Werth
Simon & Schuster, 1988
This book is about an actual medical malpractice lawsuit in Connecticut, but it reads like a gripping novel. Note: One of the attorneys in the lawsuit, Michael Koskoff, is a Law School alumnus.

**The Day Freedom Died: The Colfax Massacre, the Supreme Court and the Betrayal of Reconstruction**
by Charles Lane
Henry Holt & Company, 2008

**Disoriented: Asian Americans, Law and the Nation State**
by Robert Chang
New York University Press, 1999
Dispensing with the Truth: The Victims, the Drug Companies, and the Dramatic Story Behind the Battle over Fen-Phen
by Alicia Mundy
St. Martin's Press, 2001

Everything in Its Path
by Kai T. Erickson
Simon & Schuster, 1976

Gideon's Trumpet
by Anthony Lewis
Vintage Books, 1989

The Lost Promise of Civil Rights
by Risa Goluboff
Harvard University Press, 2007

The Making of Environmental Law
by Richard Lazarus
Chicago Press, 2004
This is an excellent history of modern (post 1969) environmental law making and policy thinking.

The Medical Malpractice Myth
by Tom Baker
University of Chicago Press, 2005

The New Environmental Regulation
by Daniel Fiorino
MIT Press, 2006

No Equal Justice: Race and Class in the American Criminal Justice System
by David Cole
The New Press, 1999

A Question of Intent: A Great American Battle with a Deadly Industry by David Kessler Public Affairs Books, 2001 Kessler discusses the FDA's investigation of the tobacco industry and the legal fight over whether the FDA had the statutory authority to regulate cigarettes. A great read.

Shades of Green
by Neil Gunningham, Robert A. Kagan and Dorothy Thornton
Stanford University Press, 2003
This is a careful study of the environmental protection efforts of 14 pulp manufacturers, both efforts aimed at complying with regulations and efforts aimed at going beyond regulations.

The Showdown at Gucci Gulch
by Allan Murray
Random House, 1987
This is the story of the 1986 Tax Reform Act. It provides great insight into the legislative process; it's the concept of "political economy" in narrative form, and a fun read.

Simple Justice
by Richard Kluger
Albert A. Knopf, Inc., 1976
One of the best histories of the long road to Brown v. Board of Education.

And We Are Not Saved: The Elusive Quest for Racial Justice
by Derrick Bell
Basic Books, Inc., 1987

Covering: The Hidden Assault on our Civil Rights
by Kenji Yoshino
Random House, 2006

Nudge: Improving Decisions about Health, Wealth and Happiness
by Richard Tahler and Cass Sunstein
Yale University Press, 2008

The Race Card: How Bluffing about Bias Makes Race Relations Worse
by Richard Thompson
Ford Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2008
A semi-popular meditation on what discrimination is and isn't, and what the law can/should do about it. This is a very readable book, with examples drawn from law and popular culture.

Rebellious Lawyering: One Chicano's Vision of Progressive Law Practice
by Gerald Lopez
Westview Press, 1992

Rights of Inclusion: Law and Identity in the Life Stories of Americans with Disabilities
by David Engel and Frank Munger
University of Chicago Press, 2003

Sexual Harassment of Working Women: A Case of Sex Discrimination
by Catharine A. MacKinnon, Thomas I. Emerson (Introduction)
Yale University Press, 1979

A Failure of Capitalism: The Crisis of ’08 and the Descent into Depression
by Richard A. Posner
Harvard, 2009
A preliminary, non-technical look at possible regulatory failures which may have caused the current financial crisis.

Love in the Driest Season
by Neely Tucker
Three Rivers Press
A story of adoption in Zimbabwe. Heart pounding and fascinating tale of the mix of culture and bureaucracy.

Retaking Rationality: How Cost-Benefit Analysis Can Better Protect Our Environment and Our Health
by Revesz and Livermore
Oxford Press, 2008

The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down: A Hmong Child, Her American Doctors, and the Collision of Two Cultures
by Anne Fadiman
Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1998
This book tells the story of a family of Laotian immigrants with an epileptic daughter, and the vastly different worldviews and conceptions of disease and treatment held by her family and by the medical establishment. It is a book about the difficulties of cross-cultural communication, with many lessons for lawyers in a multicultural society.

LIVES IN LAW

Cardozo
by Andrew Kaufman
Harvard University Press, 1998

Go East, Young Man
William D. Douglas
Random House, 1974

John Marshall and the Heroic Age of the Supreme Court
by Kent Newmyer
Louisiana State University Press, 2001
In what has been described simply by G. Edward White, as "the best study of Marshall yet to appear and one of the finest judicial biographies in American literature" Professor of Law and History Kent Newmyer has instructed a wide readership on the philosophy and accomplishments of one of the transformative figures in American history.

The Judge in a Democracy
by Aharon Barak
Princeton University Press, 2006

The Nine: Inside the Secret World of the Supreme Court (2007)
by Jeffrey Toobin
Doubleday, 2007
New Yorker writer Jeffrey Toobin writes a gossipy but fascinating examination of the personalities, biographies, and dynamics between the justices of the Supreme Court, and the ways these influenced judicial decision-making.

Supreme Court Justice Joseph Story: Statesman of the Old Republic
by Kent Newmyer
University of North Carolina Press, 1985

The Supreme Court under Marshall and Taney, 2nd Edition
by Kent Newmyer
Harlan Davidson, 2006

Thurgood Marshall: American Revolutionary
by Juan Williams
Times Books, 1998

LAW, JUSTICE, AND POWER: LEGAL THEORY

The Lawyer Myth: A Defense of the American Legal Profession
by Rennard Strickland and Frank Read
Ohio University Press, 2008
A reflection by two former law deans about the world of lawyer jokes and public opinion versus the real and
important work done by lawyers.

**Bad Acts and Guilty Minds: Conundrums of the Criminal Law**  
by Leo Katz  
University of Chicago Press, 1987

**The Canon of American Legal Thought**  
Collection of many of the core writings influencing American Legal thought, from Oliver Wendell Holmes to Robert Cover.

**A Clearing in the Forest: Law, Life, and Mind**  
by Steven Winter  
University of Chicago Press, 2003

**The Common Place of Law**  
by Susan Silbey and Patricia Ewick  
University of Chicago Press, 1998

**Freedom’s Law: The Moral Reading of the American Constitution**  
by Ronald Dworkin  
Harvard University Press, 1996

**Justice, Gender & the Family**  
by Susan Moller Okin  
Basic Books, Inc., 1989

**Justice in Robes**  
by Ronald Dworkin  
Harvard University Press, 2006

**The Politics of Law: A Progressive Critique, 3rd Ed.**  
D. Kairys, ed.  

**Law and the Fireside Inductions**  
by Paul Meehl  
The Journal of Social Issues, Vol. 27, no. 4 1971, 65-100

**Lawyers and Justice: An Ethical Study**  
by David Luban  
Princeton University Press, 1988

**The Lost Lawyer: Failing Ideals of the Legal Profession**  
by Tony Kronman  
Harvard University Press, 1995

**A Matter of Interpretation: Federal Courts and the Law**  
by Antonin Scalia  
University Center for Human Values, 1998  
A probing examination of methods of Constitutional and judicial interpretation from the Supreme Court’s best
known conservative Supreme Court Justice, with critical commentary by leading Constitutional scholars.

**The Nature of the Judicial Process**
by Benjamin Cardozo
Yale University Press, 1921
Nobody should graduate from law school without reading the best of the books on the craft of judging by one of the great ones.

**The Practice of Justice: A Theory of Lawyers’ Ethics**
by William Simon
Harvard University Press, 1998

**Race and the Alchemy of Rights**
by Patricia Williams
Harvard University Press, 1991

**The Structure of Liberty: Justice and the Rule of Law**
by Randy E. Barnett
Oxford University Press, 2000

**Simple Rules for a Complex World**
by Richard A. Epstein
Harvard University Press, 1995

**Taking Rights Seriously**
by Ronald Dworkin
Harvard University Press, 1977

**A Theory of Justice**
by John Rawls
Harvard University Press, 1971

**Democracy and Distrust: A Theory of Judicial Review**
John Hart Ely
Harvard University Press, 1980

**Original meanings: Politics and Ideas in the Making of the Constitution**
Jack Rakove
Knopf, 1996

**The Least Dangerous Branch**
Alexander M. Bickel
Yale University Press, 1962

**Pictures at an Execution: An Inquiry into the Subject of Murder**
Wendy Lesser
Harvard University Press, 1993

**Natural Law and Natural Rights**
John Finnis
Oxford University Press, 1980
Beyond All Reason: The Radical Assault on Truth in American Law
Daniel Farber and Suzanna Sherry
Oxford University Press, 1997

Playing by the Rules
Frederick Schauer
Oxford University Press, 1991

The Concept of Law
H.L.A. Hart
Oxford University Press, 1960

Ages of American Law
Grant Gilmore
Yale University Press, 1977

LAW IN FICTION

A Clockwork Orange
Anthony Burgess (many editions)

Bleak House
Charles Dickens (many editions)

Crime and Punishment
Fyodor Dostoyevsky (many editions)

The Brothers Karamazov
Fyodor Dostoyevsky (many editions)

The Fall
Albert Camus
Knopf, 1956

The Heather Blazing
Colm Toibin
Penguin, 1995

The Trial
Franz Kafka
Schocken, 1965

A Man for All Seasons
Robert Bolt (several editions)

Measure for Measure
William Shakespeare (many editions)

The Merchant of Venice
William Shakespeare (many editions)

**Judge on Trial**  
Ivan Klíma  
Harcourt Brace, 1991

**A Frolic of His Own**  
William Gaddis  
Poseidon Press, 1994

**The Book of Daniel**  
E.L. Doctorow  
Random House, 1971

**In Cold Blood**  
Truman Capote  
Random House, 1966

**Presumed Innocent**  
Scott Turow  
Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1987

A number of series of crime fiction give an entertaining and sophisticated view of law and lawyering:

**The Matthew Hope series**  
Ed McBain  
Holt Publishers

**The John Marshall Tanner series**  
Stephen Greenleaf  
Simon and Schuster

**The Brady Coyne series**  
William Tapply  
various publishers


**LAW SCHOOL: MYTHS, REALITIES, METHODS**

**Making Your Case: The Art of Persuading Judges**  
Antonin Scalia and Bryan A. Garner

**Framing Contract Law: An Economic Perspective**  
by Victor Goldberg  
Harvard University Press, 2007  
Looks at some famous cases, combining background research with simple economic reasoning. Written for lawyers and law students.

**Getting to Maybe: How to Excel on Law School Exams**
MOVIES FOR LAWYERS: ASPECTS OF LAW AND CONTEXTS OF JUSTICE

The following movies are diverse; some are about lawyers and lawyering, while others are about laypersons whose lives are shaped by legal predicaments. Still others raise questions about justice in the creation and enforcement of law.

**The Accused** (1988) - Jodie Foster’s Oscar winning role as a rough-trade rape victim looking for vindication.

**Body Heat** (1981) - A Florida lawyer is seduced by his mistress into killing her husband in this retelling of Double Indemnity; the story is an exercise in using legal skills to evade the law.

**Boy A** (2008) - English movie about a working-class youth returning to society after serving an extended term for homicide, and about the efforts of the social system to facilitate his rehabilitation.

**Breaker Morant** (1980) - Landmark Australian movie about officers court-martialed for killing prisoners to cover up war crimes by their superiors.

**Capturing the Friedmans** (2003/documentary) - Record of the investigation of a suburban New York family accused of molesting children in their neighborhood, a wrenching dissection of family dynamics.

**Dead Man Walking** (1995) - Fact-based story of a killer on death row and the efforts of a crusading nun to save his life; extraordinary performances by Sean Penn and Susan Sarandon.

**Doubt** (2008) - Meryl Streep and Philip Seymour Hoffman in the film adaptation of a play about turmoil at a parochial grade school when a priest is suspected of sexual malfeasance on the basis of insubstantial evidence.

**Enron: The Smartest Guys in the Room** (2005/documentary) - In-depth exhumation of the economic and political hubris that produced the Enron scandal and the company’s dissolution, a sly and brilliant commentary.

**Erin Brokovich** (2000) - Julia Roberts won her Oscar for portraying this real-life legal assistant who was instrumental in bringing Pacific Gas & Electric to justice in an archetypical David/Goliath story.

**4 Months, 3 Weeks and 2 Days** (2007) - Award-winning Romanian film about two college-age women and their
efforts to obtain an abortion in a totalitarian society where abortions are severely punished.

**The Informant!** (2009) - Matt Damon’s stellar portrayal of the least reliable of whistleblowers in a breakdown of the Archer Daniels Midland scandals; a dark comedy about lawyers struggling to master their case.

**Judgment at Nuremberg** (1961) - A monumental reconstruction of the post-World War Two trials of German officers and political leaders for Nazi war crimes; a turning point in the history of international criminal law.

**Kramer vs. Kramer** (1979) - Among the most acclaimed of Meryl Streep’s and Dustin Hoffman’s movies, with a perceptive portrayal of a custody battle in which the father struggles to retain control of his young son’s life.

**The Magdalene Sisters** (2003) - A scathing depiction and indictment of the system of punitive schools for “wayward” girls, schools that were widespread in Ireland through most of the twentieth century and were notorious for their cruelty.

**Michael Clayton** (2008) - One of George Clooney’s most engaging roles as a “fixer” whose role in his firm is to plan strategy when normal lawyering fails, in this case when a senior lawyer has a breakdown while managing a losing claim.

**Mugabe and the White African** (2010/documentary) - A brilliant documentary about the search for legal justice by a white farmer in Zimbabwe whose life as well as his livelihood are under threat because of government policies.

**The Social Network** (2010) - Mark Zuckerberg’s legal confrontation with those who accused him of appropriating their ideas and efforts is a central theme of this film, considered by many the best American movie of recent years.

**12 Angry Men** (1957) - Widely considered the most subtle and revealing movie ever made about the deliberations of a jury and the trade-offs between emotion and reason in the context of decision.

**The 25th Hour** (2002) - A profound look at the last day of freedom for a New York drug dealer facing seven years in prison, an incisive look at the psychology of incarceration (with a fine performance by Edward Norton).

**The Verdict** (1982) - One of Paul Newman’s career-defining performances was as a failing litigator who chooses to take a malpractice case to trial to salvage his career, when the interests of his client favor settlement.

**Witness for the Prosecution** (1957) - An extraordinary adaptation of a story by Agatha Christie featuring some of the most remarkable actors of their day (Marlene Dietrich, Charles Laughton, Tyrone Power) in a story about a barrister struggling to defend his client on a homicide charge when the circumstantial evidence strongly favors the prosecution.