

UConn | SCHOOL OF LAW

SUMMER READING LIST

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 Ngaruri 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 Thaler 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 world-views 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

by David Kennedy and William K. Fischer III (2006)

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.

Basic Books, Inc., 1998

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 Klima

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

and various crime novels by Julian Symons, Michael Gilbert, Arthur Maling, and Sarah Caudwell (esp. *The Shortest Way to Hades*, Penguin Books)

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

by Michael Fischl & Jeremy Paul
Carolina Academic Press, 1999

Law 101: Everything You Need to Know About the American Legal System

by Jay M. Feinman
Oxford University Press, 2006

Legal Education and the Reproduction of Hierarchy: A Polemic against the System

by Duncan Kennedy
New York University Press, 2004

One L: The Turbulent True Story of a First Year at Harvard Law School

by Scott Turow
Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1977

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.