

The Process of Legal Research: Practices and Resources, 9th

By Deborah A. Schmedemann, Ann L. Bateson & Mehmet Konar-Steenberg. (2016), 331 pages, ISBN: 9781454863335. \$111

Subject: Legal Research Textbook

Useful for: Useful as a course text for those who teach legal research.

Format: Chapters with index and “Test Your Knowledge” questions at the end of most chapters; Casebook Connect option.

Reviewer’s Comments:

The Process of Legal Research: Practices and Resources is a thorough text that provides instruction on the basics of legal research, as well as some materials that are more advanced. In the first two chapters of this edition -- its ninth -- the authors clearly explain of the process of legal research and the skills that are possessed by experienced legal researchers. This information is tied to the context of helping real-world clients with their legal issues, which is likely to be helpful for readers who struggle to see legal research as more than an academic process.

In the remaining chapters, the authors cover the topics found in a “typical” legal research textbook. These topics include the following: secondary sources, case law, statutory law, and administrative law and agency materials. Each chapter contains many charts and illustrations explaining the legal research process. Many of the illustrations are of relevant portions of legal research resources, and the inclusion of such illustrations is useful to the readers who are visual learners. Most of the chapters of the text end with “Test Your Knowledge” questions that test the reader on the key concepts from each chapter. The answers to the questions are provided on the final pages of the chapter.

It is worth noting that the text also contains substantial information on researching tribal and international law as well as “procedural law” (*i.e.*, Rules of Procedure and Rules of Professional Responsibility). The inclusion of the latter chapter is not surprising given that an underlying focus of the text appears to be helping the reader to recognize the critical role that legal research plays in an attorney’s practice. To that end, many chapters also contain “Put It into Practice” sections that first provide the reader with a legal hypothetical involving a client with a specific legal issue and then take the reader through the process of conducting legal research to help that client in the subsequent chapters.

RIPS-SIS Legal Research Text Review

For legal research instructors who are looking for a comprehensive text or who are looking for a course text that places legal research in the larger context of client representation, The Process of Legal Research: Practices and Resources is a great choice.

Reviewed by: Clanitra Stewart Nejd, Northern Illinois University College of Law Library, in 2017.