

## **An Impossible Task but Everybody Has to Do It—Teaching Legal Research in Law Schools**

By Michael J. Lynch. 89 Law Libr. J. 415 (1997).

**Article Categories:** Course Creation & Design; Legal Research Instruction for 1Ls

**Keywords:** Bibliographic; Course Design; Legal Research Instruction; Pedagogy; Process-Oriented

### **Reviewer's Summary:**

In this article, Lynch responds to the widely held view that new attorneys lack research skills. After describing types of research - - informational versus more complex questions that require deep thinking - - Lynch argues that librarians do mostly informational research and that this skews both their pedagogical choices and assessment of research. Much attorney research requires thinking, for example, about how different rules may be integrated. Lynch finds the process-oriented approach to teaching legal research limiting because the problems presented are often not realistically sophisticated, they do not require students to become familiar with many aspects of a given research tool, and they are too time-consuming to allow space for thinking or to give students repeated practice. Lynch advocates for bibliographic instruction that occurs throughout all three years of law school.

**Summarized by:** Susan Azyndar, The Ohio State University, in 2019.