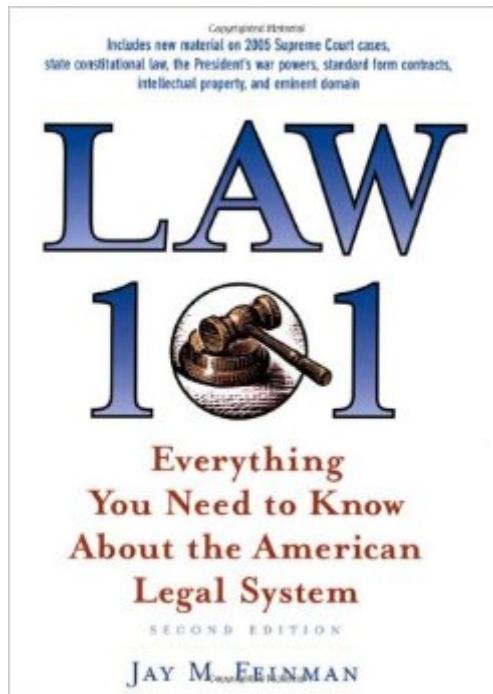


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Law 101: Everything You Need To Know About The American Legal System



Synopsis

The best-selling first edition of Law 101 provided readers with a vividly written and indispensable portrait of our nation's legal system. Now, in this revised edition, Jay M. Feinman offers an updated survey of American law, spiced with new anecdotes and cases, and incorporating fresh material on topics ranging from the President's war powers, to intellectual property, standard form contracts, and eminent domain. Here is an exceptionally clear introduction to law, covering the main subjects found in the first year of law school, giving us a basic understanding of how it all works. Readers are introduced to every aspect of the legal system, from constitutional law and the litigation process to tort law, contract law, property law, and criminal law. Feinman illuminates each discussion with many intriguing, outrageous, and infamous cases, from the scalding coffee case that cost McDonald's half a million dollars, to the sensational murder trial in Victorian London that led to the legal definition of insanity, to the epochal decision in *Marbury v. Madison* that gave the Supreme Court the power to declare state and federal laws unconstitutional. He broadens the reader's legal vocabulary, clarifying the meaning of everything from "due process" and "equal protection" in constitutional law, to the distinction between "murder" and "manslaughter" in criminal law. Perhaps most important, we learn that though the law is voluminous and complex, it is accessible to all. Everyone who wants a better grasp of current legal issues--from students contemplating law school, to journalists covering the legislature or the courts, to fans of Court TV--will find here a wonderful source of information: a complete, clear, and colorful map of the American legal system. "An entertaining and informative introduction to the law.... For journalists, those interested in the law, and fans of television law dramas, this book should be required reading."--Library Journal

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is a very well-written book explaining the basics of the American Legal System including constitutional, civil, and criminal law at a reasonably high level of abstraction. Obviously, it is impossible for the author to explain all the details in a book of this size but he successfully describes the history of the development of both the theory and practice of law in the US--up to 2005--including numerous important legal cases, both federal and state. For example:

CONSTITUTIONAL THEORY:p. 28: Part of the constitutional scheme is that the federal government is a government of limited powers. The branches may exercise only the authority that the people have delegated to them in the Constitution. Therefore, any act that is contrary to the Constitution or beyond the powers enumerated in it is void.p. 32: How do we empower a government to do what we cannot do for ourselves, while making sure that it does not become so strong that it threatens our liberties?p. 32: The framers of the Constitution responded to the widespread perception that the government created under the Articles of Confederation was too weak.p. 89: But this is antidemocratic, isn't it? In a sense it is. That's what constitutional law is all about. The will of a temporary majority, the sentiments of the moment, a vote in the legislature, cannot upset basic constitutional guarantees [but] can be shaped by the temperament of the times as to what rights are fundamental.

CONSTITUTIONAL PRACTICE (IN LIGHT OF THEORY)p.

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