

May 2013

A Practical Manual of Standard Legal Citations

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Recommended Citation

McDermott, Cyril L. (2013) "A Practical Manual of Standard Legal Citations," *St. John's Law Review*: Vol. 25: Iss. 1, Article 31.
Available at: <http://scholarship.law.stjohns.edu/lawreview/vol25/iss1/31>

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A PRACTICAL MANUAL OF STANDARD LEGAL CITATIONS. By Miles O. Price.
New York: Oceana Publications, 1950. Pp. VI, 106. \$2.00.

To adapt a famous phrase from a famous statesman of His Majesty's Government, a truly good brief is composed largely through the invocation of that troublous trinity, blood, sweat and tears. The same may be said of a well-documented Law Review article, or an authoritative opinion on a close controversial issue. In this reviewer's experience the body of the opus demands blood, the research, sweat, and the citations, tears. In his Manual Mr. Price has given the profession a highly superior working tool that will effectively forestall much of the sweat and many of the tears that flow from the frustrated fumbling and time consuming page-turning now necessary to locate the appropriate device with which to denote, accurately yet briefly, all forms of legal reference.

In the first instance the grouping of the contents and the presentation thereof is such as a jurist, lawyer, teacher or reference librarian might anticipate, and such as a student may logically and easily follow. The first 55 pages are about equally divided between Statutory Material (generally first in research) and Case Material. Also, to gladden the heart of anyone engaged in legal writing, it is expertly indexed, a fact which reflects the author's wide experience in the law library field.

The Price Manual is distinctive in that it does not presuppose a background in legal bibliography, research and writing that may not have been experienced by many. The prefatory paragraphs to main and subsidiary divisions are replete with expository information, while the instructions are studded with clear, clean-cut examples. In many instances there are multiple examples with the preferred and alternative selections indicated.

The reviewer has found that reading a standard law manual, such as the pioneer Columbia, Harvard, Pennsylvania, and Yale publication, is something like reading an arbitrary and rigid statute on citation practice, whereas reading the Price Manual is more akin to reading a well-organized treatise on the use of citations, phrased in a pleasant flowing style that lends as much continuity as is possible to a technical work of this type.

Also, from a very realistic point of view, the reviewer found on consulting this Law Review's Editorial Staff which had used both this Manual and the pioneer citator, that the format alone was a very welcome improvement. The Manual is of standard size and easily handled; the sentences are well-spaced; the topic headings and sub-headings are clearly defined in bold-faced type; the table of abbreviations of frequently cited material eliminates much cumbersome reference to bulky dictionaries and the like. All this adds up to more comfort and speed as well as general utility.

Although it seems to be the standard pattern of book reviews to follow the accolades with a resumé of reproofs, to do so herein would result in a recitation of trivia, most of which the author is undoubtedly aware of and the important aspects of which will probably be corrected in a subsequent edition

which is to be issued shortly. These consist of certain omissions or commissions that are bound to occur in the first edition of any technical manual in spite of the care and precision with which the manuscript has been prepared.

The reviewer feels that this Manual is a must for any person or firm constantly burdened with the preparation of opinions as well as briefs. It should, of course, be available to Court and Law School Librarians, to law review staffs and moot court contestants, and is a desirable adjunct to any course in legal bibliography, research and writing. Every chapter of the legal fraternity stands indebted to the author for this work.

CYRIL L. McDERMOTT.*

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