



The Bramble Bush: The Classic Lectures on the Law and Law School

By Karl N Llewellyn

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For over seventy years, there has been one book that law students have read to prepare for what they were about to encounter. That book is *The Bramble Bush*. After all these years and many imitators, *The Bramble Bush* remains one of the most popular introductions to the law and its study.

Llewellyn introduces students to what the law is, how to read cases, how to prepare for class, and how justice in the real world relates to the law. Although laws change every year, disputes between people haven't altered all that much since Llewellyn first penned *The Bramble Bush*, and the process of moving from private dispute to legal conflict still follows the patterns he described.

Moreover, the steps of a legal dispute, from arguments to verdict, to opinion, to review, to appeal, to opinion have changed little in their significance or their substance. Cases are still the best tools for exploring the interaction of the law with individual questions, and the essence of what law students must learn to do has persisted. If anything, many of the points Llewellyn argued in these lectures were on the dawning horizon then but are in their mid-day fullness now.

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Editorial Review

Review

"If you have any doubt about your level of skill, interest, or readiness to study the law, purchase and read a copy of *The Bramble Bush-The Classic Lectures on the Law and Law School*, now updated and published anew in 2008 by Oxford University Press. Law school is a bramble bush. You need to prepare yourself for the reality of its experience. [Llewellyn's] *The Bramble Bush* offers rich and nuanced answers to questions about what the law is, the case system, the nature of law school, and your legal studies beyond the first year. You will greatly benefit if you let Professor Llewellyn (with Professor Sheppard's essential assistance) take you by the hand for this journey."

--Brad Dobeck, *President, PrelawAdvisor.com*

"Karl Llewellyn was one of the greatest legal minds of the twentieth century, and *The Bramble Bush* is one of his classics-illuminating and even indispensable reading for each generation of law students and lawyers, and wonderful for general readers as well." -- Cass R. Sunstein, *Karl N. Llewellyn Distinguished Service Professor, The University of Chicago Law School*

"...one of the greatest works ever written on the nature of law and legal education. In a sometimes sharp, sometime whimsical, always brilliant analysis, Llewellyn offers invaluable insights to anyone contemplating the study of law." -- Geoffrey Stone, *Edward H. Levi Distinguished Service Professor, The University of Chicago Law School*

"*The Bramble Bush* reads to me today as it read to me three decades ago as a law student: fresh, brassy, irreverent, impudent, and brilliant. To suggest that the study of law should focus on how and why judges and officials and lawyers in the real world actually behave in our legal system! To suggest that law is not simply an arid matrix of rules and theories and principles! The nerve! In this time in the history of legal education in which law schools are reinventing themselves, we would all do well to read *The Bramble Bush* again and again." --Rodney A. Smolla, *Dean and Professor of Law, Washington and Lee University School of Law*

About the Author

Karl N. Llewellyn was a revered law professor who taught for most of his career at Columbia Law School and the University of Chicago. Renowned as a scholar in many fields, he was a principal author of the Uniform Commercial Code, the nationwide system of commercial law still followed throughout the United States.

Steve Sheppard is the William H. Enfield Professor of Law at the University of Arkansas. Among his writings, he is the coauthor, with George Fletcher, of *American Law in a Global Context: The Basics*, also published by Oxford University Press.

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