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Hart and Wechsler's The Federal Courts and the Federal System, Third Edition

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#7511527 in Books 1988-05 Original language: English PDF # 1 10.50 x 7.25 x 2.50l, #File Name: 08827764791898 pages | File size: 28.Mb

Paul M. Bator, Daniel J. Meltzer, Paul J. Mishkin, David L. Shapiro : Hart and Wechsler's The Federal Courts and the Federal System, Third Edition before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Hart and Wechsler's The Federal Courts and the Federal System, Third Edition:

3 of 7 people found the following review helpful. I thought this book was great By Readmore McCarthy While I agree with the below readers about the over-usage of footnotes, I believe the notes are necessary, as the federal courts system has changed dramatically since the first edition was published. I loved the course, and therefore loved the book. I think the two must go hand-in-hand. It gives a somewhat concise history of the beginnings of our federalist system complete with checks and balances, separation of powers, usage of legislative and executive courts. I found the historical context inspiring. To compare the intellectual abilities of American politicians of 200 years ago with the politicians today, you are left with your jaw on the ground asking "what happened?" I think this book can give a practitioner a roadmap on how to find your way around the federal court system (you learn to plead out of a complaint for lack of jurisdiction for lack of standing due to mootness, ripeness, political question, etc) and gives you an in depth look at various niche practice areas which are bulging with activity nowadays. (Executive and State Judicial Habeas Corpus...the most interesting section if you ask me...unfortunately you'll have to buy the supplement for the bulk of the issue, but the history is fascinating.) Federal Courts is a near unwieldy course, but it is fascinating just like this 1300+ page book. Whether you like this book depends on whether you like the topic. 15 of 22 people found the following

review helpful. Hard class, horrible book

By Mark Greenbaum

Federal Courts and Federal Jurisdiction is generally recognized as the hardest course in law school. After surviving the course myself, I can attest to this fact. Unfortunately, my course used this text which was useless in imparting an understanding of the material, and in fact did more to confuse my peers and me than anything else. Learning this material is already difficult enough, so it is extremely unhelpful when your text makes the subject even more mystifying. The biggest problem with this book was the utter lack of organization and its ocean of endnotes following the selected cases. The thousands of cases and articles discussed in the endnotes made organizing the material for review impossible. The editors of this text would do well to get rid of many of the confusing endnotes in each section. They should organize them more concisely, and do all law students a favor and just entirely delete sections and discussions of law review articles. Let's be honest: law students might be generally intellectual, and possess a thirst for knowledge, but NO ONE reads the parts of a casebook that reproduce unreadable, painfully boring law review articles. Do us all a favor and stop including them. For those students crazy enough to take fed courts -- probably to learn the ropes for a US District Court clerkship -- and get stuck with this book, you would do well to let this book collect dust in your locker or on your floor, and buy Erwin Chemerinsky's hornbook. It is an excellent resource for learning this difficult subject. It's concise, and much easier to read than this brutal casebook.

27 of 42 people found the following review helpful. did you read the footnotes?

By A. Antaramian

Having never actually subjected the book to scrutiny, albeit rather an exaggeration, it comes as no little surprise that i discover both the writing style and the general cognitive processes of the authors, in addition to the lack of well-placed commas, to be, without equivocation n.1, the most obtuse, murky, singularly unreaable n.2 display of textual acrobatics i have ever, whether in or out of school n.3, had the distinct displeasure of having to plod through in one day - notwithstanding a few notable books i've also had to accept into my overstuffed head, lately.n.1 This is not to say, with no reservations, that equivocation, at least in a sociological - or empirical - sense, is necessary. Pg. 45 or see supra Hallybrook Pipeline as it regards non Article III administrative, but not legislative, tribunals.n.2 Blah Blah Blah - oh yea and the most important thing in the chapter, right f**king here in the middle of a two page footnote about some sh**head in the 1800s ... Blah Blah Blahn.3 Blah Blah Blah Nothing worth reading at all - like the least interesting thing in the world that probably is repeated in 40 other footnotes, but you should read it because it might be like the footnote right above - but it isnt Blah

A classic casebook in the field of federal jurisdiction. Preserves the depth of inquiry and sophistication of earlier editions. It serves as both an effective teaching tool and a reference tool, clearly defining the structure of function of the Federal Judicial System. It links the traditional debates within the field to important currents in legal scholarship.