

4-15-1977

Book Review - Henke: California Law Guide, Second Edition

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Recommended Citation

Nancy J. Kitchen *Book Review - Henke: California Law Guide, Second Edition*, 4 Pepp. L. Rev. 2 (1977)

Available at: <http://digitalcommons.pepperdine.edu/plr/vol4/iss2/13>

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CALIFORNIA LAW GUIDE, Second Edition. By Dan Henke. Parker and Son Publications. Los Angeles, 1976. Pp. ix, 757. \$40.00.

For the person attempting to do any research in California law the initial experience can be more than a little harrowing. The very mass of California's statutory and case law and the complexities of its administrative laws, rules and regulations are overwhelming. In addition to the primary sources, however, there is also an ever growing and changing number of secondary tools needed to locate and trace California law. This makes it almost impossible, therefore, for even the experienced practitioner to stay familiar with developments in all areas. So when something becomes available which organizes this mass, puts it into perspective, helps one analyze one's problems and determine where to turn to solve them, it is a rare and valuable find.

Dan Henke, in the second edition of *California Law Guide*, has provided that tool. What he has created is a ready-reference handbook designed to meet the practical problem-solving needs of the practitioner, the collection-building needs of the librarian, and the detailed legal research training needs of the student. He provides a detailed analysis of good research techniques and instructions on the tools to use, where to find the law in given situations and how to use effectively the legal data compiled. There are also specific instructions on writing briefs, memoranda and opinion letters.

The primary emphasis of the guide is on California law, but there are also included excellent materials on statutory law, case law and finding tools of other states as well as similar helpful materials for research on the federal level. Along with this is included an extensive bibliography of secondary aids arranged by subject giving authors, titles, publishers and addresses, dates of publication and often hard-to-find prices. This comprehensive section is invaluable to the person wishing to acquire these titles or to build a collection, and even though prices change it provides relative sums needed to acquire books in a given area. Other valuable material contained in this volume includes information on legal periodicals, professional associations, legal education and bar examinations.

Another noteworthy feature of the guide is its detailed presentation of the new technology available in the field of legal research. The various computerized systems such as WESTLAW and LEXIS are explained and an analytical illustration of a legal problem researched by means of the electronic process as compared with the traditional method is included. Also extremely useful and available in very few guides of this sort is a listing of specific computer data bases.

The only problem encountered with the guide was the format used to present the materials. The guide resembles a code and uses section and paragraph numbers. While this approach is not inefficient, it is unexpected in this type of book. The format requires that one spend some time in learning how to locate specific information. This approach obviously lends a legal flavor to the guide but it may initially detract from its utility.

Mr. Henke has provided us with an outstanding tool for legal research, however, and his attempt to do many things for many people was accomplished well.

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