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FUNDAMENTALS OF LEGAL RESEARCH. By  
Ervin H. Pollack. New York: Foundation Press,  
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Harriet French

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FUNDAMENTALS OF LEGAL RESEARCH. By Ervin H. Pollack. New York: Foundation Press, 1956. Pp. xviii, 295. \$5.00.

Mr. Pollack has performed a needed service in making available to students and teachers of legal bibliography an up-to-date text, at a reasonable price, designed solely as a teaching device and not as a reference book for law librarians. Hicks' *Materials and Methods of Legal Research*<sup>1</sup> will still stand as the scholarly exposition of legal materials; Price and Bitner's *Effective Legal Research*<sup>2</sup> was an unhappy compromise between a reference book and a text; Mrs. Notz's *Legal Research*<sup>3</sup> remains the outstanding source of information in the field of federal legal bibliography but, unfortunately, it has not been kept up to date. Mr. Pollack has adopted the same plan that was used by Mrs. Notz in her excellent text and has produced a book that is pointed to the needs of students, omitting the bibliographical data that is so often a joy to the law librarian but a waste of space so far as the student is concerned.

*Fundamentals of Legal Research*, like Mrs. Notz's text, begins with the over-all classification of legal materials, followed by a description of legal research methods, and then goes into specific problem areas, beginning with federal constitution law, describing the various types of publications available for researching each particular question. In other words, the materials are subordinated to the problem, not the problem to individual sets of books. In my opinion this is the only realistic approach to teaching legal bibliography. The student is not interested in books per se but rather in how he can find the answer to a definite question. Mr. Pollack's text satisfactorily fills this need.

The coverage of federal materials is more complete in Mrs. Notz's book<sup>4</sup> up to the date of its publication but wide developments in this field in recent years which Mr. Pollack includes make his text a valuable supplement. Particularly interesting is his recognition of the growing importance of administrative practices and international law by his assigning these subjects to separate chapters. His coverage of state materials is more complete than that of Mrs. Notz but for District of Columbia problems one must still resort to her book. Mr. Pollack has also added an appendix in which he includes, in addition to abbreviations, citations in legal writing, the value of which may be questionable in view of other ready and more complete sources.<sup>5</sup> Both texts give only a superficial treatment to

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1. Lawyers Co-operative Publishing Company, 3rd edition, 1942.

2. Prentice-Hall, 1953.

3. Callaghan, 3rd edition, 1952.

4. Much of this is included in concise and accurate bibliographical notes that are useful even for the student's purposes.

5. E.g. PRICE, A PRACTICAL MANUAL OF STANDARD LEGAL CITATIONS, New York: Oceana Publications, 1950. A *Uniform System of Citation*, Harvard Law Review Association, 1955 (9th edition).

English law which is probably all that can be covered in the usual one-hour course in legal bibliography but this in itself is a fact that should be deplored.

The problem book that goes with the text seems to present rather advanced subjects in some instances for freshman students.<sup>6</sup> It is to be hoped that future editions will gear the assignments more to first year courses.

The book's format is attractive, with easy to read type, a factor that, surprisingly enough, most publishers fail to recognize as important in recommending a text for students.

Mr. Pollack is to be congratulated upon his distinct contribution to the teaching of legal bibliography.

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6. For instance, see assignment 7 on the use of American Law Reports Digest.