

Louisiana Law Review

Volume 17 | Number 3

Golden Anniversary Celebration of the Law School

April 1957

SAY IT SAFELY, by Paul P. Ashley. University of Washington Press, Seattle, 1956. Pp. 117. \$2.25.

Victor A. Sachse

Repository Citation

Victor A. Sachse, *SAY IT SAFELY*, by Paul P. Ashley. University of Washington Press, Seattle, 1956. Pp. 117. \$2.25., 17 La. L. Rev. (1957)
Available at: <https://digitalcommons.law.lsu.edu/lalrev/vol17/iss3/22>

This Book Review is brought to you for free and open access by the Law Reviews and Journals at LSU Law Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Louisiana Law Review by an authorized editor of LSU Law Digital Commons. For more information, please contact kreed25@lsu.edu.

BOOK REVIEWS

SAY IT SAFELY, by Paul P. Ashley. University of Washington Press, Seattle, 1956. Pp. 117. \$2.25.

Sir Patrick Hastings, the foremost English barrister of our day writes "the joy of reckless driving in motor vehicles is responsible for most of the litigation in the Royal Courts of Justice; reckless writing and talking unpleasantly about other people would seem to come next in the order of popularity." In our times, reporters rush for several "deadlines" daily and "commentators" rush as rapidly for the microphone and the TV camera. News and gossip are widely disseminated with great speed and little time to develop the accuracy so dear to the lawyer; hence, the great importance of knowing how to "say it safely."

The author, Paul P. Ashley, takes less than one hundred twelve pages about 5" by 7" to give his advice. Mr. Ashley was born in 1896 and came to the Bar in 1926, having received his education at the University of California and the University of Washington. He received his LL.B. degree from the latter. He is a member of a prominent law firm in Seattle and stands at the top of his profession. The cover of the book tells us that he is legal counsel for several newspapers and a broadcasting company, with much practical experience trying libel cases. Co-author of *Cases on Business Law* (Prentice-Hall), former Associate Professor of Business Administration at the University of Washington, and since 1939 lecturer at the Pacific Coast Banking School, he has extensive experience in presenting legal problems in lay language.

Mr. Ashley tells us that "Say it Safely" is pinpointed for personnel of newspapers, publishers of magazines and books, radio and television broadcasters, the wire services and broadcasting networks, advertising agencies, and students looking toward a career in the field of mass communication. The author does not cite any law case of other authority but in the limited space indicated, with directness and clarity, he gives encyclopedic advice on his subject with ample illustrations. The law of libel "reflects a continuing attempt by society to reach a proper bal-

ance between the need of the individual for protection and the necessity for a free dissemination of news and fair comment in respect to public affairs." Publishers cannot wholly avoid the risk of libel but the author says that "skilled mountaineers seldom fall; week-enders often do," and he ably guides his reader to that skill.

A chapter is devoted to libel per se with a neat check-list related to occupations and undertakings. You will not be too surprised to note that to call an author a plagiarist is libel per se, but you may be surprised to learn that it is libel per se to charge a candidate for public office with conducting a campaign of abuse and slander.

Intentions, mistakes, quotations ("tale bearers are as bad as the tale makers —Sheridan"), privilege and qualified privilege, comment and criticism, corrections and retractions, freedom of speech and contempt of court, and the right of privacy are chief among the topics which receive attention.

The reader sees in each instance what the author means by the "skilled mountaineer" in the repetitive illustrations of the manner of conveying information and opinion with an effort to be fair and to be safe.

*Victor A. Sachse**

FUNDAMENTALS OF LEGAL RESEARCH, by Ervin H. Pollack. The Foundation Press. Brooklyn, 1956. Pp. XVIII, 295. \$5.00.

Professor Ervin Pollack has distinguished himself as a lawyer, law librarian, and writer. He received his LL.B. degree from Washington University, served as an attorney with the government during the war; and, after attending Columbia University School of Library Service he was a librarian in a New York law firm and the assistant to the Dean of law librarians, Dr. Miles O. Price, at Columbia University. Among his scholarly publications, besides numerous articles in legal and library periodicals, are *Ohio Unreported Judicial Decisions Prior to 1823*, *Ohio Court Rules Annotated*, and *The Brandeis Reader*. Mr. Pollack is a member of the American and Ohio State Bar Associations and the American Association of Law Libraries. He founded the Ohio Chapter of this Association and served as its first president. He has devoted much effort to law library

*Member, Baton Rouge Bar.