

Louisiana Law Review

Volume 33 | Number 1
Fall 1972

LOUISIANA LEGAL RESEARCH MANUAL.
By Professor Kate Wallach. Institute of Continuing
Legal Education, Louisiana State University Law
Center, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 273 pp., 1972.
\$12.50

Albert Tate Jr.

Lawrence Roe Dodd

Repository Citation

Albert Tate Jr. and Lawrence Roe Dodd, *LOUISIANA LEGAL RESEARCH MANUAL*. By Professor Kate Wallach. Institute of Continuing Legal Education, Louisiana State University Law Center, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 273 pp., 1972. \$12.50, 33 La. L. Rev. (1972)
Available at: <https://digitalcommons.law.lsu.edu/lalrev/vol33/iss1/13>

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 REVIEW

LOUISIANA LEGAL RESEARCH MANUAL. By Professor Kate Wallach. Institute of Continuing Legal Education, Louisiana State University Law Center, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 273 pp., 1972. \$12.50

In the practice of law, on first seeing an attorney's law library, clients sometimes indicate either pride or doubt that their lawyer knows *everything* in them thar' law books. The lawyer is then put to the explanation that his legal knowledge is not so much quantitative as qualitative: it consists of his ability to analyze facts for legal issues, and of his knowing where to find the law or the legal authorities decisive or persuasive of the issues before him rather than of rote memory of the contents of innumerable legal volumes.

In Louisiana, as in other states, the sources of legal advice or decision are found in research materials of every description: the Civil Code and its antecedents, the Constitution and the Revised Statutes, judicial decisions, administrative rules and rulings, and numerous secondary sources. The sheer bulk of these materials is striking, and at least a working familiarity with them should be acquired early in a lawyer's career, preferably while still in law school. Quite often, however, the lawyer acquires research skills only after entering practice, where (with interest whetted by actual instead of abstract legal questions) the practitioner must serve the needs of living people by considered legal answer. Not only must relevant legal materials be canvassed thoroughly, but they must be done so efficiently, for a practicing lawyer is likely to be starved for time. Effective research ability is undoubtedly a valuable attribute of an effective practitioner.

For Louisiana practitioners, jurists, and law students alike, Professor Wallach, Comparative Law Librarian at the Louisiana State University Law Center, has authored an invaluable research aid in her *Louisiana Legal Research Manual*. The emphasis is on research necessary in everyday practice rather than on academic inquiries. This is partially evidenced by the absence of historical material found in previous texts by the same author.¹

1. See WALLACH, *BIBLIOGRAPHICAL HISTORY OF LOUISIANA CIVIL LAW SOURCES* (1955); and WALLACH, *RESEARCH IN LOUISIANA LAW* (1958). The author suggests in the preface of her current book that the previous texts be used in conjunction with the new manual when there is need for historical or civil law research in Roman, French and Spanish materials.

However, in-depth study into virtually any area of the law is facilitated by the manual's listings of available materials and law-finding methods.

Part I is devoted to legal research of authorities outside Louisiana. Not only does it contain a complete description of the various types of works (treatises, encyclopedias, digests, periodicals, dictionaries, directories, form books, law office aids), but also specific and practical advice on how to use them, including a guide to basic source materials for research in federal law. The law student will find this work an indispensable text in the basics of legal research.

Part I is a meaningful prelude to Part II, which is devoted to legal research of Louisiana sources. The thorough and detailed treatment includes an almost complete listing of these sources, with perceptive and practical suggestions as to approaches for their most effective use. For instance, the section on Louisiana doctrine contains perhaps the only comprehensive list yet published of treatises on all phases of Louisiana law. Convenient listings of available translations and English texts on foreign law relevant to Louisiana practice and a section containing legislative session research suggestions should prove particularly helpful for more involved inquiries. Of sufficient importance to deserve particular mention is the section on Louisiana administrative law, which will facilitate research into local law problems not generally considered in law school and infrequently arising for many practitioners, but always important.

Even experienced practitioners may find this work a good refresher course in effective research. For instance, the concluding chapter on "Research Methods Reviewed" suggests efficient approaches for legal analysis of fact problems, and it likewise contains a practical methodology of research and practical advice for shortcuts in finding pertinent legal material. Again, the chapter on "Case Law" contains a comprehensive but brief analysis of the places of jurisprudence and of judicial interpretations in the resolution of legal issues, together with an enlightened and pragmatic comparison of the effect of court decisions in common and civil law.

Professor Kate Wallach is an internationally recognized research librarian. Louisiana is fortunate for this most recent contribution of hers to our state's literature on the sources of our legal reasoning and for this practical aid to effective research.

*Albert Tate, Jr.**

*Lawrence Roe Dodd***

* Associate Justice, Louisiana Supreme Court.

** Senior, Louisiana State University Law School.