

Book Review

**Legal Research Methods In A Modern World: A
Coursebook, Third Edition.**

**By J. Paul Lomio, Henrik S. Spang-Hanssen, And
George D. Wilson.**

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Lomio and Spang-Hanssen's first collaboration was *Legal Research Methods in the US and Europe* published in 2008. This work covered US legal research methods, European civil law research, European Union research, public international law research, and foreign and comparative law research. A review was published in volume 36 of this journal. [FN2] The book was designed to be used as a text in a course on foreign, comparative, and international legal research. Several useful features included a glossary, citation guide, renumbering table for EU Treaties, list of important databases, and a bibliography. An accompanying website was used to keep pinpoint URLs provided in the text up to date.

One year later the authors released a second edition containing many useful improvements. The European Union's adoption of the Lisbon Treaty necessitated a revision of the chapter on EU research. The second edition was particularly strong in its coverage of European civil law research methods and the EU. The functioning of EU institutions and the records and documents they produced are covered in a detail not found in other similar works.

Another major improvement unveiled in the second edition was the teaching manual for European civil law materials. The manual included a practical overview of civil law research instruction, a sample class syllabus, and numerous sample exercises. The manual was written by co-author Spang-Hanssen, an accomplished Danish Supreme Court Attorney-at-law. The manual includes practical insights useful in

the classroom that are unavailable from any other source.

For the current edition the authors went back to the drawing board and reorganized the entire book. The chapters are now arranged in an order that closely corresponds with how most foreign, comparative, and international law research courses are structured. The book begins with an introductory chapter on the proper approach to studying foreign, comparative, and international law, which is appropriately followed by chapters on legal families, foreign law, and comparative law methods. Placing these critical chapters first emphasizes the importance of approaching this type of research from the correct vantage point and not simply imposing one's own familiar legal research methods.

The inclusion of new chapters on Russian and Chinese legal research marks a step forward from previous editions, which focused heavily on western legal traditions. The authors acknowledge this departure in the preface with the explanation that earlier editions were "only the authors' first attempt to construct an initial, simple 'bridge across the Atlantic Ocean.'" Hopefully this trend will continue and later editions will include chapters on researching more diverse topics and jurisdictions.

The entire contents of the current edition have been updated to include references to new websites, research databases, and to keep pace with the dramatic changes occurring in the legal landscape of the EU. An entirely new chapter on UK legal research has been added. Recent developments in US legal research including WestlawNext, Bloomberg law, and open source legal information are included as well.

Teachers of foreign, comparative, and international legal research courses will find an abundance of practical and helpful resources in this new edition. Sample exercises and syllabi are included along with lists of further reading located at the end of each chapter. A useful appendix includes a glossary, list of citation signals, diagram of US courts structure, list of popular Westlaw databases, and a diagram of the Library of Congress classification scheme. Spang-Hanssen has updated the web companion to the book where readers can find up-to-date hyperlinked materials to supplement the text along with a teacher's manual.

For many years there was not a textbook for foreign, comparative, and international legal research courses. [FN3] Teachers cobbled together articles, pathfinders, research guides and other sources to make due. The publication of *Legal Research Methods in the US and Europe* in 2008 was a welcome addition to the landscape. Others have followed in-

cluding Rumsey and Hoffman's *International and Foreign Legal Research: A Coursebook* and Hoffman and Berring's *International Legal Research in a Nutshell. Legal Research Methods in a Modern World: A Coursebook, Third Edition* stands apart from other textbooks in the area because of its in-depth coverage of the EU and the extensive amount of practical resources it includes. In comparison, *International and Foreign Legal Research: A Coursebook* covers more substantive areas of international law including human rights, intellectual property, environmental law, trade, and private international law. However, it hasn't been updated since 2008 and its hefty price of \$185 is a bitter pill to swallow. [FN4] *Legal Research Methods in a Modern World: A Coursebook, Third Edition* is a bargain at a mere \$55. Although primarily designed as textbook, it will also be useful as a student level treatise on the subject. Any law library serving patrons with the slightest interest in

foreign, comparative, or international law should own a copy.

[FN2]. Scott Shackelford, *Legal Research Methods in the U.S. and Europe*, 36 INTL J.L. INFO. 216-222 (2008) (book review).

[FN3]. REHBERG & POPA'S ACCIDENTAL TOURIST ON THE NEW FRONTIER: AN INTRODUCTORY GUIDE TO GLOBAL LEGAL RESEARCH (1998) was perhaps the original textbook on foreign, comparative, and international legal research.

[FN4]. MARTINUS NIJHOFF PUBLISHERS, <http://www.brill.nl/default.aspx?partid=210&pid=29350> (last visited Jan. 26, 2011).