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Cleveland State Law Review

Volume 10
Issue 3 *Tort Defense Problems (A Symposium)*

Book Review

1961

Book Review

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Recommended Citation

Milton E. Wilson, Book Review, 10 *Clev.-Marshall L. Rev.* 549 (1961)

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*Reviewed by Milton E. Wilson**

ADVOCACY AND THE KING'S ENGLISH. Edited by George Rossman. Published by Bobbs-Merrill Co., Inc., Indianapolis, 976 pp. (1960).

The book is a series of sixty-five articles on the subject of advocacy, and the clear and cogent use of the English language. The articles were selected by the Scribes, an organization composed of lawyers who have been contributors to legal literature.

Each article imparts very practical methods of approach, from the conduct of a negligence case for a plaintiff, to the drafting and argument of an appeal.

Various approaches to the problem of conveying thoughts and ideas are presented to the reader, embracing both the written and spoken word. A chronologic description of the book indicates the range of subjects covered—Trial, Appellate Briefs, and Oral Argument. The use of English, Appellate Process and Judicial Opinions, and the Ethics of Advocacy. Among the contributors are such well known names as Robert H. Jackson, John W. Davis, Wiley B. Rutledge, Harold Medina, William Prosser, and Lloyd Paul Stryker.

In the section on the trial of a lawsuit the emphasis is on the practical, such as: how to try a case from a judge's point of view, how to try a case from a lawyer's point of view, and the use of expert testimony and exhibits.

The book well expresses the extreme importance of good oral argument, which is not to be confused with mere forensic fluency. In the article by Robert H. Jackson, the point is made that judges rely heavily upon oral presentation, at least to form tentative conclusions.

The editor establishes the purpose of the book in the Foreword by saying, "Words are the common domain of all of us. Unlike land and wealth they are as available to the poor and lowly as to the rich and mighty. But how effectively they distinguish the learned from others. Good English is not the mark of the capable lawyer, but also of the gentleman." Without doubt the volume is an interesting and valuable addition to that area of the legal profession which so often is so woefully overlooked, namely proper regard for, and use of the English language.

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