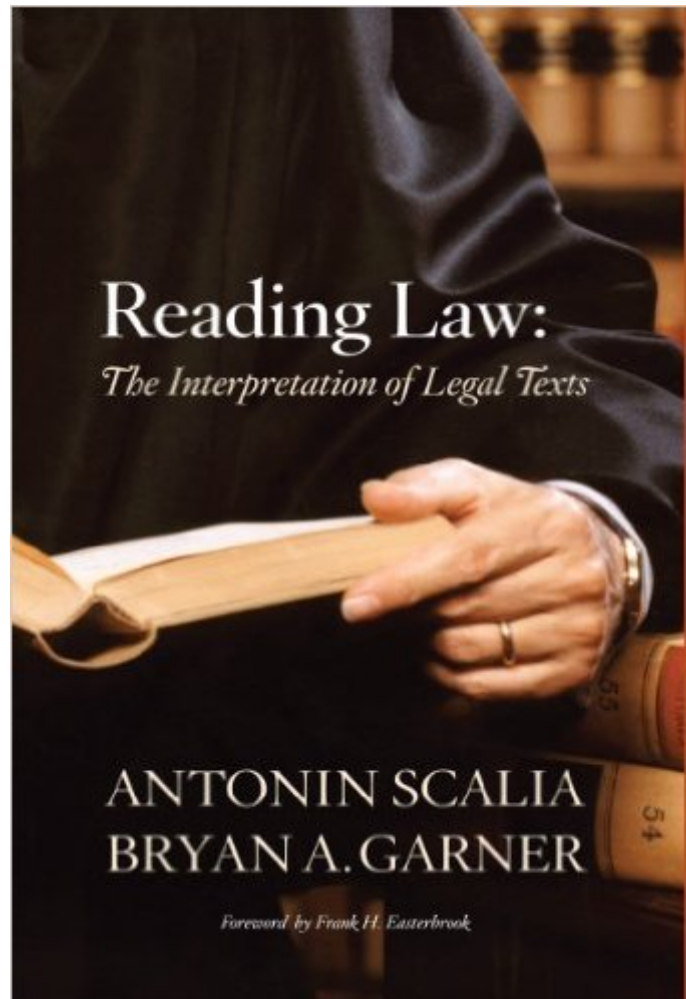


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Synopsis

In this groundbreaking book, Scalia and Garner systematically explain all the most important principles of constitutional, statutory, and contractual interpretation in an engaging and informative style “with hundreds of illustrations from actual cases. Is a burrito a sandwich? Is a corporation entitled to personal privacy? If you trade a gun for drugs, are you “using a gun” in a drug transaction? The authors grapple with these and dozens of equally curious questions while explaining the most principled, lucid, and reliable techniques for deriving meaning from authoritative texts. Meanwhile, the book takes up some of the most controversial issues in modern jurisprudence. The authors write with a well-argued point of view that is definitive yet nuanced, straightforward yet sophisticated.

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I practice law in the areas of probate litigation and estate planning. For almost twenty years I argued probate cases before judges who ultimately had to interpret the meaning of probate statutes and a legal document (a trust for instance). Two years ago I quit litigation and devoted my practice to preventative law--that is, I am attempting on behalf of my clients to either prevent probate litigation

with carefully drafted documents, resolve probate disputes outside of court with carefully customized probate ADR agreements, or contain litigation in court with the most carefully drafted estate planning documents I can write--documents that judges cannot misinterpret. I recently had one of my documents tested in the Utah Supreme Court, where the Court unanimously (5-0) found that the text was clear and unambiguous on the dispute in issue and overturned the trial court's decision to the contrary. A frustrating case in that I thought my writing was clear enough for the trial court to understand. Then I read yesterday's WSJ review on Justice Scalia's and Mr. Garner's book "Reading Law" (I wish would give reviewers a little more control in utilizing underlining or italics.) I bought a copy last night and have not been able to put it down. This book is a goldmine for drafters of legal documents. The fundamental, semantic, syntactic, and contextual canons are not only fascinating to read, but are providing eminently practical drafting guidelines that have me intellectually hopping for joy. This book has already taken its place within handreach of my beloved Ninth Edition Black's Law Dictionary (thank you, Mr. Garner), my Chicago Manual of Style (thanks again for Mr. Garner's contributions), and my battered twenty-year-old Roget's Thesaurus.

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