



# Lawtalk: The Unknown Stories Behind Familiar Legal Expressions

*James E. Clapp, Elizabeth G. Thornburg, Marc Galanter, Fred R. Shapiro*

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Law-related words and phrases abound in our everyday language, often without our being aware of their origins or their particular legal significance: *boilerplate*, *jailbait*, *pound of flesh*, *rainmaker*, *the third degree*. This insightful and entertaining book reveals the unknown stories behind familiar legal expressions that come from sources as diverse as Shakespeare, vaudeville, and Dr. Seuss. Separate entries for each expression follow no prescribed formula but instead focus on the most interesting, enlightening, and surprising aspects of the words and their evolution. Popular myths and misunderstandings are explored and exploded, and the entries are augmented with historical images and humorous sidebars.

Lively and unexpected, *Lawtalk* will draw a diverse array of readers with its abundance of linguistic, legal, historical, and cultural information. Those readers should be forewarned: upon finishing one entry, there is an irresistible temptation to turn to another, and yet another . . .

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