FIVE RECOMMENDATIONS

Chanel Miller
*Know My Name: A Memoir*
(Viking 2019)

*It is better that ten guilty persons escape than that one innocent suffer.*

*Know My Name* casts a spotlight on the dark bargain required to provide defendants their presumption of innocence — that innocents do suffer, often invisibly. From the first moments of the book, Chanel Miller demands that we see her. She takes the reader with her as she pieces together what happened the night Brock Turner sexually assaulted her, and processes what that means for her future.

The assault was a whirlwind that took with it her former life. There was no careful calculation of her accomplishments up and until that terrible moment or of the effect it would have on her moving life forward. Brock Turner’s sentence, in contrast, was carefully calculated, considerate of his past, and concerned for the impact on his future — making “the incident,” as the judge called it, seem minor in comparison.

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In telling her story, Chanel proves that it was not some minor blip in someone’s otherwise flawless resume, but also, that she is more than that moment. She calls on the reader to examine our broken systems. The story provides a glimpse into a survivor’s journey to process trauma, get justice, demand accountability, and move forward. By naming herself, she is healing and reclaiming her power. *Know Your Name* is a beautifully written, impactful memoir that should be required reading for anyone working in our legal and education systems.

Martha Minow  
*When Should Law Forgive?*  
(W.W. Norton & Company, 2019)

Lamenting an “unforgiving age” and “an age of resentment,” Minnow thoughtfully analyzes the complexities of forgiveness and law in our current context. After all, the aggrieved come to the law with the expectation that justice will be exacted on wrongdoers. When and how can forgiveness be applied without jeopardizing the rule of law? She explores this quandary in various contexts, including debt forgiveness, amnesties and pardons, and forgiving youth. In the latter, using the child soldier combatant context, Minnow analyzes culpability and accountability for atrocities committed by children, who while not always entirely innocent, are often forced into criminal behavior. She discusses alternatives to punishment, including restorative justice tools which “offer practical avenues for breaking cycles of violence and trauma.” In her final reflections, she emphasizes that law and forgiveness is not a refusal to acknowledge wrongdoing, “rather it is to widen the lens . . . to work for new choices that can be enabled by wiping the slate clean.”

Neil M. Gorsuch with Jane Nitze and David Feder  
*A Republic, If You Can Keep It*  
(Crown Forum, 2019)

Justice Gorsuch’s *A Republic, If You Can Keep It* draws inspiration from events surrounding his Supreme Court confirmation process during which he realizes that much of the public perceives judges as enforcers of their own personal preferences and policy leanings. He laments that “our civic understanding . . . about the Constitution and the proper role of the judge under it may be slipping away.” The book opens with deep personal reflections on events leading to his nomination to the Supreme Court. Throughout the book, he frequently draws the curtains open so that readers can experience special moments in his life’s journey, from his childhood years,
Court clerkship under Justice Byron White, and judging on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 10th Circuit, to his final ascent to the nation’s highest court. The central focus of the book is on originalism in the application of the Constitution and textualism in the interpretation of statutes. He examines the separation of powers triangle, the separation of legislative and judicial powers, and the executive-legislative and executive-judicial divides. Gorsuch’s clear writing, interspersed with illustrative cases and speeches makes for a good primer on originalism and textualism, while serving as a useful overview for those with deep knowledge of the Constitution.

Haben Girma

Haben: The Deafblind Woman
Who Conquered Harvard Law
(Twelve, 2019)

Haben Girma’s inspirational memoir vividly captures the experiences of the deaf blind in a sighted hearing society. The reader cannot but come to a fresh appreciation and deeper understanding of the challenges faced by those with disabilities. Haben in a stirring fashion, describes her multi-cultural experiences from childhood, adolescence, life in college, and her ground-breaking acceptance into Harvard Law as the very first deaf blind student. There are significant milestones in her journey, including her education at the Louisiana Center for the Blind, where she sharpens her blindness skills and acquires more independence. This is where she also learns to appreciate a positive blindness philosophy, rejecting the notion of inferiority in the disabled within a dominant ableism culture. In her words “with the right tools and training, blind people can compete as equals with sighted peers.” Her future foray into the law and advocacy for the disabled are fomented in experiences in college, such as the time she canvasses to make a menu available for the visually impaired. By the time she graduates from law school, Haben has been exceptionally prepared for her work in disability rights advocacy, particularly with providing access to digital reading services for blind students.

Mike Chase

How to Become a Federal Criminal:
An Illustrated Handbook for the Aspiring Offender
(Atria Books 2019)

How to Become a Federal Criminal is a satirical guide to violating some of the odder federal crimes. Expanding on his @CrimeADay Twitter account, Mike Chase adds a bit of history and imagery to the snark. With short sec-
tions and an entertaining style, this is an easy read you pick up before bed or binge while relaxing on the couch.

Teachers will find this book to be a great source for ideas, as the author manages to make lawmaking interesting. Use the ham-and-cheese sandwich example to highlight the impact of regulations. Teach legislative history with the Woodsy Owl Act. Or provide a fun historical anecdote with bootlegger smoke screens.

From bartering flamingos to carrying too many nickels over the border, one might think, “There is no way we would make such odd laws today!” That is until you reach the section on margarine, which had to be pink or served in triangular pads to avoid confusing it with butter. With the FDA considering regulating nut milk labeling, you realize that Mike will have no shortage of material in the years to come.