POVERTY LAW
FALL 2010

CASEBOOK
Mahoney, Calmore, and Wildman, Social Justice: Professionals, Communities and the Law, Thompson/West 92003)

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This is not a course in public benefits law for the poor. It is a course in the procedural, substantive and ethical components of civil rights and social justice practice—representing marginalized people. Among the topics are housing, sexual minorities, and domestic violence.

GRADING
Grade will be based on (1) An analytical book review (2) A civil rights pleading project (3) A structured report on poor clients, lawyers, and judges in local courts (4) Class preparation and attendance.

Feel free to contact
Prof William S. Geimer
577 Wilderness Place
Sooke BC V9Z 1C4
Canada
Phone: (250) 642 1765 [Pacific time zone!]
Email: tarheel@shaw.ca
ANALYTICAL BOOK REVIEW ASSIGNMENT GUIDE

Poverty Law

Fall 2010

An analytical book review is an essay about a book. The paper should explain the book’s topic and its argument. It is not simply a summary of the book. Rather, it should show me your thought in depth and address the following questions: (1) Why is the topic important? (2) What is the author’s perspective? (3) What kind of evidence does the author give in support of the argument? (4) What was it about the evidence and argument that you found particularly persuasive or unpersuasive? Explain. (5) Did the organization, style, and voice of the book advance the author’s perspective or not? Explain. (6) In what ways, if at all, will this work be helpful in dealing with marginalized people or communities, or with other social justice issues? You may also cover other issues, such as how the book relates to your vision of the part of poverty law covered in this course, or why you chose this book.

The essay should be about 7 pages long, exclusive of footnotes or end notes. Double Papers should be double spaced with normal margins and 12 point font. Blue Book form is not required for citations. The rule is: a citation must be sufficient to allow me to find and check it. You may reference class materials casually if they are relevant (“contrary to what Duncan Kennedy states at page 22 of the casebook”)

Keep the topic fairly close to legal practice---especially biographies of lawyers, books about lawyering, or books about legal cases. There are a lot of good ones. More than one of you may choose the same book. If so, you are simply on your honor not to collaborate. No novels or books that are generally about a social problem with little direct connection to law or law practice. If in doubt, contact me.. Otherwise, have fun and learn things!

Prof Geimer