

Legalized Families has quite a few strengths. First, the book centers family in the context of globalization, making visible the ways in which globalization affects family members, practices, and meanings. Second, Hacker constructs a convincing, solid argument about the constant interplay of globalization and borders, taking her readers step-by-step on the journey, making this book wonderful for undergraduate students and anyone interested in families and globalization. Third, the book can be read as independent chapters or as a whole, though putting them all together truly illustrates the different phases of family life. Fourth, it brings together literature from different parts of the world to break the borders of scholarship, instead of simply documenting how laws shape families in different countries. As such, this book deals with a massive literature on and from different regions of the world (mostly English-speaking ones, however), as we move with her from Ireland to India to the United States of America to Israel. Fifth, her nuanced and intersectional analysis of race, gender, and economic status (156) is refreshing and highlights yet again the limits of the law. Sixth, Hacker's in-depth examples make clear the intricacies of nation-based family laws in the context of globalization. Thus, Hacker creates a comprehensive analysis of a vast body of work, synthesizing it in a coherent way, while bringing theory down to the level of lived experience; although her focus is on laws, Hacker brings up the nuances of the real impacts on individuals' lives.

In short, this is a high-quality book, well-written and clearly organized. This book's ideal audience includes students of legal studies, sociology, political science, public policy, and family studies, to name a few. Both undergraduate and graduate students interested in family and law would benefit enormously from reading it. *Legalized Families in the Era of Bordered Globalization* is a must-read for those studying globalization and families.

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Judges, Judging and Humour. Edited by Jessica Milner Davis and Sharyn Roach Anleu. Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018

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In his Foreword to *Judges, Judging and Humour*, former Justice of the High Court of Australia Michael Kirby reflects upon his varied experiences of judicial humour over decades working in

courtrooms. One anecdote of an unnamed judge brings to the fore the complexities of judicial humour in form and function – complexities that this outstanding collection deftly explores:

He was a brilliant after-dinner speaker. Much of his humour was sardonic. He revelled in his deliberate political incorrectness. For decades it drew great crowds and thunderous applause. However, when this judge told his joke about “hairy legged lesbians” once too often, the laughter turned to ashes in his mouth. His put-downs and insults came to be seen as needlessly cruel. New generations came to see them as inappropriate to the holder of a judicial office. (viii)

Just as an Australian reader can readily recognise the unnamed judge in this anecdote, humour relies greatly upon contextual knowledge. As the collection illustrates, humour reinforces social connections and shared values, all dependent on time, place and cultural coincidences. Kirby’s anecdote also demonstrates the pitfalls inherent in a misreading of that context and one’s audience. What may be thought to be appropriate in an after-dinner speech in the 1990s may not be tolerated in different contexts. The shift to which Kirby refers reflects these changing expectations and changing audiences — from a predominantly male elite to a more diverse legal profession. Whether a speaker is conscious of this shift and modifies his or her behaviour accordingly reflects a deeper understanding of self and what it means to be a judge. A misjudgement on the appropriateness of humour can, in turn, raise questions regarding the underlying values and preconceptions held by the speaker, leading, in the case of a judge, to concerns regarding judicial bias, and fitness for office. Examples of this pepper Galanter’s discussion of “Funny Judges” in his exploration of humour about judges in the United States in Chapter 3 of the collection.

The inherent nuance surrounding humour, and the fine lines involved in determining what makes a remark humorous in different contexts, has minded many judicial officers to issue warnings regarding its use.¹ However, as the collection expertly illustrates, humour can have multiple purposes in legal contexts, including beneficial purposes such as managing courtroom workloads and diffusing tension (see, eg Blix and Wettergren’s discussion in Chapter 6 of humour in Swedish courts). This should be no surprise. In addition to their role as theatres of justice, courtrooms are social

¹ See, for example, former Chief Justice of Australia Murray Gleeson famous statement that “Without wishing to appear to be a killjoy, I would caution against giving too much scope to your natural humour or high spirits when presiding in a courtroom. Most litigants and witnesses do not find court cases at all funny.” (Gleeson 1998: 59).

environments, and court officers, including judges, humans interacting in social spaces, as the two chapters co-authored by Roach Anleu skilfully demonstrate (see Chapters 1, 5).

This collection embraces the complexities inherent in a study of humour and courts, offering significant fresh insights into the role of these interactions. A key strength of the collection is its expansive methodology: its three parts spanning research from four continents, and a range of interdisciplinary approaches. Part 2's authors most directly explore the challenges illustrated by Kirby's anecdote: how judges *use* humour. In addition to the exploration of the varied purposes of humour deployed by judges in Australia and Sweden in Chapters 5 and 6, Moran's examination of swearing-in ceremonies in the UK in Chapter 7 offers an important exploration of the gendered dimension of courtroom humour. Moran's chapter also underlines the historical and source-contingent nature of academic examinations of humour – the impact of the eponymous “Bakewell tart” in the ceremony was *observed* by Moran, whereas future generations would rely, at best, on written transcripts or newspaper reporting. In these ways Moran's contribution raises both the gender questions, and methodological challenges, that underpin the materials explored in other chapters in the collection.

Part 1 has as its focus humour *about* judges. Davis's chapter (Chapter 2) is an important precursor to the later chapters, as she explores the ways in which jokes, anecdotes and witticism are differentially framed by the contextual knowledge of the audience, and the consequent impact on the capacity for later academic examination of humour. Davis, and then Galanter in the following chapter, emphasises that the *absence* of jokes about judges is a reflection of the broader societal status they hold in the UK (Davis, Chapter 2) and US (Galanter, Chapter 3), and the positive values that the role of judge embodies. These conclusions align with Milner Davis's analysis of humour in the European theatre in Chapter 4. Through her fascinating discussion of stage and screen portrayals of “the judge”, Milner Davis observes that the “the joke of the comic judge turns on how judicial power *ought* to be exercised”, and that the portrayals elicit laughter “not in disrespect, but ruefully, at what should be the case”. (130, emphasis added).

Part 3 of the collection shifts to examining the impact of courts *on* humour, through the explorations by Capelotti (Chapter 8) and Little (Chapter 9) of Brazilian and American case law respectively. Given the complexity and ambiguity of humour illustrated throughout the preceding chapters, and the urgency of debates regarding the metes and bounds of free speech in a Twitter-happy world, these chapters reinforce the global significance of scholarship that interrogates how judges understand humour.

The collection's first chapter, authored by the editors Jessica Milner Davis and Sharyn Roach Anleu, expertly introduces all of these themes and methodological questions. As the editors indicate, the emerging field of law and humour offers rich potential for law and society scholars, with its inherent interdisciplinary methodologies drawing upon the humanities, social sciences, and law, and engaging empirical, doctrinal, textual, and narrative and interpretative methods. In its canvassing of the relevant literature and methodological complexities attending this important topic, this chapter alone is worth the price of the book, and should be the starting point for any law and society scholars (re)engaging with the multi-faceted connections between law and humour studies.

Reference

Gleeson, A. M. "Performing the Role of the Judge," 10 *Judicial Officers Bulletin* 57–60.

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Of Comics and Legal Aesthetics: Multimodality and the Haunted Mask of Knowing. By Thomas Giddens. London & New York: Routledge, 2018

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Comics have traditionally been considered to be a children's medium. Up until the late 20th century they were typically short-form, quirky and mischievous; deploying the witty interplay of words and images to tell stories, with speech and thought expressed in word balloon format. The escapades of characters such as Dennis the Menace and Gnasher, Minnie the Minx, Billy Whizz and Johnny Fartpants from *The Beano* (1938) and *Viz* (1979) are not only familiar to older generations but are still entertaining children, and adults, today. Along with the no less playful but more serious superhero genre, exemplified by the UK's *Eagle* (1950–1969) featuring Dan Dare and the earlier creations of American *DC Comics*, Superman (1938) and Batman (1939), they present a complex world in which there is right and wrong, good and evil, crime and punishment. Such visual aesthetic forms increase awareness of 'a multiplicity of dissident perspectives' which stimulate 'free play of the imagination and assist in our understanding of the world through our senses';