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Virginia Domestic Relations Handbook and Virginia Domestic Relations Case Finder

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BOOK REVIEWS

VIRGINIA DOMESTIC RELATIONS HANDBOOK. By Margaret F. Brinig and David Meade White. VIRGINIA DOMESTIC RELATIONS CASE FINDER. By Brien A. Roche. The Michie Company, 1986.

*Reviewed by Matthew N. Ott**

The Michie Company has released two publications dealing with the changing area of domestic relations law and which provide the busy Virginia practitioner with easy access to the areas within the field of family law practice and the relevant case authorities.

In *Virginia Domestic Relations Handbook* by Margaret F. Brinig and David Meade White, the authors have collaborated to create a practical, useful and quick reference handbook to both the standard areas of family law, such as adoption, divorce and support, as well as the emerging concept of equitable distribution. Structurally, a total of twenty-four chapters and 372 pages address all segments of the domestic relations practice. This aptly named "handbook" has a detailed Table of Contents and Index coupled with helpful forms. The authors highlight and explain basic principles of law, and, where available, add statutory references and controlling case authority. However, commensurate with the introduction, the authors "cut short interesting history or theory unless it might be relevant to building a case."

Although the domestic relations field has been the subject of valuable continuing legal education programs sponsored by the Bar, until the introduction of the handbook, the practitioner has not had a current volume which combined the practical and the academic as has been accomplished in this publication.

For both the beginner and the experienced practitioner, authors Brinig and White have provided the family law bar with a valuable and convenient reference source for initial research in the office as well as immediate reference in the courtroom.

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In *Virginia Domestic Relations Case Finder*, author Brien A. Roche states in his preface: "This book is a compendium of cases dealing with domestic relations issues." The book is arranged for rapid access to case authorities reported by the Virginia Supreme Court. The cases are in chronological order under broad subject matter headings. Although the chronological indexing provides a quick summary of the case authority related to a specific subject matter, the case summaries, although sufficient to "locate" the case, are in most instances very brief and will require further review by the practitioner.

For those practitioners who remember a case name only, this publication would be enhanced by a table of cases indexed to subject matter since both the Table of Contents and Index are very general in scope. However, consistent with Mr. Roche's purpose, this publication can be a helpful reference to "locate" a case in the domestic relations field.

In summary, these two concise and practical publications will be useful to both the new and experienced practitioner in the area of domestic relations seeking practical reference material.