

# Introduction

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## **A New Book For A New World ...**

In 1992 I wrote the first edition of Law School Bound. This book is not a revision. Much has happened since 1992. We have gone from a recession to an economic boom. The internet and other forms of digital communication are transforming the way that we live. There are areas of legal practice that didn't even exist in 1992. All of this has necessitated a completely new book.

## **What The Book Is ...**

Law School Bound is a complete career counselor and performance coach for anybody wishing to attend law school and become a lawyer. It is composed of eight books and one appendix about the LSAT (Law School Admission Test). Each of the eight books and LSAT appendix is really a book on its own and is focussed on one stage on the road to becoming a lawyer. I considered breaking this complete "Law School Bound" book into eight smaller books. But, at the end of the day, I knew that serious pre-law students would want all eight books.

## **The Eight Books Need Not Be Read In Order ...**

There is no reason why the eight books and appendix need to be read in order. I expect that you will want to refer to different parts of the book during different stages of your pre-law career. Think of it as a "Bible Of Law Admissions." You will probably find yourself rereading parts of it again and again. Don't forget to read the book in conjunction with the [www.lawschoolbound.com](http://www.lawschoolbound.com) site.

## **My Approach - We Are On A Tour And I Am The Guide ...**

To use this "Law School Bound" book is to embark on a tour through every stage of the process from "thinking about law school" to actually "becoming a lawyer." Think of me as the "tour guide" - the "bus driver", if you will. I will take you from one stop to the next. Each stop will be an important one in terms of your decision of whether to become a lawyer and/or the mechanics of getting there.

## **VIPs Will Visit Us During The Tour ...**

I recognize that when making career decisions you will want the input of many people. Therefore, almost every

Chapter includes “VIP” presentations. “VIP” stands for “Very Interesting Perspective.” They are “guest speakers.” I wish to thank the large numbers of people who have allowed their written work to appear as a “VIP”. In addition, some VIP articles will be marked with different signposts, Stop and Yield, to indicate pieces that reviewers of this book found especially interesting.



My purpose in writing this book is to help you make career decisions and to then help you implement those decisions. To remember a famous football coach: process isn't everything, it's the only thing. The facts about certain law schools are interesting, but are less relevant than process.

### **The Challenge ...**

To produce a book of this size and scope is very time consuming. The challenge is to produce a book that won't be outdated by the time it has been printed and **THAT WILL STAND THE TEST OF TIME**. Issues of process will stand the test of time. But facts change quickly. So, how have I ensured that the book won't become dated?

The Solution - [www.lawschoolbound.com](http://www.lawschoolbound.com) ...

The Chapters deal with issues and topics that are generic. They have enduring value. But of course, facts matter. So, I have ensured that facts will not become dated by: creating the website [www.lawschoolbound.com](http://www.lawschoolbound.com) which contains all the factual issues (for example what joint degree programs does a school have) that may bear on your decision. In the industry this is called using a “project specific domain name.” The [lawschoolbound.com](http://www.lawschoolbound.com) site may be accessed for **INSTANT UPDATES TO:**

- rapidly changing facts;
- rapidly changing web addresses; and
- any major chapter updates.

The [www.lawschoolbound.com](http://www.lawschoolbound.com) site is a companion to the book and should be used with it.

### **Audience Specific Introductions ...**

A great challenge in producing this book has been to make it relevant and interesting to a wide range of pre-law students. For this reason, I have included “Audience Specific Introductions” for different kinds of readers. They will appear in just a moment before the main book begins. I encourage you to read the one that you think applies to your situation.

### **Some Positive Thoughts ...**

You are considering law school at an extremely exciting time. Applications are at a reasonable but not excessive level. Although it will always be difficult to earn acceptance at top law schools, acceptance is possible and achievable. There continues to be tremendous career opportunities for lawyers.

### **Some Well Deserved Gratitude ...**

I would like to thank Pam Waechter of Career Services at the University of Waterloo and Betty Wong of Winpro Consulting for proofreading and editing parts of this book.

I am grateful to all of you who have allowed your work to appear as part of this book. Your generosity will be appreciated by future pre-law students. In the 1992 edition of this book I recognized the support and assistance of Ron Gurfinkel of Monarch Books. I continue to thank Ron for his advice and expertise. Twelve years later I acknowledge - and offer very special thanks - to his daughter Casey Gurfinkel for the final production of this huge manuscript. I doubt that the book would ever have been finished without her!

Finally, thanks to Bryan Babcock for the finishing touches and 26 years of putting up with me. Thanks Bryan.

### **A Dedication ...**

This book is dedicated to the new generation of (possibly) “Law School Bound” people. Especially, “The Subject” and “The First Lady”. Love and great lives to you all - whether or not you decide to become lawyers.

*John Richardson*

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## **Audience Specific Introduction 1**

### **Second Career or “Mature Applicants”**

Please accept my congratulations on your interest in law. Most “mature” applicants either started their post-secondary education late or are thinking of a change in career. Either way, there are tremendous opportunities for you in law.

Many law schools have specific application categories for “mature” applicants. The problem is that although the categories may be called “mature student categories” they may be defined in very different ways. It is important that you focus on how “mature student categories” are defined and not how they are labeled.

The first piece of advice I would give you is to call the schools and talk to them directly about your situation. Try to determine the types of applicants they like to admit in the “mature student category.” Remember that different schools will operate in different ways.

Note also the difference between the minimum requirements to be allowed to apply as a “mature student” and the probability of success in that category. Just because you are eligible to apply as a mature student doesn’t necessarily mean that you should. You might in fact be a strong mainstream applicant. In any case, let the individual law schools guide you on this point. There is a perception on the part of some law school applicants that it is easier to be admitted as a “mature applicant.” This is not so!

The application process for “mature applicants” may be different from the application process for regular applicants. For example, there is at least one Canadian law school that requires that “mature applicants” submit an earlier LSAT score. This school also admits “mature applicants” on the basis of an interview. In any case, you must learn the admissions process for every school you are considering.

The admissions process for “mature applicants” is often more stressful than for regular applicants. I think that this is (in part) the result of a greater feeling of isolation and the necessity of possibly making bigger life changes in order to accommodate the possibility of law school. Just stick with it! The extra “life experiences” that “mature applicants” bring to the law school benefit both the applicant and the school.

When reading this book pay particular attention to the Chapters on application categories and the interview. These are Chapters 12 and 17. You may find Chapter 6 (Non-Traditional Attendance) Ways Of Obtaining A Legal Education to be of great interest.