Employment/labor contracts: Contracts or Labor Law?

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EMPLOYMENT/LABOR CONTRACTS: CONTRACTS OR LABOR LAW?

Recently there was a question on the AUTOCAT electronic discussion list on classifying the title Drafting employment contracts by Gillian Howard with the main subject heading of Labor contract – Great Britain. Her item included model clauses, draft letters and contracts, part-time work, fixed-term contracts and changing terms and conditions. Similar works are classed in two different numbers:

KD1634, Law of England and Wales—Contracts—Particular contracts—Contract of service. Master and servant, and KD3096, Law of England and Wales—Social legislation—Labor law—Labor standards—Employment and dismissal. The cataloger asking the question liked KD1634 more than KD3096 because it is under contracts, however she noted that she was confused about what master and servant meant.

Two of our esteemed law cataloging colleagues offered their comments which I’d like to share. “Master and servant” refers to the traditional labor law based solely on private contracts between employers and employees. This term sounds archaic now and probably should include the more contemporary terms “Labor contracts” or “Employment contracts.” In fact if you browse Class Web at KD3096 which has the caption, “Employment and Dismissal. General,” there is a see reference to KD1634 for the topic “individual labor contracts.”

On the other hand, “Labor law” is the legal regime imposed by the state on the system of labor relations including unions, collective bargaining agreements, etc. Even though these two areas interact today, and would be together in a modern schedule, historically they were totally different.

Note that these concepts are also separate for U.S. law and the same distinction applies to KF894 versus KF3457.

It is important to keep in mind that when working with topics that appear in two or more different branches of law, i.e., commercial law and labor law, check the work in hand carefully to determine the branch being discussed. Is the book talking about contracts as part of labor law and citing labor law statutes and cases, or is it discussing commercial law and mentioning commercial cases and statutes?

I hope this information is helpful, and please remember to send any classification questions to us or your fellow law catalogers on the AUTOCAT and TS-SIS electronic discussion lists.

IDENTIFYING VIDEOS AND DVDS FOR THE LAW LIBRARY COLLECTION

Scenario 1: Prof. Elkins stops by your office and asks you to purchase videos on evangelists.

Scenario 2: A senior partner asks if you have any videos that will help the associates prepare their clients as witnesses.

If reading these scenarios causes you to break out in a cold sweat, you’re not alone. Identifying videos and DVDs is one of the most difficult components of collection development in a law library. But with a few resources and search techniques this can become a less onerous task.

Two research resources to check for legal videos and DVDs are Law Books in Print (LBIP) and Bowker’s Law Books and Serials in Print. LBIP has begun to include video and DVD titles and the number of non-print titles will continue to grow. Bowker’s Video Directory is a compilation of over 250,000 titles, and Bowker pulls from this database for inclusion in their Law Books and Serials in Print compilation.

But no single resource can meet all of your needs. Like any compiled paper resource, you need to consult additional (preferably online) resources to catch newly produced titles. Both LBIP and the Bowker titles are available as online resources, but there is still a gap when you’re relying on compiled lists. Not all law librarians have access to Law Books in Print, or the Bowker publications. You do, however, have valuable resources available to you via the web or through your basic ILL services. This article examines resources to use beyond Law Books in Print and Bowker.

Identifying Titles

Whether you’re going to purchase the titles or borrow them via ILL (a note about ILL: many libraries don’t lend videos) you need to identify relevant