

The Making of Modern Law: Trials, 1600-1926



The Making of Modern Law: Trials, 1600-1926 is a collection of content describing the courtroom dramas that scandalized society in America, the British Empire and the world. The literature of legal transcripts and sensational trial accounts offers an unfiltered narrative into the daily lives of everyday people. Trials publications may be the best historical source we have for sex, gender, class, marriage and divorce and raise interesting questions about the nature of celebrity and crime within a given era.

However, not all of the trials documented in the collection were of a notorious nature. *The Making of Modern Law: Trials, 1600-1926* also contains material offering constitutional value from precedent-setting cases. Many trials engage important historical issues, including the Dred Scott case, the Scopes “Monkey” Trial and the Amistad Slavery case.

This new collection joins the award-winning *Legal Treatises, 1800-1926* and *U.S. Supreme Court Records and Briefs, 1832-1978* digital collections as an important addition to *The Making of Modern Law* series. More than 7,000 titles – and more than two million pages of fully searchable content – are derived from the holdings of the law libraries of Harvard and Yale, as well as The Library of the Bar of the City of New York.

Why are books about trials important?

Trial accounts are the best source available for information about the lives of ordinary people not documented in chronicles that focus on key figures of an era. Stories that we tend to think of as distinctively modern were present to much the same extent in past centuries although they might be omitted from genteel writings and official documents. The literature of legal transcripts and sensational trial accounts has long provided more frank and less expurgated account of the rougher aspects of human existence including: violence; psychological and social aberrations; sex; poverty and greed; and corruption and scandal.

FEATURES:

- More than 10,000 titles
- More than 2 million pages of fully searchable content
- Covers trial books from all countries and languages (although the great majority are in the English-language and published in the U.S. or Great Britain)
- Offers an unfiltered narrative into the daily lives of everyday people
- One of the best historical sources available for the historical examination of sex, gender, class, marriage and divorce
- Books covering multiple trials are included as well as books about a single trial



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CONTENT:

The category of “trials” includes books (and pamphlets) of the following types:

- Unofficially published accounts of trials
- Official trial documents, briefs, and arguments where these were printed as separate publications
- Official, separately published records of legislative proceedings
- Administrative proceedings
- Arbitrations (domestic and international)

SOURCES:

Primary source documents have been taken from the law libraries of:

- Yale University
- Harvard University
- The Library of the Bar of the City of New York

TOPICS:

Researchers can explore a wide range of topics including:

- Adultery (*Queen Caroline 1821*)
- Commercial Law (*Charles River Bridge 1837*)
- Conspiracy (*The Assassination of President Lincoln and trial of the conspirators 1865*)
- Constitutional Law (*Dred Scott 1857*)
- Crimes Against Persons (*Samuel Arnold 1830*)
- Divorce and Domestic Relations (*The Campbell Divorce 1887*)
- Dueling (*William Congreve Alcock 1808*)
- Elections (*George Rose*)
- Impeachment (*Andrew Johnson 1868*)
- International Law (*Chamizal Dispute 1911*)
- Land (*Martha Bradstreet 1834*)
- Libel (*Hugh Fitzpatrick 1810*)
- Military Offenses (*James Barron 1820*)
- Murder (*Harry Thaw 1908*)
- Sexuality (*Samuel Andrews 1869*)
- Slavery (*Lemmon Slave Case 1860*)
- Theft (*Jonathan Wild 1725*)
- Torts (*James Bailey 1843*)
- Treason (*Aaron Burr 1807*)
- Wills (*Girard Will Case 1844*)

FAMOUS SUBJECTS IN:

British History include:

- Charles I
- Henry Sacheverell
- Warren Hastings
- Queen Caroline
- Daniel O’Connell
- Oscar Wilde

American History include:

- John André
- Aaron Burr
- John Brown
- Andrew Johnson
- Lizzie Borden
- Sacco and Vanzetti
- John Scopes
- Dred Scott



The Making of Modern Law: Trials, 1600-1926 is an essential research tool for researchers of legal history, social history, economic history and literary history. The collection also supports studies in government, psychology, critical theory, theater and performance, gender studies, race studies and journalism.

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