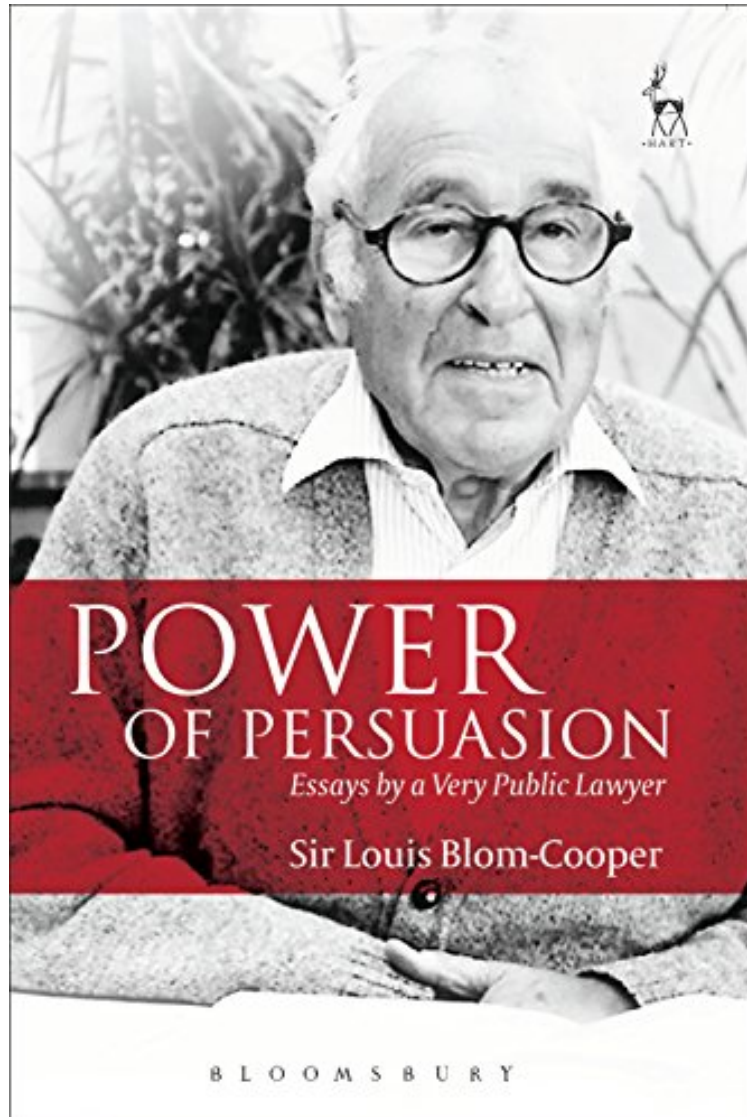


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Power of Persuasion: Essays by a Very Public Lawyer

Von Louis Blom-Cooper

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Von Louis Blom-Cooper : Power of Persuasion: Essays by a Very Public Lawyer before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Power of Persuasion: Essays by a Very Public Lawyer:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. A great collectionVon Phillip Taylor MBEA GREAT COLLECTION OF LEGAL STORIESAn appreciation by Phillip Taylor MBE and Elizabeth Taylor of Richmond Green ChambersIt is always a delight as Counsel to read of the exploits of some of our very well-known and highly respected figures in the legal world. Too often, learned legal memoirs do

not shape up the way we would expect them to and there can be a bit of disappointment after the eager anticipation of a new book being published. Not so with Louis Blom-Cooper. You know where you stand with him from the outset because of his substantial contribution specifically to public law. It is probably a bit unfair to call him a polymath practitioner although it is difficult to see where he would fit in if something as vulgar as a label were to be pinned on him: he calls himself a modern, reconstructed liberal- a man before his time and we would agree with that from his gracious speech at Middle Temple Hall when he launched this collection of essays. What does emerge from these essays, and it is of great significance today, is the lack of proper public legal education. This should never be a party political matter because the general public does not know what we, as legal professionals really do, except for what they see on television and film: both mediums getting it wrong on just about every occasion in order to produce the right story-line within a budget and time constraints. Enter Blom-Cooper who is not afraid to speak out, as Lord Dyson remarks in the Foreword when he says that Louis has always been radical in his views, and that his essays are immediately engaging which they are to lawyer and layman alike. The mark of a great advocate is the communication of information in a simple and clear manner and that is what we have with *Power of Persuasion*. You know when you read this book that you will not agree with some of the contents but you can recognize the eminence of the argument which Louis puts forward. What struck us about Blom-Cooper's career in the law was that he started as a civil practitioner and moved towards public law both crime and judicial review: for many of us it is the other way around. His essays contain much contemporary history of the last sixty years and will be of great interest to law students and practitioners, young and old, for its detail. There are 5 parts to the book covering: public law: judicial and judicious review; crime and justice; penal affairs; media law; and miscellany (including Denning as a judicial misfit which caused us mild amusement and it is a good job the book launch was not at Lincoln's Inn!). What does stand out with these essays is the forward thinking nature of the Blom-Cooper philosophy, particularly on privacy law and the serious state of affairs concerning current penal policy after his sterling work with the Howard League. We were particularly taken by the achievements of his judicial heroes, Lords Reid and Bingham. Any undergraduate today will always note the clarity of expression of Reid which stands out in the leading judgments of his day and the huge influence more recently of Tom Bingham: both in *Louis's* first eleven- it makes one wonder, who would you include? The book ends quite positively. The author talks of a divided profession 60 years ago which engaged in professional dialogue only intermittently and at arms length. Then he writes that today the picture is very different. Yes, and the final point may well yet come to fruition whereby our literary output which still lags behind the Americans will change and we will narrow the gap. And yes, we would really like to see biographies of Reid, Wilberforce, Scarman and Bingham that day will come.

Kurzbeschreibung Over the years of the developing judicial review of ministerial and governmental decisions, Louis Blom-Cooper was a leading advocate who grew up with the advent of a distinctive brand of public law. His range of public activities, both in and outwith the courtroom, saw him dubbed by his colleagues as a polymath practitioner. It included chairmanship of plural public inquiries in child abuse and mental health, media contributions in the broadsheet press and in broadcasting, and innovation in penal reform, as an ardent campaigner for the abolition of capital punishment and a plea for a modern Homicide Act. He styled himself as a modern, reconstructed liberal a man before his time. This collection of essays is uniquely prefaced by a self-examination of his unorthodox philosophy towards the law in action. It covers a variety of socio-legal topics that expresses his ambition to inform a poorly-educated public on the workings of the legal system. This aim involves a discussion of the constitutional history of Britain, unwritten and insufficiently interpreted; it reflects a commitment to the European Convention on Human Rights and portrays its international origins. The collection opines on crime and punishment; in the functioning of the courts and elsewhere the political shift from the penal optimism of the 1970s to the reactionary punitiveness of the post-1990s. The essays conclude with a miscellany of affairs, reflecting on professional practices and their product of judicial heroes in Lord Reid and Lord Bingham.

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