

Passing the California Bar Exam

If you like to slow down on the freeway to gawk at accidents, you're going to love this blog.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2007

New Essay Resource

One of the problems I have with the released answers from the Bar is that they provide only a tiny hint as to what a passing score looks like.

I took Fleming's program when I studied for the Baby Bar and I credit his materials for my passing score. He provided us with about 150 questions from past Baby Bar exams along with passing student answers. Of course, the only reason he had the answers is because the author failed to pass. But as we all know, even if we fail to get the required minimum score, it's usually because we did poorly on one or two of the questions. And unless we totally bombed it, we probably got passing scores on the other answers.

Fleming collected answers with passing scores from his students and provided them to future classes as study material. I went through all 150 of those in the weeks before that exam and I know it was a big reason why I passed.

And now it looks like someone else has decided to do the same thing with the General Bar.

I got an e-mail the other day from the guy who runs BarEssays.com. He offered me a free sign-up (otherwise, \$75) if I would take a look and help get the word out. I replied that I would check it out and get back to him.

It looks like his concept is pretty simple. He buys, or otherwise obtains, answers from bar takers who failed the exam. He sorts them based on year, month (Feb or July), subject, score range, and whether it was handwritten or typed.

One unique feature is that he provides not just answers with passing scores, but also answers with scores as low as 40, so you can see what the Bar considers an inadequate answer (I wonder if the Property exam by the depressed girl with the ring and the ex-boyfriend is up there?) And he redacts any information that would provide a clue as to who wrote the answer. An outline and checklist for each subject is also available to download.

The cost is \$75 for access through the next exam. Whether or not that's a reasonable price depends on your individual situation. At this point, I

GP



Me

About Me



The Grand Poobah
Los Angeles area,
SoCal, United States

I'll be very very (very) old when I get the news that I passed. This is a second career. I spent 23+ years in Information Technology. My third career will be when I pass the bar exam, get my license, and start my career as an attorney. This "second career" of taking the bar exam, while interesting, was unplanned. Send me email at: [bllypoobah\(at\)gmail.com](mailto:bllypoobah(at)gmail.com)

[View my complete profile](#)

can't say whether or not I would have paid for access. If I make that determination in the coming months I'll try to post an update. Links to sample material are posted on the home page so you can get an idea of what you get for your money before you decide to commit.

I would probably have mentioned the site even if I hadn't been given free access. But in the interest of full disclosure, I was asked to mention it in on the blog in exchange for access at no charge. But I only agreed to mention it if I thought it was something I would recommend to a friend.

So, [here it is](#), friends. Another of the many weapons with which we can arm ourselves in the quest to slay the dragon that is the California Bar Exam.

If you lose this post, I've posted a link on the right --->

Posted by The Grand Poobah at 6:50 PM 

12 comments:



[Jonathan Kramer](#) said...

Interesting, Brian.

As you've heard me drill into your head (repeated), you can learn a lot from released answers. BarEssay's seems to be another route to getting a look at many more passing answers, and at a very low fee.

It seems to me to be a good investment, and if you were not already getting free access, I'd buy the subscription for you.

Jonathan

[December 13, 2007 11:23 PM](#)

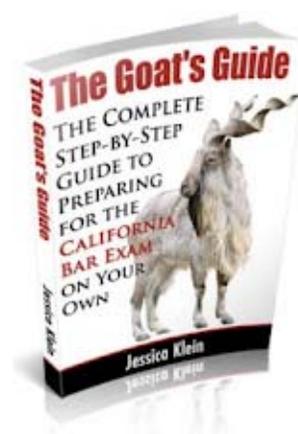
Anonymous said...

This question is a little off topic - do you know how to find a good recruiter? I don't know anything about any of them, and need some help!

[December 14, 2007 3:03 PM](#)

Anonymous said...

Hi GP, how very savvy of Baressays.com to come up with the idea of paying for essays and uploading them for viewing to assist bar applicants in prepping for the essay portion - which is the most subjective and unpredictable part of the exam. It is hard to fathom how they grade especially when you look at the big gap between first and second reading. It could be 60 at first read and 80 on the second read or 70 on first read and 60 on the second read). Any new tool that helps bar applicants zero in on what



The [Be A Goat](#) blog for self studyers.

Here's a link to a page where you can buy [The Goat's Guide](#). The complete step-by-step guide to preparing for the California Bar Exam on your own.

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they look for in essays is definitely a plus. I wish them success and hope it helps get a few more bar applicants over the hump in Feb 08.

December 14, 2007 4:41 PM

last call at the bar said...

This comment has been removed by the author.

December 14, 2007 5:20 PM

last call at the bar said...

Thanks for the tip. I may try that out as my strategy now is rote memorization of model answers.

BTW (in light of your new header), in case you don't know, there's a fine collection a Bar exam apparel here:

http://www.cafepress.com/buy/bar%20exam/-/cfpt2_/cfpt_/source_searchBox/copt_

yes, even though I am in my mid-30s and living in the SF Bay Area, I cannot do html w/o cheatsheets). I purchased and donned this one for July 07:

<http://www.cafepress.com/cp/moredetails.aspx?showBleed=false&ProductNo=91778094&colorNo=4&pr=F>

it helped me remember the subjects, too! :p

December 14, 2007 5:22 PM

The Grand Poobah said...

Jonathan: I concur!

Anon: I don't know how to judge recruiters. I tried a few right after the the exam and they were a waste of time. I got most of my responses from ads posted on Craigslist. But I ultimately found my jobs through personal contacts. I would recommend that you touch base with everyone you know in the legal field, especially those people who you might know in the class that graduated before yours. Just let them know you're looking for a job and something might pop up. That's how I found one of my jobs. Best of luck to you on that.

Anon: I agree! The problem with the released answers is that we don't know what kind of grade they received, or if they were even the best ones on the subject. With BarEssays, we can compare passing answers to the released answers. That could reveal much.

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Cal Bar None

Passed!

3 years ago

Cal Barred

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1 year ago

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Small Girl Big City

Dumb College, Dumb Students - Phoenix Law

Last Call: I'm very afraid to go there. I'm a sucker for shirts like that. I may get one but it'll have to wait until May. Or, I could buy the one that says I passed July 2007 then mark it out and write in Feb '08! Yeah.... That's the ticket! (-)>

December 14, 2007 10:07 PM

Anonymous said...

Did they ever post sample answers for the July exam?

December 17, 2007 5:04 PM

The Grand Poobah said...

Anon: No Released answers yet. You'll find them here (<http://tinyurl.com/va2s>) when they're available.

December 17, 2007 10:29 PM

Anonymous said...

I joined that baessays site. It's helpful.

Somebody should have thought of this years ago online.

There is a handwritten one in there that got a 77.5 on a Con Law question from February 2007. Any of our bar tutors would have told us that was a failing answer.

LOL. go figure. But seriously, that one appears to be the anomaly.

Comparing a 50 to a 70 answer, then looking at your own answers is helpful. (Also compare that to the bar tutor model answers.)

December 20, 2007 6:45 PM

Anonymous said...

any update on whether this was helpful?

December 26, 2007 11:01 PM

The Grand Poobah said...

Anon: None yet. I've decided to work solely on MBEs until after the first of the year. I should have an answer in a couple of weeks. It appears to be well received by others, however.

December 26, 2007 11:08 PM

Anonymous said...

Our study group is looking for a used copy of the Flemings baby bar or bar review course. As "youze-guys" are light years beyond us, could you recommend where to purchase a used copy of the audio cd's? ebay doesn't seem to have a thing!

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wizard188@juno.com

April 12, 2008 5:30 PM

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