The Litigators, by John Grisham, Doubleday, 2011

Larry Riggs
Butler University, lriggs@butler.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.butler.edu/las_bookreviews

Recommended Citation

This Book Review is brought to you for free and open access by the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences at Digital Commons @ Butler University. It has been accepted for inclusion in LAS Faculty Book Reviews by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ Butler University. For more information, please contact digitalscholarship@butler.edu.
Because Ideas Matter...

The faculty and staff of Butler University's College of Liberal Arts and Sciences presents

**Recommended Readings**

*The Litigators*

by John Grisham, Doubleday 2011

Reviewed by Larry Riggs

This is another in the long series of what I think of as Grisham's sociology-of-the-law novels. This one, though, is more comprehensive than any of the previous ones. David Zinc, a still-young graduate of Harvard Law working in one of Chicago's most prestigious law firms, melts down in the firm's elevator one morning and spends the day drinking in a seedy local bar. Thus begins an odyssey that leads Zinc, and us, through the labyrinthine world of the Law. From the top-drawer corporate and defense firm, where he has put in 5 years of 80-hour weeks as an associate, Zinc moves-drunkenly-to the store-front offices of a team of marginally competent ambulance chasers.

Zinc's involvement with what his new employers try lamely to pass off as a "boutique firm" leads him, and us, into contact with fabulously wealthy, and still rapaciously greedy, mass tort specialists; equally affluent and cynical tort defense practitioners; ruthless "Big Pharma" executives; a pompous, egomaniacal judge; and a horribly exploited Burmese immigrant family with a lead-poisoned child.

Grisham tells this story smoothly, and his denunciation of the pervasive greed and the paucity of truth or justice in the legal system never becomes a screed. The characters have some plausibility, and their motives are always recognizably human. I have found some of Grisham's novels too long, and they have not always held my interest. This one is engaging and readable throughout. It's a casual read with just enough serious social commentary.

- Larry Riggs is Professor of French at Butler University.