



# The Witness Stand: A Guide for Clinical Social Workers in the Courtroom

*Carlton Munson, Janet Vogelsang*

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Learn reliable techniques to prepare and present effective testimony!“Soon after leaving graduate school I was thrown to the courtroom wolves with no preparation. No social worker should have to go through that,” says Janet Vogelsang, author of *The Witness Stand*. Few colleges of social work prepare their students for the inevitable involvement with the courts entailed by their profession. This timely book provides you with a blueprint for presenting yourself as a competent and credible professional in court cases. This indispensable guide tells exactly what happens in court, how to counter common strategies for discrediting your profession, and what to do when your client's attorney is obnoxious. *The Witness Stand* emphasizes the biopsychosocial assessment as the essential tool for a social worker called on to testify in court. Its helpful features include sample forms and affidavits and actual court testimony. The end-of-chapter summaries can be used for rapid review and as a “to do” checklist for preparing a court case. *The Witness Stand* offers practical, detailed advice on such matters as:

- how the legal system works
- how to handle contacts with attorneys and investigators
- what to do with documents and files
- how to prepare your testimony
- how to handle direct testimony and cross-examination
- how to define your social work expertise on the stand
- what to wear when you go to court

*The Witness Stand* can help you deal with the anxiety-provoking complexities of the legal system. Instead of being confused or intimidated by legal arcana, you will be well-prepared, well-organized, and ready to present yourself as the confident, reliable professional you are.

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