



# **Bora Laskin: Bringing Law to Life (Osgoode Society for Canadian Legal History)**

*Philip Girard*

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In any account of twentieth-century Canadian law, Bora Laskin (1912-1984) looms large. Born in northern Ontario to Russian-Jewish immigrant parents, Laskin became a prominent human rights activist, university professor, and labour arbitrator before embarking on his 'accidental career' as a judge on the Ontario Court of Appeal (1965) and later Chief Justice of Canada (1973-1984). Throughout his professional career, he used the law to make Canada a better place for workers, racial and ethnic minorities, and the disadvantaged. As a judge, he sought to make the judiciary more responsive to modern Canadian expectations of justice and fundamental rights.

In *Bora Laskin: Bringing Law to Life*, Philip Girard chronicles the life of a man who, at all points of his life, was a fighter for a better Canada: he fought antisemitism, corporate capital, omnipotent university boards, the Law Society of Upper Canada, and his own judicial colleagues in an effort to modernize institutions and re-shape Canadian law. Girard exploits a wealth of previously untapped archival sources to provide, in vivid detail, a critical assessment of a restless man on an important mission.



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