

# CIVIL PROCEDURE

#### **Second Edition**

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Second Edition

To the memory of James A. Martin

#### PREFACE

Process lies at the core of our system of law: It expresses many of our culture's basic ideas about the meaning of fairness; it determines the victor in close cases; and it further determines which cases will be close ones. Procedure is also the area of law least understood and most maligned by lay observers. As a culture, we root for underdogs and insist that the rules not be stacked against them. But we are equally quick to condemn a case for having been decided on a "legal technicality," a phrase that usually means that a procedural rule has come into operation.

One finds similar ambivalence pervading debate about the behavior of courts and lawyers. As a society we demonstrate a healthy belief in the efficacy of lawsuits to solve social, business, and personal problems. But at the same time we worry about what many believe is an excessive willingness to seek such solutions. The ensuing debate ranges from the role of courts in restructuring major social institutions to the question of whether lawyers exacerbate disputes by reflexively behaving in competitive, adversarial ways.

All of these issues are procedural. Lawyers thus need to understand process as a tool of their trade, as a constitutive element of the legal system, and as a focus of debates about social values. Yet civil procedure is, by most accounts, the most difficult and frustrating first-year course. Students come to law school with little experience with procedure and an impression that cases simply arrive at the point of decision. Moreover, first-year students sense that procedure may be the area in which lawyering counts most; the notion that meritorious cases may be lost because of bad lawyering outrages their sense of justice even as it creates anxiety.

Our goal is to show procedure as an essential mechanism for presenting substantive questions and as a system that itself often raises fundamental issues regarding social values and the allocation of costs. We hope that students will begin to appreciate that lawyers move the system and that, to a large extent, clients' fates are necessarily dependent on the wisdom, skill, and judgment of their lawyers. Moreover, although all would agree that cases should not be decided on the basis of "mere" technicalities, fierce dispute quickly arises when one tries to distinguish the rules of mere procedure from those that guard the boundaries of fairness.

In addition to considering such theoretical issues, we have some practical goals. We want students to have a working knowledge of the procedural system and its sometimes areane terminology. We see the course as an introduction to the techniques of statutory analysis. We hope that xxvi Preface

students will better understand the procedural context of the decisions that they read in other courses. To these ends we have tried to select cases that are factually interesting and that do not involve substantive matters beyond the experience of most first-year students. The problems following the cases are intended to be answerable by first-year students and to present real-life issues. Finally, we have incorporated a number of dissenting opinions to dispel the notion that most procedural disputes present clear-cut issues.

The organization of the book follows the sequence that most procedure courses use. After a brief overview of the entire procedural system, we consider jurisdiction, choice of law, remedies, pleading, parties and joinder, discovery, decision without trial, trial, appeal, and former adjudication. Although this organization has the advantage of being in sequential order, there is no particular magic about it. Thus, although one of the authors has followed these chapters in sequence in teaching the course, another first goes through the entire procedural system from pleading through trial and former adjudication and then considers jurisdictional and joinder issues.

Cases have been severely edited to eliminate citations, and they read somewhat differently than real case reports; we hope that they err in the direction of smoothness. Citations are retained when they refer to the writing of important scholars or otherwise seem significant. We have eschewed the temptation to list large numbers of cases or articles following the principal cases. Footnotes have been eliminated without indication. Those that survive retain their original numbers, while the editors' footnotes employ asterisks.

We have used several special citation forms: F. James and G. Hazard, Civil Procedure (3d ed. 1985), is cited as James and Hazard; C. Wright, Federal Courts (4th ed. 1983), is cited as Wright, Federal Courts; J. Moore, Federal Practice and Procedure (1969), is cited as Moore; C. Wright and A. Miller, Federal Practice and Procedure (1969), is cited as Wright and Miller.

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Those whose assistance was acknowledged in the preface to the first edition built the foundation on which this book rests. This revision has incurred additional debts of its own, benefiting from the help of many persons, particularly Leslye Firestone at Little, Brown. Research for this

Preface xxvii

edition has been supported by the Dean's Fund of the UCLA School of Law and by the Stanford Legal Research Fund, made possible by a bequest from Ira S. Lillick and other friends of Stanford Law School.

But the greatest contribution, and the one that gives the greatest pain to remember, is the one acknowledged in the dedication. James A. Martin's death has deprived this book of one of its original conceivers. His involvement with the project extended over the several years of writing and editing but drew on a much longer and deeper commitment to law and to teaching. We — and his students — will miss his high intelligence and good cheer, his broad knowledge of procedure, and his dedication to the project. We are consoled by the knowledge that his intelligence and his scholarship survive.

Jonathan M. Landers Stephen C. Yeazell

January 1988

# **CONTENTS**

Preface		XXV
	N OVERVIEW OF THE ROCEDURAL PROCESS	1
A. B.	The Idea and the Practice of Procedure Where Can the Suit Be Brought?  1. Subject Matter Jurisdiction Gordon v. Steele Notes and Problems  2. Personal Jurisdiction Notes and Problems  3. Venue Notes and Problems  4. Service of Process Notes and Problems  Stating the Case — Pleadings  1. The Lawyer's Responsibility Smith v. Egger Notes and Problems  2. The Complaint Bell v. Novick Transfer Co. Notes and Problems  3. The Response — Answer and Motions Notes and Problems Counterclaims Notes and Problems Cross-claims Notes and Problems Third-party Claims Answer and Counterclaim Notes and Problems  4. Amendment of Pleadings	1 3 4 5 9 9 10 10 11 12 12 12 12 12 13 14 14 15 16 18 18 19 19 19 20 21 21 21
D.	Parties to the Lawsuit  1. Permissive Joinder  Notes and Problems	22 22 22

X

		2. Compulsory Joinder	23
		3. Intervention	24
		Notes and Problems	24
		Massachusetts Association of	
		Afro-American Police v. Boston	
		Police Department	25
		Notes and Problems	26
			26
	777	4. Class Actions	
	E.	Factual Development — Discovery	27
		Notes and Problems	27
		Goldinger v. Boron Oil Co.	29
		Notes and Problems	32
	F.	Pre-Trial Disposition — Summary Judgment	32
		Donnelly v. Guion	33
		Notes and Problems	37
	G.	Trial	39
		Norton v. Snapper Power	
		Equipment	42
		Notes and Problems	44
	H.	Litigation and Repose — Former Adjudication	45
		Notes and Problems	47
		Rush v. City of Maple Heights	47
		Notes and Problems	53
	T	Appeals	53
	Ι.		55
		Dunn v. Phoenix Newspapers, Inc.	
		Notes and Problems	58
		Note: Civil Procedure in Your	=0
		Substantive Courses	59
TT	TTT	DICDICTION	(1
11.	JU	RISDICTION	61
	Α.	Jurisdiction in Anglo-American Law	61
		1. The Idea of Jurisdiction	61
		2. Jurisdiction and the Constitution	62
	B.	Personal Jurisdiction	63
		1. The Origins	63
		Pennoyer v. Neff	64
		Notes and Problems	69
		2. The Modern Formulation	74
		a. Power: The Basic Structure — Statutory	7.1
		Constraints	75
		Markham v. Anderson	76
		Notes and Problems	78

Note: The Mechanics of	
Jurisdiction — Challenge and	
Waiver	80
Notes and Problems	80
Power: The Basic Modern Constitutional	
Formulation	82
International Shoe Co. v.	
Washington	82
Notes and Problems	87
Power: The Absorption of In Rem	
Jurisdiction	90
Shaffer v. Heitner	91
Notes and Problems	105
Power: Defining Substantial Justice	107
Helicopteros Nationales de	201
Colombia, S.A. v. Hall	108
Notes and Problems	114
World-Wide Volkswagen Corp. v.	2.2.3
Woodson	115
Notes and Problems	126
Note: Long-Arm Jurisdiction and	120
the Federal Courts	127
Burger King Corp. v. Rudzewicz	128
Notes and Problems	134
Asahi Metal Industry Co. v.	171
Superior Court	137
Notes and Problems	144
The Outer Limits of Jurisdictional Power:	1.77
	147
Jurisdiction to Determine Jurisdiction Insurance Corp. of Ireland v.	1 17
Compagnie de Bauxites de	
Guinée	148
Notes and Problems	153
	100
b. Consent as an Alternative Basis of	154
Jurisdiction	154
National Equipment Rental v.	1
Szukhent	155
Notes and Problems	158
Overmyer v. Frick	159
Notes and Problems	163
c. The Requirement of Notice	164
Mullane v. Central Hanover Bank	3.00
& Trust Co.	166
Notes and Problems	173
Note: The Mechanics of Service	
of Process	174

		3.	Statutory Limitations and Discretionary	
		7.	Refusal of Jurisdiction	178
			a. Venue as a Further Localizing Principle	179
			Notes and Problems	183
				10)
			Note: Jurisdiction, Venue, and	102
			"Business"	183
			b. Transferring and Declining Jurisdiction:	101
			Transfer and Forum Non Conveniens	184
			(1) Transfer Under 28 U.S.C. §1404	184
			(2) Forum Non Conveniens	186
			In re Union Carbide Corp. Gas	
			Plant Disaster	186
			Notes and Problems	190
	C.	Su	bject Matter Jurisdiction of the Federal Courts	193
		1.	The Idea and the Structure of Subject Matter	
			Jurisdiction	193
		2.	Federal Question Jurisdiction	195
			Louisville v. Mottley & Nashville	
			Railroad	196
			Notes and Problems	199
			Note: Raising Objections to	
			Federal Subject Matter	
			Jurisdiction	201
		3.	Diversity Jurisdiction	202
		7.	Note: The Reason for Diversity	202
			Jurisdiction	202
			Mas v. Perry	202
			Notes and Problems	205
				203
			Note: The Future of Diversity	207
			Jurisdiction	207
		4	Note: Amount in Controversy	208
		4.	Pendent and Ancillary Jurisdiction	210
			Introductory Note	210
			United Mine Workers v. Gibbs *	212
			Notes and Problems	217
		5.	Removal	219
			Bright v. Bechtel Petroleum, Inc.	219
			Notes and Problems	224
III.	TF	IE.	ERIE PROBLEM	225
	A	Sta	ate Law in the Federal Courts	225
			When State Law Must Be Applied	225
		4.1	Erie Railroad v. Tompkins	226
			Litte Ratifold v. 10mpkills	220

Contents	xiii

		Notes and Problems	232
		Guaranty Trust Co. v. York	234
		Notes and Problems	238
		Byrd v. Blue Ridge Rural Electric	
		Cooperative, Inc.	240
		Notes and Problems	243
		Hanna v. Plumer	246
		Notes and Problems	255
		Note: Recent Erie Issues in the	
		Lower Courts	260
		2. The Determination of State Law	261
		McKenna v. Ortho Pharmaceutical	
		Corp.	261
		Notes and Problems	272
		Note: Abstention and Certification	273
	B.	Federal Common Law	275
		Illinois v. City of Milwaukee	276
		Notes and Problems	279
	C.	Borrowing State Law in Federal Courts	281
		Occidental Life Insurance Co. v.	
		EEOC	281
		Notes and Problems	284
WW 7	DT	PAREDIEC.	80=
IV.	KE	EMEDIES	287
		Adjudication and Its Alternatives	287
	В.	Damages	288
		<ol> <li>Compensatory Damages</li> </ol>	288
		United States v. Hatahley	289
		Notes and Problems	290
		2. Other Forms of Damages	291
	C.	Non-Monetary Remedies	292
		1. The Idea of Specific Relief	292
		2. An Excursus on Equity and on Remedial	
		Hierarchy	293
		Sigma Chemical Co. v. Harris	295
		Notes and Problems	297
		Note: Equitable Remedies	298
	-	3. Declaratory Relief	299
	D.	Attorneys' Fees	300
		Notes and Problems	303
		Notes and Problems	305
		Evans v. Jeff D.	307
		Notes and Problems	311

xiv Contents

	E.	Provisional Remedies	312	
		1. Preliminary Injunctions and Temporary		
		Restraining Orders: The Basic Problem	313	
		William Inglis & Sons Baking Co.		
		v. ITT Continental Baking Co.	313	
		Notes and Problems	315	
		2. Prejudgment Garnishment and Attachment	317	
		Fuentes v. Shevin	318	
		Notes and Problems	329	
	F.	Resolving Disputes Without Judicial Adjudication	332	
	1.	Lawyers, Clients, and Goals		
		2. Other Ways of Disputing	333 334	
		a. Negotiation	335	
		Notes and Problems	336	
		Notes and Problems	337	
		b. Mediation	337	
		Notes and Problems	338	
		c. Minitrials	339	
		Notes and Problems	340	
		d. Arbitration	340	
		Notes and Problems	341	
		27 21 22 22 23 24 27 27 27	271	
		e. Nonadjudicative Resolutions Within Litigation	342	
		Notes and Problems	343	
		Notes and Problems	344	
		Notes and Problems	345	
		3. Choosing Adjudication or Its Alternatives	345	
		5. Choosing Adjudication of its Alternatives	242	
V.	PL	EADING	347	
	A.	Common Law Pleading, Forms of Action, and		
		Equity: A Brief Overview	347	
		1. Common Law Procedure	348	
		a. Plaintiff	349	
		b. Defendant	350	
		c. Plaintiff	352	
		d. Defendant	352	
		e. Later Pleadings	352	
		f. Closing the Pleadings	352	
		g. Consistency in Pleading	353	
		h. Singleness of Issue	353	
		i. Joinder of Claims and Parties	354	
		j. Demurrer Opens the Record	355	
		Notes and Problems	355	
		1 TOTO WING I TODICITIS	222	

Contents xv

	2.	The Forms of Action	356
	4.		358
		a. Trespass and Case	359
		Scott v. Shepherd	
		Notes and Problems	363
		b. Recovery of Personal Property	365
		Notes and Problems	366
		c. Recovery of Land	367
		d. Contract — Special Assumpsit and	260
		General Assumpsit	368
	-	Notes and Problems	370
	3.	Equity	372
		a. Scope of Equity	374
		b. Doctrines of Equity	377
		c. Equity Procedure	378
-		Notes and Problems	381
В.		de Pleading	381
	1.	Theory of Pleading	383
		Ross v. Mather	383
		Notes and Problems	387
	2.	Stating the "Facts"	391
		Gillispie v. Goodyear Service	
		Stores	391
-	-	Notes and Problems	393
C.	12	deral Pleading	395
	1.	0	395
		Rannels v. S. E. Nichols, Inc.	395
		Notes and Problems	399
		Note: Consistency in Pleading	402
	2.	Ethical Limitations and Disfavored Cases	403
		a. Ethical Principles as a Limitation	403
		Eastway Construction Corp. v.	
		City of New York	404
		Notes and Problems	408
		b. Disfavored Claims?	411
		(1) Fraud	411
		Ross v. A. H. Robins Co.	411
		Notes and Problems	414
		(2) Civil Rights	415
		Fisher v. Flynn	417
		Notes and Problems	419
	3.	Allocating the Elements	421
		Cleary, Presuming and Pleading:	
		An Essay on Juristic Immaturity	422
		Gomez v. Toledo	429
		Notes and Problems	433

xvi Contents

	D.	Re	sponding to the Complaint	434
			Notes and Problems	434
		1.	Pre-Answer Motion	434
			Notes and Problems	435
		2.	Answer	438
			a. Denials	438
			Zielinski v. Philadelphia Piers,	
			Inc.	439
			Notes and Problems	443
			b. Affirmative Defenses	443
			Layman v. Southwestern Bell	
			Telephone Co.	444
			Notes and Problems	446
		3.	Reply	449
			Notes and Problems	449
		4.	Amendments	450
			a. The Basic Problem: Prejudice	450
			Beeck v. Aquaslide 'N' Dive Corp.	450
			Notes and Problems	454
			b. Statute of Limitations and Relation Back	457
			Barnes v. Callaghan & Co.	457
			Notes and Problems	460
			Schiavone v. Fortune	461
			Notes and Problems	466
VI.	JO	INI	DER OF CLAIMS AND PARTIES	469
	Α.	Ioi	nder of Claims	469
		1.	Joinder of Claims by Plaintiff	469
			a. Historical Background	469
			b. Federal Rules	470
		2.		470
			Plant v. Blazer Financial Services,	
			Inc.	471
			Notes and Problems	475
	B.	Joi	nder of Parties	478
			As Plaintiffs or Defendants	478
			Mosley v. General Motors Corp.	478
			Notes and Problems	482
		2.	Third-Party Claims	484
			Frazier v. Harley Davidson Motor	
			Co.	484
			Notes and Problems	485

Contents xvii

	3.	More Com	plex Litigation	487
			Owen Equipment & Erection Co.	
			v. Kroger	488
			Notes and Problems	498
			Amco Construction Co. v.	
			Mississippi State Building	
			Commission	499
			Notes and Problems	502
	4.	Compulsor		503
	Т.	Compuisor		203
			Bank of California National	505
			Association v. Superior Court	505
			Notes and Problems	510
			Helzberg's Diamond Shops, Inc. v.	
			Valley West Des Moines	F 7 5
			Shopping Center, Inc.	513
		nan a nan	Notes and Problems	516
		Real Party		519
	6.		Sue or Be Sued	521
C.	Int	ervention		523
			Natural Resources Defense	
			Council, Inc. v. United States	
			Nuclear Regulatory Commission	523
			Notes and Problems	529
			Planned Parenthood v. Citizens for	
			Community Action	530
			Notes and Problems	534
D.	Int	erpleader		535
	2000	orproduct.	State Farm Fire & Casualty Co. v.	
			Tashire	538
			Notes and Problems	543
E.	Cl	ss Actions	rvotes and rioblems	545
11.	1.	Introduction	an an	545
	2.		itutional Foundations	547
	4.	THE COUST		547
			Hansberry v. Lee	
	2	CLILIT	Notes and Problems	552
	3.	Statutory F	Requirements	555
			In re Northern District of	
			California Dalkon Shield	
			Products Liability Litigation	555
			Notes and Problems	560
	4.	Problems o		563
			Eisen v. Carlisle & Jacquelin	563
			Notes and Problems	571
			Phillips Petroleum v. Shutts	574
			Notes and Problems	580

		Note: Federal Jurisdiction in Class Actions  5. Attorneys' Fees Boeing Co. v. van Gemert Notes and Problems  6. Damages and Injunctive Relief  7. Settlement and Dismissal	581 581 581 586 587 588
VII.	DI	SCOVERY	591
	Α.	General Rules for Discovery	593
		1. Scope — Relevance and Privilege	593
		Blank v. Sullivan & Cromwell	594
		Notes and Problems	595
		2. Work Product	598
		Hickman v. Taylor	598
		Notes and Problems	607
		3. Expert Information	610
		Grinnell Corp. v. Hackett	611
		Notes and Problems	616
		4. The Culture of Discovery and the Discovery	<b>C10</b>
	D	Conference	618
	В.	Depositions	620
		Haviland & Co. v. Montgomery	620
		Ward & Co.	620 621
		Davis v. Lower Bucks Hospital Notes and Problems	626
	C.		628
	O.	Overbroad Questions	629
		2. Unknown Answer	630
		3. Opinions and Contentions	631
		4. Burdensomeness	631
		Notes and Problems	633
	D.	Documents	634
		Notes and Problems	634
	E.	Requests for Admission	635
		Morast v. Auble	635
		Notes and Problems	638
	F.	Physical and Mental Examination	640
		Schlagenhauf v. Holder	640
		Notes and Problems	648
	G.	Sanctions	649
		Cine Forty-Second Street Theatre	
		Corp. v. Allied Artists Pictures	
		Corb.	649