BUSINESS LAW AND THE REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT Concepts and Cases

Lusk Series

Metzger Mallor Barnes Bowers Phillips

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Sixth Edition 1986



Homewood, Illinois 60430

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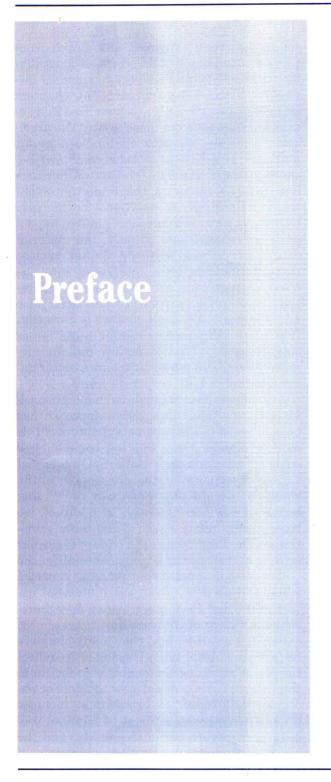
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ISBN 0-256-03334-X

Library of Congress Catalog Card No. 85-80612

Printed in the United States of America

1234567890K32109876



When the first edition of this text appeared in 1935, Harold F. Lusk could not have foreseen either the far-reaching developments that would reshape almost every area of the law he described, or the tremendous success that his book would have in the marktplace. Yet Harold's approach, a painstaking attention to the details of the "black letter" law coupled with an emphasis on emerging trends that promised to transform existing legal rules, was admirably well-suited to the needs of business students in a dynamic legal environment.

When John D. Donnell, Charles M. Hewitt, and A. James Barnes assumed authorship of the text in the late 1960s, they continued to employ Harold's approach with notable success. One constant in the changing legal environment of business over the past five decades has been that the textbook bearing Harold Lusk's name has always been among the leading texts in the business law field. The book must surely rank as one of the all-time success stories in the history of business publishing.

This latest edition of the book combines the efforts of A. James Barnes with those of four new authors: Thomas Bowers, Jane Mallor, Michael Metzger, and Michael Phillips. John

Donnell and Charlie Hewitt, like Harold Lusk before them, have decided to "pass on the baton" and retire from the rigorous business of textbook writing. We, like John and Charlie, approached our task with some trepidation. mindful of the high standards set by our predecessors. Like them, however, we assumed the challenge with confidence in the viability of the approach pioneered by Harold Lusk and in our own ability to meet the challenge. All of the new authors are tenured professors in the Business Law Department at Indiana University. We have all developed an intimate familiarity with the book through years of using it as a teaching tool. In addition, all of us are actively engaged in researching many of the topics that we were called upon to discuss.

Current adopters of the book will immediately note that a majority of the chapters in the new edition have undergone major revision. Wherever possible, we have tried to make a complex subject more understandable to students by adopting a more relaxed, almost conversational writing style. We have included many new cases exemplifying the latest legal developments and containing fact situations sure to stimulate high student interest. These cases have been edited in a way that we hope will aid student understanding.

In many chapters, current adopters will also notice an increased emphasis on the social forces that shape legal rules. Wherever feasible, we have attempted to identify both the historical factors that contributed to the evolution of the legal rules under discussion and the social function performed by those rules. We have done this because we believe that a complete understanding of the law requires an understanding of the origins, as well as the content, of legal rules.

In addition to these changes in approach, this new edition has been reorganized in a variety of ways. The discussion of legal rea-

soning has been expanded and moved from Chapter 2 to Chapter 1 due to its obvious affinity with the opening chapter's expanded discussion of the nature of law. The chapters on agency law have been reorganized and reduced in number from three to two. The previously separate chapters on landlord-tenant and real property have been combined because of their common intellectual heritage and because many of the important legal trends relating to transactions for the sale of real property are having a similar impact on lease transactions. Finally, the material from the previously separate chapter on close corporations has been integrated into the other corporations chapters. Close corporations and publicly held corporations face many issues in common, and we believe that it is more efficient to confront those issues simultaneously. Also, we believe that an integrated treatment affords students a better understanding of both corporate forms.

Although it does not involve chapter consolidations, a similar integrative approach has been adopted in the contracts chapters of this edition. Rather than treating common law contract rules and their Uniform Commercial Code counterparts in separate sections of the chapters, we discuss these two converging bodies of law concurrently. In addition, we have incorporated many of the basic provisions of the Restatement (Second) of Contracts into the text because they exemplify the Code's strong impact on modern contract rules, and because, given the influential nature of the first Restatement, they may represent the future of contract law.

Readers also will find that many chapters have been substantially expanded to reflect the latest legal developments, or to facilitate the inclusion of essential new topics. For example, the chapter on crimes now includes a more expansive treatment of criminal procedure, corporate criminal liability, and the controversy surrounding the application of

the RICO statute to corporate defendants. The chapter on employment law reflects a new emphasis on employment discrimination and the erosion of the employment "at will" doctrine. It also includes a topical discussion of current problem areas such as reverse discrimination, sexual harassment, and comparable worth. The contracts chapters now afford more expansive treatment to a variety of important topics, including promissory estoppel, unconscionability, liability for nondisclosure, and punitive damages as a remedy for breach of contract. The chapters on antitrust law now include a substantial discussion of the "Chicago School" challenge to traditional antitrust policy and its impact on recent antitrust enforcement. The corporations chapters also have been expanded to reflect the increasingly broad acceptance of the Revised Model Business Corporation Act. These examples are far from exhaustive.

In addition to expanding the substance and scope of a majority of the chapters carried over from the fifth edition, we have added two new chapters. A chapter on computer law dramatically highlights the legal dilemmas associated with this important technology and the ways in which the law is responding to these new challenges. Like the franchising chapter it replaces, the computer law chapter is an integrative effort, embracing the law of contract, product liability, intellectual property, privacy, and crimes. A new chapter on corporate social responsibility has also been incorporated into this revision. While prior editions included a treatment of corporate social responsibility issues scattered throughout the text, a practice that we have continued to follow in this revision, we saw the need for a specific chapter that would address the basic issues in the field in a more integrative fashion. In treating this controversial subject we have attempted to avoid the temptation to be judgmental. Instead, we have tried to delineate the basic issues and the major arguments of the parties on both sides of the debate, hoping to stimulate students to think independently about the subject after being properly informed of the complexity of the area and the trade-offs inherent in each of the contending policy positions.

This new edition also is accompanied by a variety of supplementary materials designed to enhance its effectiveness as a teaching tool. The teacher's manual includes suggestions for lecture preparation for each chapter and contains teaching hints, additional examples illustrating concepts introduced in the text and text cases, optional substantive material beyond that presented in the text, and suggestions for the discussion of text cases. A test manual containing multiple-choice, truefalse, and essay questions is also available, and adopters are invited to use the Irwin Computerized Test Generator System. For students, a revised student workbook has been prepared by our colleague, Mary Jane Dundas, at Arizona State University.

As is usual with an effort of this magnitude, the final product reflects the contributions of a large number of people in addition to the named authors. Merritt Baker Fox of the Indiana University School of Law wrote the chapter on the international legal environment of business. Our other colleagues in the Business Law Department at Indiana University generously afforded us their counsel and guidance at various stages of the project. Our spouses tolerated the distraction, frequent absences, and irritability that inevitably accompany a project involving a year of night and weekend labor. We also had the assistance of able external reviewers, Mary Jane Dundas, Arizona State University; James E. Macdonald, Weber State College; Robert D. McNutt, California State University, Northridge; and Roscoe Shain, Austin Peay State University. These reviewers were drawn from the ranks of our colleagues in the business law field. In many cases we responded to their

comments. In some cases, after due consideration, we elected not to respond. The responsibility for any mistakes or errors of judgment thus remains our own.

By its nature, a basic text of this sort presents its authors with a variety of often perplexing choices. Practical constraints place effective limits on the subjects that can be addressed and the detail in which these subjects can be presented. Virtually any chapter in this text could serve as the proper subject for a book in its own right. A comprehensive effort such as ours thus inevitably poses the risk of distortion through oversimplification.

Reasonable persons can surely differ concerning the wisdom of many of the choices that we have made. We hope that knowledgeable readers will concur with our choices more often than not. As always, we solicit your comments and suggestions. Our goal is to make this text the best of its kind. With your help, we will be able to do so.

Michael B. Metzger Jane P. Mallor A. James Barnes Thomas Bowers Michael J. Phillips

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