

Business Law in a Global Economy

Nancy Kubasek, Dan Herron, Dan Ostas, Neil Browne, and Andrea Giampetro-Meyer



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Gontemporary Business Law in a Global Economy

PREFACE

To the Instructor

We are all fortunate to teach business law; its relevance is not difficult to portray to business students. The cases have enough human interest to fascinate almost all students; the laws themselves are both fluid enough to fascinate those who yearn for a better world and, at the same time, are stable enough to provide a body of knowledge needed by all those who intend to be business managers. As your colleagues, we believe we can help you provide an even more exhilarating course by creating a text that is readable and contemporary.

Something Very Special For The Business Law Market

We formed a partnership with Lakeshore Communications to produce this text because they promised to address the two major complaints we heard from those who teach business law: the soaring prices of the texts and the disappointing service provided by the remaining players in the Business Publishing field.

We are especially proud to be able to say we are not only producing a less expensive book, but a **better** book in many ways. Suffice it to say, we have infused a global approach throughout the text, selected cases that are more recent and appealing than those of competing books, and integrated AASCB concerns about ethics and critical thinking into each chapter. To summarize, our book is a better book that, as a bonus, is much cheaper to the student.

With respect to the **price**, we and Lakeshore agreed that we did not want to merely produce a cheaper book; instead, what we have done is to provide a guarantee that our book is and will continue to be priced 20% below the price of comparable books. This lower price permits you to justifiably claim that you are concerned about the extraordinarily high prices of your students' textbooks and have decided to do something about it.

Lakeshore and we wanted to directly address the second major complaint of those teaching Business Law: the disappointing **service** often experienced by those of us who need materials from the publishers, but find their bureaucratic layers serving all too frequently as obstacles to our teaching. When we negotiated our

agreement with Lakeshore, we insisted that our adopters be treated as the professionals they are. We expect telephone calls and web site solicitations about our text to be answered promptly. Furthermore, we sought promises that text materials would be sent immediately to those who needed them.

Lakeshore has complied with all our requests in this regard. Our text has a dedicated 800 number (800-537-7054) to ensure that you can receive the service you need. In addition, Lakeshore guarantees a 72-hour response time to any requests for ancillaries and desk copies from either prospective or existing adopters. Lakeshore also is an experienced provider of local campus customization options and will work with you, if you wish, to develop a version of our text that is more focused on the needs of your local situation.

If for any reason there is a breakdown in these pledges, we want to hear from you. We have all been the victims of poor service from book publishers; and, consequently, we are especially earnest about wishing to make certain that the needs of your students are being met expeditiously and proficiently.

Special Features

Prefaces are notorious for promising more than they deliver. But give our text a try, and you will see that we provide the significant inclusions we pledge to incorporate. The authors have a collective experience of 120 years as business professors, and we have tried to distill that experience in determining the major constitutive elements of this text.

Before we enumerate the special features of our text, we want to highlight one aspect of the text that has received universal acclaim from the numerous business law professors and students with whom we have piloted early versions of *Contemporary Business Law in a Global Economy*. The cases we have selected are especially current and compelling.

One of the advantages of our text is that a smaller publisher can move more nimbly to assure that, in an area like business law where contemporaneity is crucial, a text like ours includes incredibly current cases. We have taken full advantage of that capability, as evidenced by our frequent allusions to Enron's problems in the appropriate chapters. Hence, you can assure your students that you have chosen a text for them that is fresh and up-to-date.

To give you a sense of how current *Contemporary Business Law in a Global Economy* is, we wanted to list just a few of the cases discussed or excerpted in the text:

- A & M Records, Inc. v. Napster, Inc., 239 F.3d 1004 (2001)
- Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. v. Waffle House, Inc., 2002 WL 6763 (2002)
- Hunt v. Nebraska Power District, 282 F.3d 1021 (8th Cir. 2002)
- Solid Waste Agency of Northern Cook County, Petitioner, v. United States Army Corps of Engineers, et al., 531 U.S. 159 (2001)
- Christy Brzonkala v. Antonio J. Morrison et al., 120 S. Ct. 1740 (2000)
- Lorillard Tobacco Co. v. Reilly, 533 U.S. 525 (2001)
- Kyllo v. U.S., 523 U.S. 27 (U.S. 2001)
- TrafFix Devices Inc. v. Marketing isplays Inc., 532 U.S. 23 (2001)
- Circuit City v. Saint Clair Adams, 121 S. CT. 1302 (2001)

The agility with which we can continue to keep the text current for you and your students is an especially valuable aspect of our partnership with Lakeshore Publications.

Following are the special features that we believe will make this book one your students will read and learn from:

A. Global Emphasis: Each chapter has one or more Global boxes that remind readers that business managers must now be prepared to be familiar with business laws that are not necessarily similar to American business law. The method behind these Global boxes is to not only prepare students for a global marketplace, but also to make them aware that American business law can sometimes profit from studying how other commercial communities encourage and regulate business practice. If law is to evolve with the help of our students, their study of legal practices among our trading partners should yield them a rich source of possibilities.

Allusions to business law in other economies is also integrated in several places throughout the book. We did not want the Global boxes to just make their appearance in each chapter without our having reinforced the global approach in the remainder of the chapter as well. So we tried to interweave references to non-American law into the general flow of the chapters to reinforce our belief in the importance of this dimension of business school education for modern managers.

B. Integrated Chapters: Each chapter begins with an actual business scenario that presents a problem elucidated by the chapter contents. Multiple times in each chapter, the text returns to the opening scenario to provide continuity and purpose to the chapter. Finally, at the conclusion of the chapter, the text reminds the reader of the usefulness of what has been learned in the chapter for situations like the one introduced in the opening scenario.

The objective of these opening scenarios is to tie the chapter to real business dilemmas that have been faced by actual commercial entities, many of them recognizable by the readers. The hope of these inclusions is to make certain that our students can see business law in action.

C. Critical Thinking Framework: The opening chapter presents a critical thinking approach created for this text by a prominent critical thinking educator. Many texts claim to be encouraging critical thinking; ours is designed by a co-author of what is perhaps the most successful critical thinking text in the country especially for Business Law in a Global Economy. Consequently, those who use this text can correctly argue that they are making a contribution to the general education mission of their schools, as well as responding to AACSB mandates that critical thinking be taught in the business school curriculum. This element of the book should be particularly valuable to those who find themselves needing to defend the importance of business law in the business school curriculum.

The questions following each case contain one question earmarked as a critical thinking question. To answer those questions, students can use the critical thinking framework provided in the initial chapter.

D. Practical Business Ethics Protocol: Business law teachers are increasingly the primary source of what business students learn about business ethics. As if the business law course were not already bursting at the seams with content, we business law professors have absorbed this additional responsibility because we believe it to be crucial to the forms of business management that promise a better economic future, not only in the sense of greater material abundance, but also with respect to the need for businesspeople to do the good or the right, not just the effective.

But we will not be effective in this objective unless we provide a protocol that our students will be able to apply when they are in the midst of contemporary business pressures. While philosophers can and should think deeply about ethical dilemmas, the speed of commercial transactions requires businesspeople to have a series of protocols that they can use on a regular basis without taking an ethical reflection break from their jobs. Our text attempts to explain one set of possible approaches that can be used as part of the ordinary problemsolving approach used by any active manager.

Chapter 2 sets out a series of logical steps for ethical decision making in a business enterprise. It encourages the learning and use of a mnemonic device that is referenced in the ethical questions raised after the legal cases in each chapter. While ethics is much more complicated than this practical approach to ethics suggests, we wanted to give students an approach that they could use in their careers, an approach that promises to make a visible improvement in business conduct if it is followed.

E. **Technology Boxes**: Cyberlaw is highlighted in every chapter where the burgeoning implications

of emerging computer and Internet technology have surfaced. The Tech Boxes reinforce our belief that this area of business law is an essential dimension of modern business practice. By our making it a regular feature of our text, we send students the message that they will need to stay informed about legal developments surrounding technology because there are so many new legal questions suggested by new forms of information transfer.

F. Assignments on the Internet: Every chapter contains assignments requiring students to develop proficiency with the Internet. In addition, Contemporary Business Law in a Global Economy will have a special password-protected web site where users of our text will receive new Internet assignments and teaching suggestions as they are developed for each chapter.

We want to create a textbook that you will be proud to use. We are open to all suggestions about how we make the book more effective for learning business law. We cannot promise we will follow all your suggestions, but we are genuine in our openness to considering whatever you propose. We have written the best book we know how to produce, but we know it can be better with your assistance. We and future readers can only benefit from your contributions. Please feel free to contact any of the authors about your concerns.

Write us at nkubase@cba.bgsu.edu; herrondj@muohio.edu; dostas@ou.edu; nbrown2@cba.bgsu.edu; and agiampet@loyola.edu with any of these concerns.

PREFACE

To the Student

Your instructor chose this textbook after looking at Y many alternatives. There are many strong business law texts, and your instructor selected this one. We want to prove to you that the choice was a wise onea decision focusing on your future. As a prospective business manager, you need to appreciate the role of business law in shaping the range of socially acceptable business decisions.

Let us explain. Businesspeople cannot do whatever they please. They function in a social world, where the interests of consumers, suppliers, distributors, shareholders, employees, and lenders rarely are identical. Business laws provide a guidebook of evolving boundaries within which these conflicting interests are acknowledged and distributed. Your task in this course is to familiarize yourself with the realm of acceptable behavior within which the general community expects businesses to operate. Go outside those boundaries, as Enron recently did, and the community imposes a harsh judgment, seeing you as having violated the community's trust.

This text was written because the authors respect business law and its role in guiding a successful economy. If we can get you to share in our admiration for the essential nature of business law as a lubricant for commercial life, you will be more engaged in improving it. And it's the excitement of making business law even better than it is that energizes all of us who find this area of study so fulfilling. We do not want to simply accept existing business law as a final word about the correct interests of commercial stakeholders. Rather, we want to learn what business law is and then assist in some small way in making it what it should be.

We know you are busy, but we are always open to your suggestions about how to make this textbook a better tool for your learning. The following are Special Features that we believe will make this book one you will enjoy reading and learning from:

A. Global Emphasis: Each chapter has one or more Global boxes that remind readers that business managers must now be prepared to be familiar with business laws that are not necessarily similar to American business law. The method behind these Global boxes

is to not only prepare you for a global marketplace, but also to make you aware that American business law can sometimes profit from studying how other commercial communities encourage and regulate business practice. If law is to evolve with the help of students such as yourselves, your study of legal practices among our trading partners should yield you a rich source of possibilities.

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The questions following each case contain one question earmarked as a critical thinking question. To answer those questions, you will find yourself using the critical thinking framework provided in the initial chapter.

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new legal questions suggested by new forms of information transfer.

F. Assignments on the Internet: Every chapter contains assignments requiring you to develop proficiency with the Internet, if you have not already done so. In addition, *Contemporary Business Law in a Global Economy* will have a special password-protected web site where users of our text will receive new Internet assignments and teaching suggestions as they are developed for each chapter. See: www.cont-businesslaw.com.

If you have seen features in a text in another discipline that were especially effective in assisting your learning, do a favor for future readers of this book; pass the suggestions along to us. We are relatively humble textbook authors, and as such we would welcome your suggestions. Send them to Neil Browne at nbrown2@cba.bgsu.edu. He will respond to all suggestions, regardless of how small or huge they are.

In conclusion, we hope your business law course is not just another course. We want it to open your eyes to the concepts, rules, and methods of persuasion that together make up business law. If the course and this text are a success, you should finish the course and wonder to yourself: how could anyone possibly be a successful business manager without a thorough understanding of business law?

Again, let us know if you believe you have a better idea for achieving this objective.

Acknowledgments

The authors wish to acknowledge the several indi- ■ viduals who helped in the creation of this book. First, we would like to acknowledge a large cadre of research assistants who helped us at various stages of this project. Carrie Williamson, currently a third year law student at the University of California at Berkeley Law School, who aspires toward becoming a Business Law professor herself in the near future, and has assisted in various aspects of this project from its inception. Much of the research for the global boxes was done by Kathleen Hale, currently a law student at the University of Arizona. Melissa Hinds, Anne Hardenbaugh, and Chaz Giles helped by finding interesting case problems. Finally, the following assistants helped with a wide variety of essential tasks: Elizabeth Barre, Steve Weigand, Emily Coplin, Jason Slobe, Modesto Rosado, Mohamed Smaidi, Kevin Minnick and Brandi Buettner.

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The book would never have been completed on time if it were not for the careful word processing of Karen Masters, who typed most of the manuscript. Her colleague in the BGSU word processing department, Tami Thomas, typed the remainder of this manuscript.

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