Legal Ethics in the Practice of Law
Legal Ethics in the Practice of Law

FIFTH EDITION

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Carolina Academic Press
Durham, North Carolina
To Jesse, Gabriel, and Maya (RZ)

For Chuck and Griz — Who are always there (LRC)

To Madeleine and Liam, who inspire me
To Lori, for everything (TC)
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Acknowledgments

We gratefully acknowledge the assistance we have received over the 23 years since publication of this volume, and honor those who helped by reprinting below the cumulative acknowledgement from the first four editions. In this fifth edition we want to remember Monroe Freedman, a mentor and dear friend, and an intellectual giant who challenged conventional thinking by integrating a deep sense of morality into our professional obligations. We miss him greatly as we continue on the trail he blazed.

We owe considerable thanks to the team at our new publisher, Carolina Academic Press, which stepped in after purchasing the LexisNexis law-school-book line just as we began to prepare this new edition. Keith Sipe, Linda Lacy, Scott Sipe, Keith Moore, Ryland Bowman, and Tasha Gervais have all managed to follow the bouncing balls of publishing transition with kindness and responsiveness. Dana Pepper and Erin Matthews, among others, have quickly worked to understand this volume and explain it to our academic colleagues.

We owe a debt of gratitude to the indefatigable Ezio Borchini, who once again provided us with an extensive list of typographical and other technical errors that make this fifth edition cleaner and more accurate. We could not have readied this edition for publication without Xiomara Dodson at Cal Western, who was our go-to person for gaining permissions for the third-party works we’ve excerpted.

More specifically, the existing authors thank our wonderful new colleague, Tim Casey, who brought fresh eyes, thoughtful insights, and a great work ethic to this effort. We are fortunate that Tim shares our long-held views for teaching this subject from the lens of practical experience, making it a meaningful and enjoyable part of the law school curriculum.

Others at Cal Western also stepped up: students Cheryl Kozdrey and Liza Ahmed helped with key research, and Laurie Farid provided administrative assistance. Cal Western faculty — most notably Bob Seibel, Janet Weinstein, Linda Morton, Tom Barton, and Bobbie Thyfault — provided support, while the incredible practitioners in the STEPPS Program maintained the connection to the real world that defines our approach to teaching ethics. Philip Genty and Jane Spinak from Columbia Law added their inspiration and feedback, as did Vermont Law School faculty, most notably Susan Apel and Jeff White.

Above all we want to thank 40 years of students from the schools where we’ve taught, and schools where adopters of this coursebook teach. We appreciate and
learn from them. They inspire us to keep making this book stronger, our classes more engaging, and our graduates better prepared for practice and committed to improving the profession.

Richard Zitrin
Liz Ryan Cole
Timothy Casey
October 2018
The creation of this fourth edition was made more challenging and interesting by all the sea changes in the world of legal ethics that have occurred since 2007. We could not have kept up with these changes without the help of many people, and we are indebted to each. Over the years we have had the help of many colleagues—academics and practitioners alike. Ethics professors Steve Berenson, Kathleen Clark, Steve Derian, Mary Jo Eyster, Monroe Freedman, Peter Joy, Drew Kershen, Rory Little, Judith Maute, Morris Ratner, Cindy Slane, and especially Bob Kuehn, now at Washington (St. Louis), have provided valuable comments over the years.

Practitioners who serve as adjunct professors have been no less helpful. Jim Schaller, who has taught for years at George Washington, and his colleague Ezio Borchini, provided us with a detailed list of errors from the third edition, many typographical and some substantive, which will make this new edition much cleaner. Richard Heafy of Oakland has provided us a stream of cases over the years, Rob Waring of San Francisco and Hon. Gary Miller of Indianapolis have provided video excerpts related to each of our problems, and Brian Faughnan gave us valuable information on state-by-state solutions to the perjury “trilemma.” William M. Balin provided across-the-board input in many areas, while Victoria Zitrin, a non-practicing J.D., used her skill as a book editor to help her husband out of tight linguistic squeezes.

Law students have worked tirelessly to assist us on this edition. Vermont Law School students Ruth White and Tracy Ulloa wrote a valuable paper that helped us significantly in revising our technology problem. Pauline Dachman, Phillip Foy, Ryan Gadapee, Jeffrey Guevin, Justin Kjolseth, Bob Liu, Eric Nickel, Ida Rose Nininger, Dan O’Connor, James Ostendorf, Christa Shute, Andrew Stone, Kami Todd, Jocelyn Walters-Hird, and Nicole Zub all assisted Prof. Cole at Vermont to research new material. Aishlin Hicks, R. Stone Lee, MD, and Amber Lu provided similar invaluable assistance to Prof. Zitrin at UC Hastings. Special heartfelt gratitude to recent Hastings grad Eugenée Heeter, who was responsible for coordinating all the permissions for this edition, which she did with grace, patience, and exceptional organization.

At the same time, we are reminded of those whose help was invaluable during our preparation of the first three editions. Claude Piller, researcher extraordinaire, gave both inspiration and perspiration to both the first and second editions,
combing the archives and the Internet for the most interesting potential new readings. Jane Nydorf was our rock for these earlier editions, unsparingly giving us her tireless and ever-cheerful help. Bob D’Arcy read every word of the first two editions and provided consistent editorial wisdom. For the second edition, Waqar Hasib made certain that every reading was accounted for and properly cited.

We again thank others who helped us along the way, particularly the first time around: Elona Baum, the law firm of Carroll, Burdick & McDonough, Mark Hsen Wu Chu, Peter Cling, Joan Cortez, Nancy Castor, Ralph Francis, Diane Gamlowski, Ted Gest, Manoj Gorantla Govindaiah, Michael Hartmann, Terry Inghroff, Kimberly B. Janas, Steve Kassirer, Janet Loduca, Joe Levin, Peter McGaw, Margaret Moses, Laurie Robertson, Tracy Swann, Kenneth Wang, Maureen Kay Wurfel, Arthur Zitrin, Charlotte Zitrin, and Elizabeth Zitrin.

We would like to single out for thanks the following: our friends at LexisNexis, particularly our wonderful editors, Ally VonHockman for the second edition, and Pali Parekh for the last two; Lee Freudberg, who as director of law school publications for the Michie Company years ago was among the first to have the vision to see the value of a book such as this; former University of San Francisco dean Jay Folberg, who may have been the first to see the value of this volume; Shannon Lovely, who as Prof. Cole’s administrative assistant guided us through hardcopy and on-line exchanges without which we could not have drafted the text of this book; and above all our friend and colleague, law professor Susan McGuigan, who assisted us fundamentally in researching much of this book and continues to work with us on future projects. Finally, we are forever grateful to the hundreds of students at the University of California's Hastings campus, the University of San Francisco, and Vermont Law School, who over the last 35 years have tested both our materials and our teaching methods, and who consistently challenge us and help to make us wiser teachers and better lawyers.

Richard Zitrin
Carol M. Langford
Liz Ryan Cole
October 2013
Preface to Fifth Edition

For students and those teachers who have not previously read this book, the first part of our Introduction, which follows, serves to explain our practice-oriented, “real world,” problem-driven approach to the discipline of legal ethics and the book’s organizational structure. We suggest you begin there, before reading this Preface.

This Preface provides those with some working familiarity with our first four editions a brief overview of what has changed—both in the world of legal ethics and in this volume.

Changes in the legal ethics world continue to come quickly. In comparison with other core law-school courses, ethics is still a relatively young discipline. Forty years ago, there was very little focus on legal ethics as part of the law school curriculum, and very few law professors considered it their primary focus. Today, it is a fully-formed discipline, having grown not only in stature as a stand-alone course, but also in relation to the dramatic expansion of clinical and other experiential courses that integrate legal ethics and skills training.

The pace of rules changes has slowed between this edition and the last. Before the fourth edition, we saw the adoption of the ALI’s Restatement (Third) of the Law Governing Lawyers, wholesale revisions of the ABA’s Model Rules of Professional Conduct in 2002 and 2003, followed by substantial revisions in 2012 and 2013 on the interface of technology and ethics. Today, the biggest changes are ever-evolving conflict of interest rules, allowing broader “advance waivers,” better defining screening and imputation, and seeing every state adopt some version of the ABA rules. Technological ethics advance so fast that our technology problem (Problem 6) needs wholesale updating each edition.

Perhaps the two biggest changes since the last edition have been the final approval—over a decade in the making—of ABA-style rules in California, and the explosion of experiential programs that integrate legal ethics. We are modifying our teacher’s manual substantially to track the California changes. While the new California rules adopt the ABA numbering system, there are still many differences between the ABA rules and those of this iconoclastic state. As far as new and more widespread experiential programs, we have always tried to keep clinical courses in mind. Now, we have consciously tried to “up our game” to ensure that this book provides what students and teachers in experiential programs most need.

This Fifth Edition keeps intact the core of what has always worked well in previous editions. Throughout, we have maintained our predisposition for academically
rigorous materials that are both accessible and readable. We have included more narratives of our own authorship, which not only gives us the opportunity to present issues exactly as we wish but also makes the text tighter.

Without exception, every Problem (for we continue to organize the book by Problems) is changed from the last edition. Many have mostly nips, tucks, and updated citations, as our discipline continues to mature. Some, though, have undergone substantial revisions, such as the problems on technology, prosecutorial obligations, and conflicts of interest. We’ve replaced a fair number of older articles with newer ones or narrative text, but we’ve kept some older pieces that continue to have resonance and currency. And, as always, we’ve maintained the last edition’s structure and “full coverage” approach. We don’t expect courses to use this material cover-to-cover. We do expect that if it’s important to the discipline of legal ethics, you will find it here.

We hope you, both professors and students, find the changes useful and enjoyable. Anyone with questions or comments can reach us at zitrinr@uchastings.edu, lcole@vermontlaw.edu, and tcasey@cwsle.edu. As always, we encourage you to contact us.

Richard Zitrin
Liz Ryan Cole
Timothy Casey
October 2018
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