

# It's a Brave New World In Legal Publishing

PACIFIC MCGEORGE PROFESSORS LEAD WAY WITH ELECTRONIC CASEBOOKS, TREATISES

Eight years ago, Professor Fred Galves envisioned a world in which law review articles would be published online with footnotes linked to animation as an enhanced learning tool. He paved the way for this interactive tool with an article he published in hardcopy and CD format in the *Harvard Journal of Law and Technology* on the admissibility of computer animation. “As I was writing the article,” Galves recalls, “I found it extremely difficult to discuss some of the admissibility issues without the reader being able to see and experience the computer animation.” The solution: computer click on a footnote—and *Voila!*—animation. >

By Jonathan Kalstrom



Professor Charles Kelso knows a bargain (his online book) when he sees one.

In the ensuing years, law review articles have picked up on the concept to some extent, but not to the degree Galves says he had envisioned. “But the thing I didn’t envision, that maybe it started, was to do casebooks this way,” he says. “And that’s what we’re doing now, right here at McGeorge.” Thomson West is publishing an interactive casebook series and Galves’ volume on evidence is the next to be published.

Two other Pacific McGeorge faculty members have jumped into the cutting-edge publishing. Professors Ray Coletta and John Sprankling are writing an interactive casebook on property to follow the publication of the Galves book. So Pacific McGeorge occupies a lead in terms of the number of professors involved. Coletta says he knows of no other law school that has three professors contributing to the series.

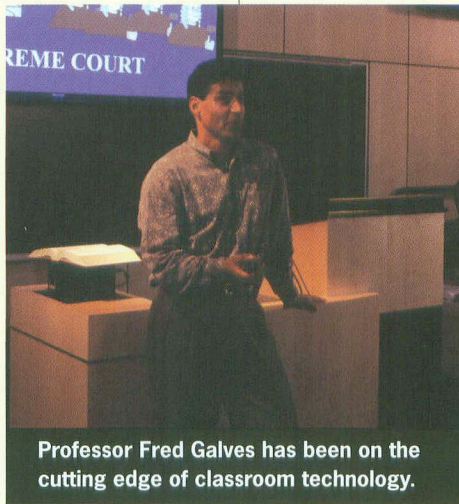
The professors’ casebooks are to be published in both print and online form. When students purchase one of the books, they also receive a password to access the online version on their computer. One plus of the additional online book for students is the interactive capability. For example, as they’re reading

online, they can click on a legal term, and a definition appears on the screen from *Black’s Law Dictionary*. Or, while reading, the student can mouse-click on the side of a case, and the complete unedited version appears, explains Coletta.

Another benefit of this hybrid product—part traditional book, part electronic book—is that the e-book allows students who are reading a case to tap into Thomson West’s electronic legal data base and immediately see the full text of any authority cited in the case, such as statutes, other cases,

or law review articles. Thus, the words in the case become springboards to access a huge array of other legal materials. Both Sprankling and Coletta mention that property, their casebook subject matter, is highly visual and lends itself to audio visual content. “In the electronic book, we will have color photographs that a student can click into, plus maps, diagrams, and other visual materials,” Sprankling says. “We’ll also be including sound recordings from Supreme Court arguments.”

Clicking on icons or call-out boxes for a particular media, such as a video, helps make a point. Students can see evidence law come alive, literally and figuratively because of the technology, Galves



Professor Fred Galves has been on the cutting edge of classroom technology.



Professor John Sprankling, left, and Professor Ray Coletta are writing an interactive casebook on property law for Thomson West.

notes. One of the innovations that Galves plans for in the evidence casebook is for actors and actresses to play lawyers and judges in courtroom scenes. This method, for instance, could be used in the authentication of a document. “What we want to do is have a link, where they would click on... and then you would see and hear a lawyer and a witness going through the litany of what gets said when you lay the foundation for a letter or a photograph,” explains Galves, who teaches all of his classes with display technology.

Another faculty member, Professor Charles Kelso, is working in this brave new publishing world. Kelso and his youngest son, Randall, a law professor at South Texas School of Law, in Houston, are co-authors of a 2,000 page legal treatise, *The Path of Constitutional Law*. The work is published exclusively online for a bargain rate of \$14.95, including yearly supplements. “We didn’t find a publisher in print that was really interested in publishing the long, involved treatise that we created,” he explains. “We did find a publisher who was interested in online publishing, so it’s a way to get the book out to the public.” Published in August

2007, it is the first comprehensive treatise on American law to be published solely on the Internet.

Kelso is working on two other legal-related works that employ 21st century technology. In what he calls his “e-course book,” students are provided text, encapsulated cases, Power Point slides and discussion questions. “And I’m going to offer it to all of my students next fall, unless there’s some really negative reason not to do so,” he says. “[It] is a way of, in a sense, being out in front.”

In addition, Kelso is working on another project that involves providing tutorials, which is a supplement designed to teach analytical, logical reasoning from the accepted basic rules in Constitutional law. In this work, a general principle of the current Supreme Court is stated, along with some examples by way of questions. It also includes flow charts showing the way that the principles work. “It’s strictly a supplement to other instruction,” he says. “But there are a lot of people who don’t get the basic rules firmly in mind, and it hurts them on the bar exam—and that hurts them in their method or reasoning. So it’s a useful supplemental device.”