

Introduction

On August 27, 1908, at its 31st Annual Meeting in Seattle, Washington, the American Bar Association adopted the 32 Canons of Professional Ethics, the first set of model standards of ethical conduct for lawyers nationwide. The Canons were based principally on the Code of Ethics adopted by the Alabama State Bar Association in 1887, which in turn had been influenced by the lectures of Judge George Sharswood, published in 1854 under the title of *Professional Ethics*, and by the fifty resolutions included in David Hoffman's *A Course of Legal Study* in 1836.

The development of legal policies and rules for the self-regulation of the legal profession and the independence of the judiciary has been a fundamental aspect of the ABA's work since then. Guided by the precept that our justice system must be maintained so that the public has confidence in the integrity and impartiality of its administration, the ABA embarked on a century of leadership to establish professional conduct standards that would merit the approval of the public. Progressing through the Model Code of Professional Responsibility in 1969 to the current Model Rules of Professional Conduct, initially promulgated in 1983, the ABA committed its intellectual and financial resources to this endeavor. Today, nearly every jurisdiction in the country has substantially embraced the Model Rules of Professional Conduct in form and substance, and other nations regularly look to the ABA framework as they develop ethical standards for their own lawyers. In August 2008 the ABA marked a century of worldwide leadership in developing standards of professional conduct for the legal profession.

As part of the centennial celebration, the American Bar Association Center for Professional Responsibility issued a call for papers requesting scholars and practitioners to submit their reflections on how the regulation of the practice of law has changed over the past 100 years and their predictions regarding the challenges of the future. The nine papers that were commissioned for the celebration are published in this volume.

In addition to the commissioned papers, the Center for Professional Responsibility held a program entitled "From Canons to Codes to Rules: 1908-2008 and Beyond: A Centennial Celebration of the ABA Legacy of Lawyer Ethics" in honor of the anniversary at the 2008 ABA Annual Meeting in New York. The program from that event is published in this book.

The Honorable Judith S. Kaye, Chief Judge of the State of New York, gave the Keynote Address at that program. A copy of her speech is also included in this publication, as is a copy of the speech given by Professor Geoffrey C. Hazard, Jr. upon receiving the 2008 Michael Franck Professional Responsibility Award in May 2008. It is particularly fitting that Professor Hazard's remarks should be included in this special commemorative edition, as he was the Reporter for the ABA Commission on Evaluation of Professional Standards (the "Kutak Commission")

that created the Model Rules of Professional Conduct that were adopted in 1983 and a member of the ABA Commission on Evaluation of the Rules of Professional Conduct (the “Ethics 2000 Commission”) that revised many of the rules for adoption by the ABA in 2002.

Finally, this book includes reprints of two law review articles related to the centennial celebration, namely James M. Altman’s historical piece on the 1908 Canons and Mary M. Devlin’s historical piece on lawyer disciplinary procedures in the United States

The American Bar Association hopes that the collective works of this publication will inform and inspire the legal profession and the judiciary as they confront the dynamic and evolving challenges of professional regulation in the 21st century.

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