The idea for this book was not mine—at least not originally. As in most instances in my life, the creative process emanated from an outside source. Someone whom I will not identify told me it would be a good idea for me to write about what it is like to be a real estate lawyer, what a real estate lawyer is, and how one goes about becoming one. As I considered the idea of writing a book while still maintaining a full-time law practice, I had to first consider whether to attempt a work of scholarship. It did not take long to reject that notion. The publisher requested something other than a form book or a summary of case decisions. Instead, this book will attempt to describe a phenomenon that exists primarily in urban areas and primarily in metropolitan Chicago—a lawyer whose primary focus is on transactional work and almost exclusively on residential transactions.

It seems difficult to admit that a substantial number of attorneys have for many years opted to eschew litigation work and concentrate their practices on the representation of buyers and sellers of residential property. That is not to say that many of these attorneys never enter a courtroom. I, for one, could not bear to devote all energies to such a limited law practice. It takes a special person to handle the same type of matter day in and day out.

But the reader may rightfully wonder whether a transactional practice is really so limited. Are there not a myriad of issues that present themselves in these matters? Does not the Law of Contract allow for a great many challenges for the lawyer, even in this age of standardization?

My purpose in writing this book is to highlight the myriad of practice areas encompassed by the term real estate lawyer and to provide insight into the most effective ways to direct your time, talent and attention to start the process of developing an active real estate law practice.