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Dean Logan's Blog

Oxford University Press Publishes Alum's Book

Posted by David Logan on 09/20/2011 at 09:39 AM

I am delighted to announce that one of the world's most prestigious publishers, the Oxford University Press, has released "A Doubtful and Perilous Experiment: Advisory Opinions, State Constitutions, and Judicial Supremacy," authored by Mel Topf (RWU Law 2006). For a host of reasons, Mel is not the typical law school graduate: he got his J.D. 35 years after he earned his Ph.D.; he attended RWU (and NYU) law while holding down a tenured faculty position in the Roger Williams undergraduate college.

The bridge for this fascinating intellectual journey was his service as a volunteer on the Rhode Island Ethics Commission, where he was troubled by the efforts of governors to restrict the power of the group by seeking, and obtaining, advisory opinions from the state supreme court. Mel used this experience as a springboard for a much larger project, examining the phenomena nationwide, and his book is the fruit of those labors. In the Acknowledgements, Mel was kind enough to thank members of the law faculty, Ed Eberle and Carl Bogus, as well as folks on the crackerjack team in our Law Library, Nan Balliot, Emilie Benoit, and Thelma Dzialo.

Besides being a successful academic, Mel has also been generous to the School of Law: impressed by the quality of instruction he received at the School of law, he endowed an annual award that goes to the 1L who writes the best brief in the Legal Methods program.



Congratulations Mel!