
TRIBUTE TO HOWARD ABRAMS

The Copyright Society lost a valued and revered member when Howard Abrams passed away on January 21, 2020. Howard was that rare and special kind attorney who contributed to our profession as both a practitioner and academic. Indeed, Howard spent ten years of his career in practice, first as an Assistant Public Defender in Cook county, Illinois and then in Abrams, Mix & London. The Copyright Society particularly feels his loss because Howard served it as a Trustee, member of the Journal's Board of Editors, and speaker on many occasions. I also understand that Howard attended *every* annual meeting of the Copyright Society ever held – a streak that began in 1977 and unfortunately ended in 2019. This says volumes about Howard's devotion and importance to the Society.

Howard began his academic career in 1977 at the University of Detroit Mercy, serving there with distinction until his passing. Such was his dedication that he continued to teach until less than a week before his death. He taught 16 different courses for his school, ranging from Contracts, through commercial law, and into copyright. Countless students benefitted from his keen intellect.

Readers are probably familiar with the defining work of Howard's academic career, his two-volume treatise *THE LAW OF COPYRIGHT*. Dozens of courts and hundreds of scholarly publications have cited this work. Howard also wrote many fine law review articles that extended influence over the field of copyright.

Howard published one of those articles, entitled *Eldred, Golan and their Aftermath*, in the Journal, and we have chosen to reprint it in this edition as a tribute to Howard. More than that, however, it is fitting to reprint this article because the fundamental questions it raises remain relevant today. Its analysis is clear, its research thorough, and most importantly, Howard shows his reader that copyright is about much more than the legal interpretation of statutes and opinions. For him, *Eldred* and *Golan* mattered not only for their results, but also because they signaled a possible shift in Supreme Court jurisprudence about the "soul of copyright." As Howard predicted, "[T]he battle over the soul of copyright" has indeed continued, with perhaps another chapter to come when the Supreme Court decides *Oracle v. Google*.

Without question, Howard was a significant figure in the field of copyright and in legal education. However, I will remember most the kind and encouraging person who made me feel welcome as a new professor. Rookies in every field wonder how they will be received by established veterans. Howard treated all newcomers with respect, using his knowl-

edge and insight to teach us gently things that we didn't yet know while also taking our ideas seriously.

It is a sad day when someone like Howard passes from our midst. At the same time, we can all smile, even if only faintly, in celebration of his productive career and how he made a difference in the lives of so many. Thank you, Howard, and may you rest in peace.

Alfred C. Yen
Editor-in-Chief