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4/07/04—Darald and Juliet Libby Professor Sanford Katz’s groundbreaking new book, *Family Law in America*, has been published by Oxford University Press.

“For over three decades Professor Sanford Katz has been an original thinker who has contributed to the important field of family law,” said Suffolk University Law Professor Charles Kindregan. “Now he has written a book which both in scope and content provides a thoughtful analysis of the many developments which have revolutionized the field in the United States. His new book is a creative study of subjects such as marriage, divorce and adoption, with a special emphasis on current topics such as same-sex marriage, domestic partnerships, relocation of a custodial parent after divorce and open adoption.”

For many years family law was viewed as a study of state regulation of relationships of husband and wife, and parent and child. Both of these relationships were clearly defined: In the case of husband and wife, it was through formal legal procedures or formal arrangements called “marriage.” In the case of parent and child, it was either through biology or adoption. Equally defined were the stages by which these relationships were established, maintained, and terminated. By the close of the twentieth century, however, basic questions about who should be officially designated a family member, and by whom, were being raised both in the legislature and through litigation. In addition, conventional models that had defined domestic relations such as marriage, divorce, and adoption were either being expanded to include contemporary patterns of living arrangements and the current reality, or new models were being constructed.

“*Family Law in America* bridges the gap between practice and legal theory,” Katz says. “It recognizes the changes that have occurred in the practice of family law in the last quarter of a century and the importance of lawyers in the decision-making process. In addition it illustrates that although so many of the traditional family law models like marriage, divorce and adoption were thought to be rigidly defined, history proves otherwise. A study of family law in America shows that for years informal and de facto relationships have been recognized legally depending upon the context in which they are raised. For the past quarter of a century, family law has reflected the social realities and if the past is any prologue to the future, we can expect some major changes during this new century.”

*Family Law in America* also describes state intervention into the parent and child relationship in child abuse and neglect cases and illustrates how this is reflected in the re-examination of the privacy of the family unit. It concludes with a discussion of adoption of children and the impact of new forms of assisted reproductive techniques on that institution.
The inaugural holder of The Darald and Juliet Libby Chair, Professor Sanford N. Katz joined the Boston College Law School faculty in 1968 and teaches Family Law and Contracts. Professor Katz has served as Chairman of the Family Law Section of the American Bar Association, President of the International Society of Family Law and Editor-in-Chief of the Family Law Quarterly. He is a member of various editorial boards of journals and, in addition to his published articles and books, has been the chief drafter of model child welfare legislation for the federal government. He is a Special Contributor and Consultant for Law for the Fourth Edition of The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language published by Houghton Mifflin Company. He was named to the Scientific Committee of the International Society of Family Law World conference in 2005.

Katz’s degrees include an A.B. from Boston University, and a J.D. from the University of Chicago. He was also a U.S. Public Health Fellow at Yale Law School. In addition to Family Law in America (Oxford University Press, 2003); his publications include Cross Currents: Family Law and Policy in the United States and England (With John Eekelaar and Mavis Maclean, editors; chapter author for "Dual Systems of Adoption in the United States" and "Individual Rights and Family Relationships", Oxford University Press, 2000); "Emerging Models for Alternatives to Marriage" (Family Law Quarterly, Fall 1999); "Domestic Partnership Laws" in The International Survey of Family Law 1997 (edited by Andrew Bainham, The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff, 1999); and "Marriage as Partnership" (Notre Dame Law Review, May 1998), among many others.