

UK Law Professor and Award-Winning Author Set to Release New Book

Richard H. Underwood, the Edward T. Breathitt Professor of Law at the University of Kentucky College of Law and winner of two Independent Publisher Book Awards, will release his new book, *Gaslight Lawyers: Criminal Trials & Exploits in Gilded Age New York*, at Joseph-Beth Booksellers on Sept. 19. The release event is set to begin at 7:00 p.m.

Prof. Underwood will discuss and sign copies of *Gaslight Lawyers*. A fascinating history of crime and punishment, the 284-page book paints a serious but entertaining picture of colorful characters, courtroom drama, and the emerging importance of forensic science and medical-legal jurisprudence in Gilded Age New York City.

From the 1870s to the early 1900s, post-Civil War New York City was becoming a wonder city of commerce and invention, art and architecture, and emerging global prominence. It was also a city of crime, corruption, poverty, slums, and tenements teeming with newcomers and standing in sharp contrast to the city mansions and the extravagant lifestyle of the rising American aristocracy. The New York City of those days is not just the venue of the intriguing true stories told in this book it is also a supporting actor in them.

“My new book *Gaslight Lawyers* tells many entertaining stories of the shenanigans of lawyers and judges in the criminal courts of New York City during the Gilded Age,” said Prof. Underwood. “Hopefully it will remind readers that: ‘[N]o country can be well governed unless its citizens as a body keep religiously before their minds that they are the guardians of the law, and that the law officers are only the machinery for its execution, nothing more.’”

Drawing from the experience of a legal scholar and from a wealth of thorough research gleaned from trial transcripts, other court records, contemporary newspaper stories, and memoirs, Prof. Underwood reconstructs and recounts the absorbing legal drama of a number of spectacular criminal cases. Among the murder trials are the Nack-Thorn-Guldensuppe scattered body parts case, the trial of Frenchy for the murder of Old Shakespeare (the so-called Jack the Ripper case), the trials of Italian immigrant Maria Barbella, who escaped the electric chair with a defense of psychic epilepsy, the ordeals of the unfortunate Dr. Samuel Kennedy, and the trial of Florodora Girl Nan Patterson for the murder of gambler and man about New York Thomas Caesar Young.

“Richard Underwood’s *Gaslight Lawyers* in the nineteenth-century equivalent of *Better Call Saul* – surprising, insightful, and hilarious. Charles Dickens would approve,” said Brian L. Frye, Spears-Gilbert Associate Professor of Law at UK Law.

Gaslight Lawyers is available for purchase through Shadelandhouse Modern Press, LLC at <http://smpbooks.com/>.

Richard H. Underwood, American legal scholar and legal nonfiction and true crime writer, is the Edward T. Breathitt Professor of Law at the University of Kentucky College of Law. He has taught a variety of courses, including Evidence, Scientific and Forensic Evidence, Litigation Skills (Trial Advocacy), Civil Procedure, Federal Courts, Insurance Law, Remedies, Law and Medicine, Bioethics, and Professional Responsibility (Legal Ethics). His legal publications include many law review articles, and he is the co-author of three legal practice books. Prof. Underwood has received special awards from the Kentucky Supreme Court for his work on the Kentucky Rules of Professional Conduct (1989) and for his service as the chairman of the Kentucky Bar Association Ethics and Unauthorized Practice Committees (1998).