Book Review

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Graw's Introduction to the Law of Contract Computorial, Law Book Company, 1995.

This is one of a series of "computorials" or computer tutorials that the Law Book Company has introduced to complement a student textbook, in this case Graw's *An Introduction to the Law of Contract*, 2nd edition. The program is the creation of the School of Accounting Legal Studies in collaboration with the Computer Based Education Department at the Queensland University of Technology. It requires at least a 386SX IBM or compatible processor with 640 KB RAM and 5 MB hard disk space. The program is not designed to run on Apple personal computers.

The program is text-based and is divided into five sections: an introduction to computer based tutorials, profiles of the fictional members of the rock band "The Contractors" who feature in several questions, a section relating to formation of contracts (with modules dealing with intention to be bound, offer and acceptance, consideration, and capacity to contract), a section relating to execution of contracts (with modules dealing with terms and operation of contracts, consent of parties, illegal and void contracts, and discharge and remedies) and revision questions.

The introductory section contains essential information regarding matters such as the functions of the various keys and gives instructions in relation to the different types of question utilised by the program. A helpful explanation of the division of the screen into question boxes and answer boxes is provided. There is also, however, information that might be considered somewhat trite such as the loca-

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tion of the brightness and contrast controls on computer monitors and the seating position of the user. In addition, the information concerning printing ventures no further than giving instructions with respect to form feeding on a continuous form printer. There is a notable absence of advice concerning the use of laser printers, or even whether the program supports printing by laser printer. It would have been of some use if the program had listed the printers that it supports.

The character profiles provide background information for the seven members of the band, such as age, interests and musical influences, and include good quality graphic portraits. Not all this information must be mastered in order to attempt the program but it provides good colour to the subsequent sections. The character profiles may be accessed at any stage throughout the question modules.

The three question sections utilise four basic types of question: multiple choice questions, true/false questions, questions which require the user to enter missing words in sentences, and questions which require the user to match items from opposing lists. Questions are either theoretical-based or relate to scenarios involving the fictional band members. The first two question sections are broken up into modules comprising ten or fifteen questions. Each module relates to a specific chapter in the Graw text. This is useful also if the user is interrupted in the completion of a section since it enables the user to quickly locate the part of the program being attempted. The final section, the revision module, contains questions relating to three scenarios that involve material drawn from all chapters. In all cases, following selection of a response the correct answer is displayed in the answer box together with useful cross references to the relevant section in the Graw text. Where there is comparative State legislation, such as that regarding the capacity of minors to contract, a separate screen lists the relevant statutes. The program keeps a record of correct responses for each module.

Overall the program is easy to use. There is no difficulty navigating between screens, although the green typeface used for some instructions could be difficult to read. Also, while case citations are included when cases are referred in questions, no citations are given for cases referred to in answers. This may be understandable due to the limited space available in the answer boxes, but nevertheless it is a disadvantage for someone attempting the questions without a copy of the Graw text handy. A Teachers' Manual, which contains the full text of the questions and answers, is also available and may be especially valuable should students have enquiries concerning specific parts of the program.

There are natural limitations of any computer tutorial in law, where rather than clear cut answers so much may depend upon argument concerning the application of law in the circumstances of the case. Wisely the creators have steered clear of attempting to adapt the program for the purposes of assessment. Instead, *Graw's An Introduction to the Law of Contract Computorial* serves as a welcome and valuable adjunct for anyone undertaking studies in contract law, and is an excellent revisionary tool.