

## EDITORIAL

TOM MILNER\*

At the time of writing this editorial, over 200 countries around the world are taking unprecedented measures to combat the spread of the coronavirus outbreak that began in December 2019. Workplaces have closed, quarantines have been imposed, and many aspects of everyday life have ground to a halt. Nevertheless, legal academia marches on.

While the global coronavirus pandemic has caused novel challenges in the development of Issue 43(2) of the *University of New South Wales Law Journal* ('*Journal*'), I am proud that its publication has continued. In the current state of global emergency, legal norms and boundaries are being constantly tested, questioned and re-evaluated.<sup>1</sup> Novel legislative changes must always be rigorously analysed to determine their effectiveness, clarity and fidelity to purpose.<sup>2</sup> Enclosed within this Issue are 12 insightful and topical articles that provide such analysis.

Critical consideration of novel legislative developments is particularly evident in the three articles selected to inform the prospective launch topic for this Issue, 'Evaluating Statutory Reform'. These articles explore inconsistencies in national reforms of civil statutes of limitation for child sexual abuse claims; critically analyse the extent to which recent voluntary assisted dying legislation reflects its stated policy goals; and examine the effectiveness of Victorian civil liability reform in clarifying institutional liability for child abuse. Although the launch event of Issue 43(2) could not proceed in person due to the coronavirus pandemic, I would also like to thank the Hon Justice Sarah Derrington, Judge of the Federal Court of Australia and President of the Australian Law Reform Commission, for generously agreeing to speak on this topic to launch the Issue.

The nine further articles in this Issue provide similarly topical contributions to diverse areas of law. These articles consider issues including: the incompatibility of irreducible life sentences with human rights; use of a Parramatta historic institutional facility as a Site of Conscience; the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority's performance against its legislated objectives; legislation criminalising fraudulent procurement of sex; law enforcement confusion over legal ownership of information; recent legislative bail reforms; predatory conduct by online payday lenders; expert

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1 For some early commentary on legislative responses to COVID-19 worldwide, see, eg, Justice Francois Kunc (ed), 'Current Issues' (2020) 94 ALJ 315; Victoria L Killion, *Freedom of Association in the Wake of Coronavirus* (CRS Legal Sidebar No LSB10451, 16 April 2020).

2 See generally Colleen Chen, 'Less is More: Regulating the Weaponisation of Disease under the *National Health Security Act 2007* (Cth)' (2018) 25 *Journal of Law and Medicine* 678; Edward Santow and George Williams, 'Terrorism Threat Assessments: Problems of Constitutional Law and Government Accountability' (2012) 23 *Public Law Review* 33; Peter Billings, 'Mind the Gap: Public Power, Accountability and the Northern Territory Emergency Response' (2010) 17 *Australian Journal of Administrative Law* 132.

evidence to counteract jury misconceptions about sexual consent; and the role of legal and health practitioners in combating elder abuse.

It has been a privilege to oversee the editing and publication of this brilliant collection of timely and important articles, which I am confident will be widely read and discussed within and outside legal circles. This is, in my opinion, the type of legal academia that will have real impact.

Publication of this Issue represents the culmination of a year of dedicated work by a great number of people, and I would like to take this opportunity to extend my gratitude to everybody that has contributed to this Issue. This Issue is your achievement, and it has been a pleasure to work with all of you along the way.

First and foremost, I must thank the 24 authors of the 12 articles published in Issue 43(2) for entrusting the *Journal* with your legal works. The *Journal's* reputation and position in legal academia relies upon exceptional submissions, and your articles uphold that standard. I expect the *Journal's* audience will enjoy reading them as much as I have enjoyed engaging with them as Editor.

I am also deeply grateful to all of the anonymous peer reviewers for Issue 43(2), for generously granting us your time and your expertise in reviewing articles submitted to the *Journal*. Your insights are fundamental to the success of our student-run publication.

The *Journal* could not exist in its current form without the steadfast and generous support of our three Premier Sponsors: Herbert Smith Freehills, King & Wood Mallesons, and Allens. I am particularly grateful to Herbert Smith Freehills for their support of Issue 43(2) in particular and their flexibility in exploring digital alternatives to an in-person launch event at the Herbert Smith Freehills offices.

I would like to extend special thanks to our Faculty Advisors, Professor Rosalind Dixon and Professor Gary Edmond. Your consistently wise advice has been essential to the ongoing success of the *Journal* and the sanity of the Executive Committee. I also thank Professor George Williams AO and the UNSW Law Faculty for their support.

Beyond the brilliant articles, the other key to the *Journal's* reputation for publishing outstanding legal scholarship is its hardworking and diligent Editorial Board, comprised entirely of student volunteers. Thank you for your commitment, exceptional attention to detail and unwavering professionalism and good humour.

My most heartfelt thanks go to the *Journal's* Executive Committee, with whom I have shared the burdens of peer review, editing and *Journal* management over the past year. I am confident the *Journal* remains in excellent hands under your faithful stewardship. I am particularly grateful to have worked with two exceptional Executive Editors, Anne Yang in 2019 and Antonia Xu in 2020.

Finally, and most importantly, I am grateful to my friends and family for their continued support, encouragement and patience over the past year. Thank you for putting up with my regular absence and distraction and for keeping the challenges of publishing Issue 43(2) in perspective.