

EDITORIAL

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It is a daunting task to write the opening words for this final Issue of Volume 44 of the *University of New South Wales Law Journal* ('*Journal*'), but I do so with immense pride and gratitude. This year, like its predecessor, has been one of change and uncertainty, demanding flexibility and innovation to address pressing problems.

Thus emerges the theme for the launch of Issue 44(4) – 'Filling Critical Gaps' in laws, in scholarship, and in the profession. The 14 articles comprising Issue 44(4) seek to do just this, presenting nuanced perspectives on a diverse range of legal topics that demand critical insight. Some articles identify gaps in existing legal frameworks on press freedom, forced marriage and responsible investment. Others offer proposals for the way in which the law might better determine employment status, sentence offenders with Autism Spectrum Disorder, and regulate price gouging, algorithmic collusion and voluntary assisted dying. Others still, engage in measured criticism of laws and policies as established as native title, and as novel as the COVIDSafe App. And finally, some articles offer nuanced ways of reconceptualising legal instruments to better protect or serve their intended stakeholders, from treaties on international air carriage¹ and the international sale of goods,² to community titles schemes in Queensland, and section 116 of the *Australian Constitution*.

I cannot do these articles justice in one pithy paragraph, but having read them several times over the course of the year I can confidently vouch for their insightful commentary and academic rigour. I am grateful to the authors published in this Issue for entrusting us with their work; it is our honour to publish it. Thank you for your kindness, understanding and appreciation throughout the publication process – it truly makes it worth our while. Thank you also to the anonymous peer reviewers without whose goodwill we could not publish this calibre of work.

The theme for the launch of Issue 44(4) is equally inspired by the development and trajectory of the legal profession in Australia towards acknowledging and filling critical demographic gaps. As of 2021, there are now more female than male solicitors in every state and territory in the country.³ In a toast to the first female Justice of the High Court, Mary Gaudron, upon her retirement in 2003, Justice

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1 *Convention for the Unification of Certain Rules for International Carriage by Air*, opened for signature 28 May 1999, 2242 UNTS 309 (entered into force 4 November 2003).

2 *United Nations Convention on Contracts for the International Sale of Goods*, opened for signature 11 April 1980, 1489 UNTS 3 (entered into force 1 January 1988).

3 Caroline Tomiczek et al, Urbis, 2020 *National Profile of Solicitors* (Final Report, 1 July 2021) 1.

McMurdo cited her legacy as ‘proof that no doors are permanently closed, even if sometimes they do not seem very open’.⁴ I recognise that there is a long road ahead in achieving authentic diversity in the profession, particularly in the upper echelons, but I am hopeful that this shift further opens these doors. I am deeply grateful to Ms Sonja Stewart, CEO of the Law Society of New South Wales, the first woman and first Indigenous person to hold this position, and an inspiring advocate for diversity, for graciously agreeing to deliver the keynote address at the launch of this Issue.

The Executive Committee for 2021 has also made it our priority to identify areas for reform and foster positive change in the day-to-day management of the *Journal*. I am incredibly privileged to be part of a team whose genuine passion for wellbeing and diversity shines through their work. I could fill the remaining pages of this Issue with my gratitude and praises, but I will endeavour for brevity. To our humble, caring, Executive Editor, Tina – you have been my anchor, and for that I am grateful. Caitlin and Arani, our Digital Editor and Forum Editor, thank you for your good humour and unwavering support – the *Journal* is thriving because of all your hard work. To my fellow Issue Editors for Volume 44, Drew, Rebecca and Lilian, your dedication, tenacity, and camaraderie during a whirlwind year has been both a great inspiration and a source of comfort. I also particularly want to thank Issue Editor 45(1), Karie, without whose fierce support and kindness I wouldn’t have had the courage to take up this mantle. And I pass the mantle on to Aakriti, Katherine and Georgia in the full knowledge that the *Journal* will flourish in their capable hands. It is a rare and wonderful thing to have colleagues turn into friends, and I am so very grateful for all of you.

My most heartfelt thanks must go to the Editorial Board, a 50-strong contingent of wise, witty, pedants who are the beating heart of the *Journal*. It has been my great pleasure to get to know you all and to see you in action. The editing process is a demanding one and the determination with which each of you has approached the task is a testament to your character.

I would also like to express my gratitude to the University of New South Wales Faculty of Law and Justice. Thank you to our Faculty Advisers, Professors Rosalind Dixon and Gary Edmond for their sage advice in times of crisis and for helping us flourish as a student-run publication. Thank you also to our Dean, Professor Andrew Lynch, for the pride you take in the success of the *Journal* – we value your support greatly.

The *Journal* is grateful for the enduring support of our premier sponsors Herbert Smith Freehills, Allens and King & Wood Mallesons. My special thanks to King & Wood Mallesons for generously supporting the launch of Issue 44(4).

Last but not least, I remain forever grateful to my parents, sister and wonderful friends. Thank you for your unconditional love and belief, and for endeavouring to ensure that I eat all my meals on time.

4 Justice Margaret A McMurdo, ‘Speech Proposing a Toast to Retiring Justice Mary Gaudron’ (Speech, Australian Association of Women Judges, 22 February 2003) 5.

I will leave the more erudite discussion to those far more qualified than I, and end with a quote from my favourite fictional trailblazer, Leslie Knope. We do what we do for ‘the chance to work hard at work worth doing, alongside a team of people who we love’.⁵ It has been an honour and privilege to contribute to the enduring legacy of the *Journal*, and to do so with some of my dearest friends. The path has been winding, but it’s been one worth taking.

5 ‘One Last Ride’, *Parks and Recreation* (Open 4 Business Productions, 2015) 0:40:24–0:40:32.