

## Editorial

It is a great privilege to be able to contribute to this issue of the journal by way of an editorial. The contents of this issue illustrate only too clearly the dynamic nature of educational law concerns in the common law world and beyond. Consonant with the journal's objectives to facilitate understanding of the impact of law upon all spheres of education, the contributions to this issue are both diverse and stimulating. Articles from the United States, South Africa and Canada explicitly reflect the internationalisation of education law concerns, with contributions which are both informative concerning comparative legal positions, and also provide stimulus in the matters of legal method and social justice concerns. In this context, the article by Michaelis which canvasses postmodern perspectives in order to found a critical theory of juvenile justice is of significance.

Amongst the Antipodean contributions, the journal is pleased to break further new ground. The article by Williams and Dillon introduces the complex and fascinating subject of what is fast becoming known as "cyberlaw". As the authors argue persuasively, there are aspects of existing legal regulation which are not easily applied to the internet. This article raises contemporary and compelling questions for all educators. Abiding social justice concerns of relevance to all educators are raised in Farrell's article on inmate mothers in Australian corrections. The breadth and depth of the empirical research in this contribution is a particular highlight, and the author provides a fresh perspective on the factors which affect the access of inmate mothers to educational opportunities.

Oosthuizen and Beckman provide an informative introduction to the history of education law in South Africa, and some indication of the range of challenges facing that jurisdiction under its new Constitution and Bill of Rights. Khan's article provides insights into English legal obligations to attend school. Readers may have been fortunate enough to hear Professor Charles Russo speak at the ANZELA Conference in Canberra in October 1998 on the topic of the Legal Rights of American Students with Disabilities. In this issue of the journal, we are pleased to be able to include a contribution from Professor Russo and Allan Osborne on this subject, which provides an accessible overview of this thorny area.

This issue also includes three book reviews of recent publications on education law from Canada and the United Kingdom. The latest in the case notes series has been provided by Paul MacMahon on the New South Wales Supreme Court decision in *DM v State of New South Wales*. In a recent address, the newly-appointed Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of New South Wales, presciently named administrative law as an area of significant growth and development in the twenty-first century. It is thus timely that this journal publishes a case note on the issue of procedural fairness requirements in the area of student discipline. Administrative law principles may have far reaching effects upon the administrative policies and practices in education as the decision discussed by MacMahon demonstrates.

The issue contains a wealth of food for thought, and the editors welcome all comments on the contents and issues raised. It is the hope of the editors that in subsequent issues the case notes section will grow further to complement the strength and diversity of other contributions. Special thanks in this issue are due from me to the Editor, Dr Doug Stewart for his sage advice, and to Donna Bennett for her efficiency, calm and professionalism.

Katherine Lindsay  
Assistant Editor