



Understanding Company Law

by Phillip Lipton and Abe Herzberg; LBC Information Services 1995; 6th edn; 745 pp; \$65.00 softcover.

Understanding Company Law is a fabulous book. It's the only reason I passed company law. Lefty lawyers generally don't need to be experts on the Corporations Law but it's nice not to fail.

Lipton and Herzberg divide the book into fairly standard chapters on membership, dividends, takeovers, receivership etc. It is well set out and easy to both read and understand. The sixth edition incorporates changes made by the *Corporate Law Reform Act 1994* (Cth) and the *Corporations Legislation Amendment Act 1994* (Cth) but not those made by the *First Corporate Law Simplification Act 1995* (Cth) or those proposed in the *Second Corporate Law Simplification Bill*.

Understanding Company Law is an excellent source for students, particularly during that pre-exam panic cram phase. However, it may not be suitable for all lay people. I lent my copy to a physicist friend who was thinking of setting up a company. If a man who wrote a thesis on the right-handedness of the universe couldn't understand it, what hope is there for mere mortals? FW

MAJAH, Indigenous Peoples and the Law

edited by Greta Bird, Gary Martin and Jennifer Nielsen; The Federation Press, 1996; 298 pp; \$35.00, softcover.

This book contains essays on a wide range of topics of interest to people familiar with issues in relation to Aboriginal people and contemporary Australian society. Many of the contributors are distinguished commentators in their fields, such as Chris Cunneen, Stanley Yeo and Jenny Blokland. It is the first of a series of annual monographs to be published by the Fac-

ulty of Law and Criminal Justice of Southern Cross University.

The series is introduced by the Foreword of Sir Gerard Brennan and has the general purpose of critically examining the place and appropriateness of law in the wider struggles for justice. For this first in the series, the specific focus is on 'the perception of Australia as a post-colonial state . . . (with) the authors assert[ing] that Indigenous peoples in Australia remain colonised peoples'. The essays address important and interesting questions such as 'The Price of Compromise: should Australia Ratify ILO Convention 169?' by Lisa Strelein, and Mark Harris' piece on 'reconstructing the Royal Commission — Representations of 'Aboriginality' in the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody'. Parallel experiences overseas are contrasted with those in Australia.

The edition is very worthwhile. The tone of some of the essays is earnest and clearly written over a fairly long time span. As a result closer editing may have been required to update references which are now inaccurate. Some of the essays are written from personal experience rather than a strictly scholarly perspective which enhances the insights available in the work. ● SP

Generation f: Sex, Power and the Young Feminist

by Virginia Trioli; Reed Books 1996; \$14.95.

This book really doesn't need to be reviewed again given the media fuss that justifiably accompanied its release but I want to have my go anyway.

Generation f is largely a riposte to Helen Garner's *The First Stone* and the associated wave of neo-conservative bile that threatened to swamp young feminists after its release. In the book, Trioli successfully defends her generation against the charges of apathy and, perhaps more importantly, 'woosiness'.

Trioli is an award-winning journalist and it shows. *Generation f* flows well and is a pleasurable easy read. Intellectually, the book is fairly lightweight but it makes no pretence to be other-

wise. It was designed as a vehicle for younger feminists to have their say about the cause and is a valuable call to arms that I recommend to all chicks and babes. ● FW

VI for Short

by Sara Paretsky; Penguin 1996; 246 pp; \$12.95.

VI for Short is a collection of short stories written by Paretsky between 1982 and 1995 featuring the indomitable VI Warshawki, PI.

I wasn't expecting to enjoy this book as much as I did. The short story format suits Paretsky's punchy style at the same time as providing some discipline: for once she doesn't have the room to digress about Paretsky's appearance. Phew.

The stories cover a broad range of subjects from championship sport to classical music. They do not follow a strict chronology as far as the details of VI's life goes. Paretsky apologises for any inconsistencies in an opening note. I don't think they matter, particularly given that all my favourite characters from the novels get a look in: Lotty, Max, Mr Contreras and the beloved dog, Peppy.

There seems to be an attempt to appeal to the dyke market in *VI For Short* via a lesbian character and the tough, sporty heroine. This is compounded by the author description in the book which states that Paretsky lives with a 'Chicago physicist and their golden retriever'. Paretsky's cover is blown in the press release, however, which reveals that the physicist is a husband.

Comparisons between Paretsky's work and Patricia Cornwell's novels seem inevitable. Both authors have created tough heroines with Italian backgrounds and relationship problems. VI is more 'streets' than Cornwell's detective; very Chicago.

VI for Short is a good read, especially on the way to work or at the beach. The book will probably even appeal to that alarmingly large portion of the population who 'don't read short stories' because of the narrative thread provided by the Warshawski character. FW

***BITS* was compiled by Susan Phillips and Frith Way.**