

BOOKS IN BRIEF

DICTIONARY OF MASS MEDIA & COMMUNICATION

By Tracy Daniel Connors
(Longman)

This U.S. publication is of limited practical value in Australia. Leafing through, this reviewer found no entries for: beat up, back-pack, basket, copy-taster, crosshead, copy basket, drop edit, anytimer, grab, happy snap, hold up, h-and-j, inside page, in depth, intrusion, man-in-the-street, noddy, piece, re-jig, ringaround, splash, do-up, standfast, stone sub, stop press, taste, vox pop, write-off, window box, blockline [this list is not exhaustive].

Perhaps, an Australian supplement is in order?

AUTHORS AND PUBLISHERS – Agreements and Legal Aspects of Publishing

By Lazar Sarna
(Butterworths)

This slim Canadian publication is mainly of background value, but definitely is worth skimming through if you're on the author's side of a publishing agreement. It contains some examples of forms of publishing agreements, drafted by the author, with handy paragraph headings and commentaries providing a summary of the purpose and scheme of the various contracts.

THE LAW OF TORTS (6th edition)

By John G. Fleming
(Law Book Company)

As usual in the author's strongly individual style, it has the advantage of serving up to the general inquirer all the essentials of Defamation in just over 60 highly-readable pages.

REPORTS OF PATENT CASES

Edited by Michael Fysh
(Lawyers Bookshop Press – Brisbane)

For the specialist only, at \$7,450.00 for the set of the Reports of Patent Cases, 1884-1982.

EQUITY DOCTRINES & REMEDIES (2nd edition)

By R. P. Meagher Q.C., W. M. C. Gummow & J. R. F. Lehane

It is nine years since the 1st edition, and of major interest to those of us involved in the communications law field are the developments in Confidential Information (subsequently rewritten and Passing-Off (a new chapter).

[Reviews in Brief by John Mancy, Barrister]

Twenty-six states have ratified the Convention, and Edward Thompson indicated that ten or twelve states intended to join soon. Australia has not ratified the Convention and cannot because it has no domestic legislation to protect performers – even to the minimum level required – despite the fact that its Copyright Act gives the other beneficiaries (record companies and broadcasters) protection well in excess of the Convention standards.

In the environment of the present debate, it was unfortunate that there were no speakers representing traditional copyright owners, such as authors and composers. In the past these groups

have tended to oppose copyright for performers, arguing that the effect of creating new classes of rights' holders is generally to "devalue" the rights of traditional copyright owners. This has been said to result in reduced payments to authors – the so-called "cake theory" which has been repeatedly challenged at international meetings.

It seems to me that not only is this fear unwarranted, but it is also outweighed by the advantages to traditional owners if performers are brought into the copyright fold. Performers would become the natural allies of authors, artists and composers in many crucial areas of copyright law reform –

particularly in the movement for moral rights legislation and in schemes (such as the proposed royalty on blank tape) designed to meet the impact of new technologies. These, of course, affect performers just as they affect present copyright owners. Many of the performers present at the conference, and their powerful unions, would make valuable and articulate lobbyists for moral rights and law reform generally if their skills were recognised by the Copyright Act.

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