

EDITORIAL NOTE

This publication had its origins in an initiative by Professor Tony Angelo, Professor Janet Holmes and Māmari Stephens to develop interdisciplinary studies involving law and language in their broadest senses. How that initiative was to be advanced was a key point in early discussions of the idea. Happily, those discussions took place just before the setting of the theme for the 2011 collaborative publication of the *Victoria University of Wellington Law Review* and the *Revue Juridique Polynésienne*. The law and language theme was suggested to the respective editorial boards and accepted by both.

This publication was to be something of a sounding-board, and a test of the local academic interest in such interdisciplinary studies. The response to the request for expressions of interest in writing a paper for this edition of the journal was fast and enthusiastic. Many of those who responded are now represented by contributions in this publication.

Contributors were given free rein as to their topic and as to the length of their contribution. The result is an exciting range of pieces – short, long, academic, personal, practical, the language of law, law in poetic expression, legal translation, law and culture, and language evolution. A significant number of the papers focus on the extent of protections for languages available in various legal systems. Other papers take a more lexicographical bent, examining the construction of particular legal terms within a range of languages, and their usage in various legal contexts. Still others approached the brief by investigating the distinct lego-historical contexts within which certain language usages evolved. A range of languages in their legal usages are explored, including English, Spanish, French, Māori, Tahitian and New Zealand Sign Language. In view of the French and English language contributions to this volume we are confident that we have tapped a rich source of academic interest in the interdisciplinary study of law and language.

Of course, this publication is not intended to provide a comprehensive and thematically unified coverage of all permutations of law and language scholarship. Instead, the papers reflect the current and particular research interests of the contributors. The goal envisaged was that there would be pieces of interest to all readers in the publication and that it could thereby reach a large audience. It is hoped that this goal has been achieved and that this initiative will stimulate thought and bear fruit in further studies in the field of law and language.

A future similarly-themed volume would provide a further opportunity to expand on the insights contained in this volume, but also to report on other, no less fascinating areas of scholarship. Such a volume might provide insights from the field of forensic linguistics including comparative studies of the use of language within the courts and within court judgments. Such a volume might also explore New Zealand and Pacific developments in legal lexicography in more detail, as well as how traditional cultural expressions ought to be dealt in intellectual property law. The next law and language themed issue might consider the exciting developments in free expression and

communication of ideas under the amendments to the United States' Constitution and the constitutions of its States. We look forward to the opportunity to pursue such an opportunity at a future date.

The collection is presented in journal form for readers of the *Victoria University of Wellington Law Review*, in book form for the *Revue Juridique Polynésienne* audience, and in journal form for members of the New Zealand Association for Comparative Law.

The Editors