



Park, Patricia. (2002). Editorial. *Mountbatten Journal of Legal Studies*, December 2002, 6 (1 & 2), pp. 3-4

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EDITORIAL

This current issue reflects the broad interests and the quality of research carried out by legal academics throughout the world, with contributions from the UK, USA, Australia and Hong Kong. The first article considers the current concern over the impact of human activity on the global climate, and the fact that it has taken over 100 years for the international community to establish an agreement between nations to address the situation. The article evaluates those international treaties, the purpose of which is to protect the atmosphere from certain activities of man, which may have a detrimental effect. The challenges and limits that such international treaties impose on state sovereignty, and the intrusion into domestic jurisdiction and territorial integrity of states are discussed. This is followed by a review of the domestic law of a number of different states and their response to the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. It was this Convention which conferred upon the atmosphere the status of 'common concern' to indicate the common legal interest of all states in protecting the global atmosphere.

The second article considers sovereignty from a different perspective. It is an evaluation of the acquisition of sovereignty by quasi-states and takes as a specific example the Sovereign Military Order of St John of Jerusalem, of Rhodes and of Malta. This Order is the only organisation currently recognised, by a minority of states, as quasi-sovereign. The article considers the origin and nature of the sovereignty and attempts to answer the question of which other orders of chivalry are 'sovereign', and also questions whether the Order of Malta itself is truly sovereign. This analysis makes for a stimulating read and concludes that as the concept of state sovereignty declines in relevance, so notions of racial sovereignty have grown. Considering the inevitability of the loss of traditional state sovereignty with the growth of new international entities only serves to recognise that the first of these international organisations should date, not from the twentieth century, but from the twelfth.

The next two articles, it could be said, consider how the use of the World Wide Web transcends territory. The paper considers the position of legal eTextbooks. This is an area, which is exercising academic minds across the European Union and the USA. The article covers peer-to-peer file sharing, the most common forms of digital eBook piracy and a classification of the potential copyright enforcement bodies. The general

conclusion reached is that eBooks will be pirated as the law and digital rights management strategies such as encryption are at present, insufficient to turn the tide of Internet piracy. Given that eBooks are a microcosm of the larger issues involved in the area, the author goes on to consider eLibraries and two proposals are presented as important piracy inhibitors. The second of the articles considers how the State of Virginia has responded to computer information transactions. The article analyses the Uniform Computer Information Transactions Act and considers how it impacts upon the formation of click wrap agreements under Virginia Law. More specifically, the article discusses the provisions of the statute and provides those businesses that license computer information in Virginia, guidelines for drafting and executing click wrap agreements.

The final article considers the misdelivery under forged bills and misdelivery in the absence of original bills and exemption clauses, with regard to the maritime sector. The article analyses the law with particular reference to a recent Hong Kong case *Center Optical (Hong Kong) Limited v Jardine Transport Services (China) Limited and Pronto Cargo Corporation (Third Party)* in which the Hong Kong Commercial Court preserved the well-established principle that a carrier has the *prima facie* obligation to deliver goods upon presentation of original bills of lading, failing which any misdelivery will be at the carrier's own risk.

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Editor