Succession law is a growing area of importance as our population ages, and is therefore increasingly relevant to practitioners across the spectrum of practice. *Principles of Australian Succession Law* provides a concise overview of the current law of succession in Australia. Its primary focus is on wills, covering topics such as the making of, revocation, repudiation, construction and gifts by wills, as well as intestacy. The remaining chapters encompass topics on family provision and grants, rights, duties and obligations of legal representatives. There are also chapters on statutory wills and survivorship.

Each topic is covered thoroughly, including the most up-to-date legislative changes (current to 2013), with reference made to statutory provision and authorities in all Australian jurisdictions. The author has broken down the more complex parts of succession law into several chapters — topics are covered in a logical fashion, and there is a detailed index for focussing in on particular topics of interest. Although the text addresses legislative changes and judicial authorities in respect of the whole of Australia, readers are still able to obtain information relevant to his or her own jurisdiction. Where one jurisdiction has an unusual provision or varies from the “norm”, the text generally provides analysis of the difference and the specific provision.

The book provides a useful overview of succession law and an identification and discussion of the key issues that can arise. The book does not, however, cover the areas of estate planning / taxation, and practitioners seeking to provide detailed advice on any relevant topic would need to read and research more broadly on the particular topic.

Overall, *Principles of Australian Succession Law* serves as an excellent first point of reference on the key aspects of succession law for both students and practitioners.

Hugh Griffin, Hazelbrook Legal

The Third Edition of Dr Michael White's *Australian Maritime Law* provides a long over due re-write of a text that has become a ‘must have’ for any Australian practitioner with an interest in legal matters associated with shipping operations in the Australian maritime environment. The book's focus is on the myriad issues that relate to the practical, commercial aspects that accompany maritime trade.

The book contains ample reference to both Australian domestic legislation and relevant international legal instruments with helpful instruction regarding the effect of the differing legal regimes. Topics canvassed in the book include chartering of vessels, rules for the carriage of goods and passengers, employment of mariners, an explanation of the vagaries of vessel ownership (the explanation of who is the ‘owner’ at pp 311-314 is particularly illuminating) as well as detailing the laws that apply to vessels that encounter difficulties at sea.

Contemporary maritime legal issues are not neglected. *Australian Maritime Law* has a short chapter that deals with marine pollution from both a vessel and offshore platform perspective. A separate chapter considers criminal jurisdiction at sea, including a short description of the apprehension of the *Pong Su* (here slight inaccuracies are noted — the vessel is described as ‘...flagged in North Korea’ whereas contemporary reports identify it as ‘...Tuvalu flagged and North Korean owned.’ Perhaps the difficulties in establishing vessel ownership came to the fore when Dr White was completing this section?)

Overall, *Australian Maritime Law* reflects the author’s careful attention to detail — the previous edition was updated over a period of three years. The book is an authoritative publication that fills a unique place in the Australian maritime legal arena.

Associate Professor David Letts, ANU College of Law

The sixth edition of this popular work incorporates the main changes to family law since the previous edition was published in 2006, including bankruptcy, marriage and child support. In particular it includes the substantial changes made to the law by the *Family Law Amendment (Shared Parental Responsibility) Act 2006*, effective from 1 July 2006.

A new chapter has also been added on *de facto* relationships that covers legislative amendments relating to financial agreements for *de facto* couples, and new and amended State and Territory Acts for relationships and civil partnerships.

There is also discussion of developments in administrative assessment of child support, covering topics such as the duty of parents, eligibility, formalities and procedures; and the jurisdiction of the Federal Circuit Court of Australia (formerly the Federal Magistrates Court).

As the author succinctly states, "The *Family Law Act* has a variety of functions, many of which are designed to support marriage and family life rather than put an end to them".

One of the attractive features of this text is the author's presentation of both family law and the principles that underlie it. For those with an interest in the historical aspects of family law, the author includes references to the evolving historical threads (including English Ecclesiastical Law and Courts) and occasional comparisons with other jurisdictions. I found this particularly helpful and providing a more detailed understanding of the context and perspective of current family law.

Professor Dickey provides a comprehensive and eloquent discourse of the substantive rules of family law in Australia. This well-respected text offers an obligatory reference tool for legal practitioners and students alike and should be on the bookshelf of all practitioners whose professional interests extend to Family Law.

Don Malcolmson, Malcolmson Lawyers