

## BOOK REVIEWS

THE FAMILY LAW LIBRARY OF SINGAPORE. BY LEONG WAI KUM [Singapore: Butterworths 1999: CD-ROM: \$990 (subject to discounts)]

IN 1990 I was privileged to be asked to review Associate Professor Leong Wai Kum's first book, *Family Law in Singapore*. While welcoming the first comprehensive and up to date collection of cases and materials on Singapore Family Law, I also lamented the lack of a definitive exposition of the law on this subject. In the intervening years, Associate Professor Leong has responded to my call by writing the following books:

- *Principles of Family Law in Singapore*
- *Cases and Materials of Family Law in Singapore*
- *Butterworths Annotated Statutes of Singapore (Volume 6 – Family Law)*

This CD-ROM incorporates all 4 of these landmark works as well as her other monographs, articles and unpublished legislative submissions. In short, this is a personal bibliography of Associate Professor Leong. Given that she is the pre-eminent authority on Singapore Family Law and has written prolifically on all aspects of the topic, this CD-ROM is clearly the definitive work on the subject, and no higher recommendation can be made than that.

As I have already reviewed *Family Law in Singapore* in (1990) 32 Mal LR 435, it remains for me to make some brief comments about the other 3 books comprised in this CD-ROM:

- (a) *Principles of Family Law in Singapore* is the textbook, and is as comprehensive a treatment as any student or practitioner might wish. All the main cases are discussed at length, and often differently in separate contexts. The discussion of the case law and statutes is both thorough and provocative. Virtually no major judgment has escaped the author's critical analysis, and the logic and underlying policy behind the judgments are rigorously examined.
- (b) *Cases and Materials of Family Law in Singapore* is a companion volume to the textbook where extracts from the primary materials are set out for easy study and reference. However, Associate Professor Leong is never a mere compiler of materials, and every extract is accompanied by helpful notes and thought-provoking questions. This source book also links the materials to the principles discussed in the textbook, so increasing the reader's understanding as well as expanding his or her horizons.

- (c) *Butterworths Annotated Statutes of Singapore* is essentially a practitioner's work, containing a detailed commentary on each of the provisions in the various statutes that make up the body of Family Law in Singapore. The work is worth having simply for its commentary on the Women's Charter, but the reader will also welcome the commentaries on the Adoption of Children Act, the Guardianship of Infants Act, the Legitimacy Act, and the Maintenance of Parents Act. When the practitioner realises that this volume also contains all the subsidiary legislation for the various Acts, he or she will treasure it as an indispensable companion, not only to keep in the office, but to bring to court in the same way as no civil litigation lawyer would ever leave for court without bringing a copy of the White Book. This is indeed a portable library of Family Law.

In the same vein, this CD-ROM may, to the computer-savvy Family Law practitioner, be the ultimate travelling companion to court, since it is difficult to imagine any question that could arise in the Family Court which could not be answered somewhere in this CD-ROM.

Butterworths has also made the financing of this purchase comparatively attractive by giving staggered rates of discount to those purchasers who already have one or more of the works contained in the CD-ROM. Both Associate Professor Leong and Butterworths are to be warmly commended for making the entire Family Law of Singapore available in one relatively easy package.