

FAMILY LAW

Kate Standley



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Preface

I have endeavoured in this book to provide a succinct and clear account of the major aspects of family law. Writing the book has been a difficult task because of the complexity and rapidly changing nature of the subject. A large proportion of the book is devoted to the law relating to children because of its increasing importance. In fact in some universities child law is now taught as a separate course. I would have liked the book to have been more discursive but with so much to cover this has not been possible. Some of the questions at the end of chapters may, however, stimulate further thought and discussion.

I have attempted to emphasise those areas of family law which are currently important, so that some topics (e.g. nullity, desertion as a fact for divorce) are given less attention than in other textbooks. Some topics (e.g. welfare benefits, human-assisted reproduction), although important, have been dealt with briefly, since a detailed examination is outside the scope of this book. Interjurisdictional issues have also been omitted except in the context of child abduction. I have also excluded the historical development of family law, except in the context of divorce. Students who are interested in the historical background to family law should consult Bromley and Lowe, *Bromley's Family Law* (1992). The other standard textbook which students can consult is Cretney and Masson, *Principles of Family Law* (1990). A short bibliography is included at the end of the book.

At the time of writing, although cases on the Children Act 1989 are beginning to be reported, it is still too early to estimate the success and impact of that Act, and also of the new child support provisions which are being introduced under the Child Support Act 1991.

I would like to thank my husband John for his advice and support and our children Tom and Lizzie for their tolerance while normal family life was suspended.

This book is dedicated to the memory of my dear friend Marilyn Sutton, who died in August 1992.

I have endeavoured to state the law on the basis of the materials available to me as at 31st March 1993.

KATE STANDLEY

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