His phases, so pregnant with metaphoric meaning, though, demonstrate distracting stretchmarks after reading. Lindstrom is consistent, if not relentless, in encoding Tannese experience in Foucault-ian terms, which they may come to see one day as another legacy of their former condominium status.

In spite of the adumbrated jargon, with the odour of *café noir* and *Gaulois* enveloping it, I cannot see much advance in Lindstrom's analysis on phenomenologist Erving Goffman's *Forms of Talk* (1981) and F.G. Bailey's neo-functionalist *Stratagems and Spoils* (1968), none of whose extensive bibliography does he mention. He does cite Fredrik Barth's cognate works on Papua New Guinea, however.

For the original information management theorist, he might well have gone to Georg Simmel's essay on secrecy (1906), also ignored. The omission of Simmel is all the odder when one considers one of Lindstrom's principal definitions of his *volk*: "On Tanna, there are no encyclopedias and no dictionaries to go to for answers — just people with secrets" (p.119).

Readers interested in French theory, particularly that emitted from Foucault & Co., will want to see what Lindstrom does with the master's *oeuvre*; persons involved in the analysis of information management, if they are looking for novelty in theory, may find inspiration in *Knowledge and Power* as well.

Pacific specialists likely will find Lindstrom's heavy theoretical overlay an opaque quilt of obscurity, obfuscating the ethnography. Few people use quilts in the Pacific.

Grant McCall
University of New South Wales

Encyclopedia of Information Technology Law *edited by S. Saxby* (updated by releases twice yearly) (2 vols.) (Sweet & Maxwell, London, 1990)

It is a formidable undertaking to review anything with as imposing a title as "Encyclopedia of ...", although limits of the present work are clearly set by the phrase Information Technology Law. However, it would be mistaken to believe that information technology law now constitutes a discrete legal discipline. Rather, it is an area of applied law or, to paraphrase the Editor, a study of the interface between law and technology. As such, it has many disparate threads and it is not always easy to bring them together into a coherent whole. Some of these threads have already been closely examined and well developed in other places and by other writers, while some have only received cursory or rudimentary treatment and raise many difficult questions that have yet to be satisfactorily resolved. While most, if not all, of the legal principles examined in this work are far from new, the context in which they now arise is often virgin territory and the task of a legal scholar here is something akin to that of a research scientist investigating some hitherto unexplored natural phenomenon.

In his preface, Saxby recognises this pioneering aspect of the Encyclopedia, and comments, not without some justification, that what is written in many of the chapters will inevitably have an effect upon the way in which the law develops in the future. This adds a touch of excitement to the whole enterprise, and highlights the theme that underlies the whole work. In information technology, the law is faced with the task of adapting old established principles to a phenomenon that is constantly developing and changing. While this may

not require the development of entirely new legal principles or paradigms, the process of adapting old principles and paradigms to startling new situations still calls for considerable ingenuity and insight.

The Encyclopedia is directed principally at a legal readership. Its focus is also primarily UK law, but there is a considerable amount of comparative legal material that is referred to throughout, and its value to an Australian reader is therefore considerable. Not only is it the case that solutions adopted in UK law are influential in themselves, but the analysis and statements of problems are common to all jurisdictions. For a reader with a technical or industry background, there may be little that is unfamiliar in these areas. However, as stated above, the work is not directed at this kind of readership and the technical and industry information that is contained in it will be of great value to legal readers. For example, the introductory chapter by Saxby provides an excellent birds-eye view of the development of the computer industry and the changes that have occurred in this over the years. Such an understanding is critical to any lawyer who is seeking to advise clients working in this area. Successive chapters then deal with specific areas of law that have an impact on information technology. Perhaps the most critical of these is intellectual property law, where some very fundamental disputes over legal policy have arisen. This is treated in two comprehensive chapters, Chapter 2 which deals with the rights themselves and Chapter 3 which deals with the exploitation and enforcement of those rights. For the most part, this discussion is focussed upon the particular issues that arise in relation to information technology, but there is sufficient by way of general background to enable a reader to use the chapters without first having to consult more basic texts or treatises. Further chapters are then concerned with dealings in or with information technology that occur in specific contexts; in relation to technology transfer and export licensing controls (Chapter 4), electronic funds transfer (Chapter 5) and computer contracts (Chapter 6). These are supplemented by chapters dealing with questions of liability (Chapter 7) and competition law (Chapter 8).

The above comprise the subject areas covered in Volume 1 of the Encyclopedia. Volume 2 deals with a number of other disparate topics, including telecommunications (Chapter 9), international telecommunications (Chapter 10), evidence (Chapter 11), crime (Chapter 12), risk management (Chapter 13), employment (Chapter 14), taxation (Chapter 15) and data protection (Chapter 16). There is no unifying theme to be found in either volume except the overall link that is to be found in the subject matter of information technology itself. Nonetheless, this is to be expected in such a work which involves drawing upon so many different and otherwise unconnected strands of law whose only common link is that they are relevant to the use or application of information technology.

As stated at the outset, it is a formidable task to provide a meaningful review of a work of this scope. As it is an ongoing work that is to be updated by regular releases, it would be gratuitously pedantic to point to particular topics that have been omitted or that have been treated only in brief, as these may well be picked up and amplified upon in later releases. The true test of the currency of a work of this character will only become evident after a period of years, when one can assess how quickly and how efficiently new developments have been noted and integrated into the work as a whole. Accordingly, I confine my remarks to the overall structure and organisation of the work as first published, as this must provide the framework into which these other matters will, at some later date, be slotted.

First, with regard to the overall structure and organisation of the work, there is little with which to find fault. Saxby has identified all the relevant areas of law and there is no glaring omission from the treatment provided. Although this is intended primarily as a work for practising lawyers, there is sufficient by way of background technical and industrial information to make the examination of strictly legal topics more readable and comprehensible. I am not sufficiently qualified to judge the accuracy of the technical background that is provided in the introductory and other chapters, but it seems to me to be both concisely and clearly set out. There are also continuing references to broader themes, in particular the slowness with which legal principle adapts to changing conditions. There is a certain amount of repetition that occurs throughout the work, particularly with respect to such matters as intellectual property rights, as these are relevant to a number of chapters, such as those dealing with technology transfer, contract and employment. To a large extent, such repetition is unavoidable although it may pose a problem for the conscientious editor. From the point of view of the practitioner using the work, however, repetition may not matter very much, as the immediate object of such a user is to be directed immediately to the topic which they wish to research and to be given such additional information as is immediately necessary for him or her to be able to complete that task.

There is a certain inconsistency to be seen between chapters with respect to matters of style and depth of treatment. This is largely explicable when one looks at the list of contributing authors. Each is well-known in the particular area in question, but their backgrounds differ considerably. A number of chapters have been written by the partners and associates of particular firms of London solicitors, and it is apparent, from the copyright notices that appear on the title pages to these chapters, that these contributions are conceived of as one of the firm rather than the individual practitioners concerned. This is true, for example, of the chapters dealing with intellectual property (Chapter 2), exploitation and enforcement of intellectual property rights (Chapter 3), technology transfer and export licensing control (Chapter 4), computer contracts (Chapter 6), competition law (Chapter 8), telecommunications (Chapter 9), international telecommunications (Chapter 10) and taxation (Chapter 15). For the most part, these chapters are well researched and well written, but there is a certain blandness that often comes from multiple authorship and the treatment of the policy issues involved is more limited than in some of the other chapters. The chapters by individual authors provide some contrast to this and are the best written, in particular those dealing with evidence (by Colin Tapper of Oxford University) and crime (by Martin Wasik of Manchester University). Several other chapters, written by persons who are not apparently legal practitioners, also stand out for the practical insights and information they contain. Notable among these is the chapter on electronic fund transfer (Chapter 5), the chapter on risk management (Chapter 13) and the chapter on data protection (Chapter 16). Each of these chapters will be read with great interest by Australian practitioners, as the backgrounds and analyses presented are highly relevant to our own situation. Another chapter of particular interest is the chapter on international telecommunications (Chapter 10), which provides a very useful overview of the international arrangements in this area which will be of great utility to readers anywhere. Other chapters, however, may be of less assistance. This is true, for example, of Chapter 14 which deals with employment issues, but suffers from

a certain lack of structure, and Chapter 15, which deals with taxation but is really only of relevance to UK readers.

In summary this is an extremely useful reference work that will be of considerable assistance to Australian readers in suggesting to them the ways in which legal issues relative to information technology can be dealt with in an Australian context. Although expensive, I would suggest that it does have a place in the library of any Australian practitioner who is concerned with these questions.

Sam Ricketson
Monash University

Beyond Southern Skies *by Peter Robertson*. (Cambridge University Press, Melbourne, 1992), pp. xi + 357, $59.95, ISBN 0-521-41408-3.

The cultural cringe is still well and alive. The forward to Peter Robertson's book is written by Sir Bernard Lovell, a British radio astronomer rather than one of the great Australian pioneers of radio astronomy. This is rather a pity.

Australia is a world leader in astronomy and in the field of radio astronomy it was, along with Britain and Holland, one of the early pioneers. A wise decision by David Rivett after the war to channel the research direction of the CSIR (later renamed the CSIRO) away from defence research paid a very handsome dividend in the form of an internationally recognised institution. In a letter to a friend in 1945 Rivett wrote: "Unless we can keep CSIR free from all the straight jackets that are all too freely offered to it from all sides, we are not going to count for very much in 20 years time, even if we do succeed in the meantime in doing a job or two that wins favour from the press, populace and politicians. I fully believe that we shall fail in the end unless quite 50 per cent of our effort is directed to finding out how the machine of Nature works, without a thought as to whether that knowledge may or may not be useful in this decade, or next century, in showing farmers how to save sixpence or politicians how to increase revenue from taxation".

A combination of factors — a group of brilliant young men, an abundant supply of the latest electronic equipment, a high staff morale, an unusually active Sun and an excellent team spirit — enabled the Radiophysics Laboratory to get off to a flying start in the new field of radio astronomy. The whole atmosphere in the early years was one of excitement, improvisation and experiment. According to Chris Christiansen, "Each morning people set off in open trucks to the field stations where their equipment, mainly salvaged and modified from radar installations, had been installed in ex-army and navy huts ... During this period there was no place for observers who were incapable of repairing and maintaining the equipment". It was in circumstances such as this that radio astronomy grew up in Australia.

The book deals with the history and development of radio astronomy in Australia and in particular the design, development and building of the largest radio telescope in Australia. The book was long overdue and Robertson is to