

# Book Review

## Greg Craven, "Conversations with the Constitution: Not Just a Piece of Paper."



By **Mark Farquhar**,  
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**T**o many of us, the word 'Constitution' conjures up images of lengthy undergraduate lectures focused on the intricate operation of s.51(xxxix) and the way in which it impacts on the powers of the legislature. In other words, the Constitution does not evoke fond memories or a sense of passion and excitement, rather it causes us to reminisce on lecturers more interested in the Commonwealth's powers over lightships, beacons and buoys than the dwindling interest of their students.

Not so of 'Conversations with the Constitution'. Professor Greg Craven's latest publication, rather than considering the purely legal provisions of our Constitution, looks at the history of federalism in Australia from the perspective of its founding document, as well as the way in which the document will embrace the future. This fresh approach to the Constitution, its operation and its history helps to invigorate the document and, hopefully, to alleviate the unpopularity of our founding document.

Professor Craven's discussion commences with the founding of the Constitution. In doing so, the reader is drawn into the world of the late Nineteenth Century and the development of the document in its original form, along with the characters who developed the original concept. From this premise, the book proceeds to lead

the reader through the various phases of the Constitution's development and, in doing so, the development of our nation itself.

As well as providing an interesting discussion of Australian history from a (vaguely) legal context, the book examines a number of more recent developments. These include the expansionist approach to implied rights under the Constitution and the way in which the document would adapt to even greater changes, such as the move towards an Australian republic. The lack of a pure legal discussion also helps to increase the book's appeal to a wider, non-academic, audience.

Professor Craven's writing, whilst clearly imparting his own personal opinion, does provide a balanced discussion of both sides of the various arguments. However, this does not diminish the passion and zeal with which a number of his arguments are presented, forcing the reader to consider the author's contention and depart from any neutrality on the subject.

'Conversations with the Constitution' is an excellent book in a legal, historical and contemporary sense. However, given the way in which much of the populace regards our founding document, perhaps the author would have achieved even greater praise had the book not included the word "Constitution" in its title. ■

*Career Doctor (continued from page 19)*

Reading business publications such as the Business Review Weekly and the Australian Financial Review will assist in keeping you up to date. Never underestimate the power of being able to refer to relevant issues in discussions with a potential employer. It is also a good idea to read overseas publications such as Fast Company or Fortune to keep abreast of trends in other markets.

### 7. Consider additional study

A Masters degree adds a strong element to any résumé, particularly if it is backed up by work experience. Double degrees such as combining an LLM with an MBA highlight your knowledge in the general commercial arena as well as in legal analysis. There are other specialist courses available for particular areas of law, such as a Graduate Diploma in Company Secretarial Practice. It is important to know what direction you are headed in before you make a commitment to further study - that way you can be sure to study the right course for your career path.

The most important step in securing your first in-house role is actually applying for roles of interest when they come up. If you are not successful on your first try, seek feedback either from your recruitment consultant or the organisation itself (if it is a direct application) and learn from the experience. Persevere and apply for the next opportunity.

I wish you all the best in securing a corporate role! ■  
**Career Doctor**

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