

CAMLA COMMUNICATIONS LAW BULLETIN

Communications & Media Law Association Incorporated

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Special International Women's Day Edition

Dear readers,

We hope you are having a reflective and inspiring International Women's Day. This year's IWD #BreakTheBias theme seeks to explore the daily challenges faced by women across society and initiate discussions around how to change perceptions and move conversations towards creating positive change. CAMLA is proud to have created a platform for these conversations to be held.

After the success of our inaugural IWD special edition last year, we are pleased to again be sharing an edition of the CLB that celebrates the many illustrious and diverse contributions of some of our industry's leading women. This edition contains a series of short interviews with around 40 leaders from a range of backgrounds and experiences across media, communications, IP, advertising, government, privacy, entertainment and tech. You will hear brilliant stories from the bench, the bar, government, private practice, in house, and executive roles. The CAMLA industries in Australia are driven by the intelligence, advocacy, warmth, leadership and persistence of many incredible women – and we are pleased to be able to share a sample of that in this bulletin.

There are some common threads through the interviews. Women of different generations, with very different backgrounds and levels of experience, representing organisations with sometimes divergent interests, regularly share similar passions and concerns and are inspired by the same people. Many interviewees were asked about women they admire, and this year, we are seeing the positive impact that Brittany Higgins, Grace Tame and Chanel Contos have had on many women in our community. And of course, some of the inspirations come from less local sources: Madame Bollinger; Hildegard of Bingen and Jane Austen among them. Ruth Bader Ginsburg is, as she was last year, a regular response to this question. But to be an inspiration to women, one needn't be RBG or Jane Austen. Multiple interviewees refer to their mothers and grandmothers as inspirations. And we love that too.

Another leitmotif in this edition is the COVID-19 pandemic. Many of our interviewees refer to the impact that the pandemic has had on working, especially around WFH, intermittent and unforeseeable home-schooling duties, and the removal of boundaries between work and home life. Quite a few interviewees point to some

benefits to be celebrated in better shared parenting responsibilities and increased flexibility. But, as others point out, there's a real issue with rising levels of burnout that disproportionately affects working women and which has been exacerbated by the pandemic.

One theme that stood out to us was imposter syndrome and the dissonance between how we perceive a woman and she perceives herself. It's certainly not something that affects only women, and it is (quite strangely) simultaneously alarming and reassuring that it affects superstars as much as anyone.

One question our interviewers asked some of the individuals featured in this edition is "what advice would you give to the next generation of female leaders in the industry?". This is an important question to ask – there is acknowledgment that throughout your career you will collect unique fragments of wisdom and valuable insights. However, perhaps more powerfully, this question encourages inclusiveness by sharing that wisdom. By creating such a legacy and connecting with others, we can each #BreakTheBias and forge women's equality through creating positive change.

Like IWD itself, this edition is for everyone – it is not gender specific. For the second year in a row, when we put out a call for interviewees, we were met with a wave of interest from young lawyers, all keen to be involved in the initiative. It is clear that there is a deep desire to share and mark the achievements of women in the legal industry.

Thank you to everyone who gave their time to be featured, and to the CAMLA Young Lawyers who conducted the interviews. This could not have gone ahead without all of you.

Enjoy the read!

Eli and Ash



Eli Fisher



Ashleigh Fehrenbach

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