ies which have arisen from the abortion question in Ireland and a number of other jurisdictions. As the Hon. Mrs Justice McGuinness says in her foreword, the authors of this book "have shown considerable courage in tackling a subject which has proved, both in Ireland and elsewhere, to be one of great legal, social and political difficulty".

Much of the book concentrates on events in Ireland since the right to life of the unborn was enshrined in the Constitution in 1983. The problems which have arisen in this area are examined not only in the context of Irish constitutional law but also from an EC perspective and taking into account the impact of international human rights instruments. Through an examination of the abortion issue this book covers a wide range of highly interesting constitutional, EC law and human rights questions and provides, for comparative purposes, a valuable account of experiences in the United States, Canada, Germany and Northern Ireland.

The Eighth Amendment to the Irish Constitution was intended to give constitutional protection to the unborn child, which already received legislative protection from the Offences against the Person Act 1861. This constitutional amendment very soon gave rise to a series of court cases involving questions as to a woman's right to receive information on abortion services available abroad and to travel abroad to avail herself of such services, questions which directly involved Ireland's obligations under the European Convention on Human Rights and the Treaty of Rome. The question of interpretation of the Eighth Amendment as regards the availability of abortion in Ireland itself did not arise until later with the highly controversial case of *Attorney General* v. *X* in 1992, which involved an application for an injunction to prevent a pregnant girl leaving the jurisdiction to obtain an abortion in the United Kingdom. This case resulted in a ruling to the effect that an abortion was not prohibited in circumstances in which a pregnant woman's life was threatened. The *X* case precipitated further amendments to the Constitution to protect the right to receive information on abortion and the right to travel abroad.

Parts I and II of this volume analyse the significance of these events in the context of constitutional law, criminal law, EU law, under the European Convention on Human Rights and under international law generally. Part III consists of a comparative exercise looking at the situation in Northern Ireland, the United States, Canada and Germany. The issues are clearly set out and thoroughly analysed in a manner which makes this book an absorbing read for all lawyers, not all of whom might necessarily have an overriding interest in the issue of abortion itself.

PADRAIC TAYLOR

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