

Editorial

Reflections on children and law: Special Edition in honour of Emeritus Professor Trynie Boezaart

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Professor Trynie Boezaart imagined a law faculty and a law profession – in fact, a legal system – that recognised child law as a separate field of law. She did not just leave that in the realm of imagination – she rolled up her sleeves and got to work on making it happen. In 1998 she established the Centre for Child Law in the Department of Private Law at the University of Pretoria. As an established researcher and author in family law, the law of delict and the law of persons, the Department of Private Law was her home. She knew very well, however, that child law was broader than that. It spanned many aspects of law – constitutional law, public law, and even, somewhat surprisingly, mercantile law. The very first case that the Centre for Child Law took on in 2004 was in fact a labour law matter which carved out a special exemption for child and youth care work, by defining this work as part of essential services, in order to ensure children would not be left without carers due to a workers' strike. In the year that case was taken, the first author of this foreword, Ann Skelton, joined the Centre for Child Law. She was the Centre's Strategic Litigation Director from 2004 to 2014. Ann took over as Director when Trynie moved to become the Head of Department of Private Law. In the meanwhile, Karabo Ozah, the second author of this foreword, joined the Centre as an attorney, and in January 2019, she became the Director of the Centre for Child Law.

Trynie began a legacy that left a significant mark on the legal landscape in relation to children, and that pathway continues to broaden and deepen. Her expertise spanned the law of persons, delict and family law. This special edition brings together themes that cross those fields, symbolising the fusion of the legal issues that Trynie was passionate about. The authors have all connected with Trynie or her work in some way, some have long relationships with her, some newer. The themes of the articles span international, regional and domestic legal exploration; with many of the articles focusing on cutting-edge, emerging issues such as gender and climate change.

The special edition is dedicated to Emeritus Professor Trynie Boezaart, in honour of her work, and her dedication to the recognition and development of child law and her many contributions to the field.