

Acknowledgements

This collection has its origins in the Socio-Legal Studies Association's (SLSA) annual conferences (2006–2009), specifically in the Labour Law streams which we jointly organised. Despite the broad and general nature of our calls for papers over those 4 years, family and work reconciliation was a recurring theme with the presentations in that important area providing the catalyst for some of the most stimulating discussions and exchanges of ideas. Several, although not all, of the chapters in this book started life as such papers. We wish to thank the SLSA for providing us with the opportunity to develop and promote greater understanding of the issues presented in those early papers. Our gratitude is also extended to all of the participants at those sessions whose insights are, no doubt, reflected in some of the contributions to this book.

The contributors themselves have all enthusiastically embraced the opportunity to collaborate on this project and we thank each of them for that. On a more personal note we thank our partners and children for their support and patience during the latter stages of editing this collection; reading the chapters was a pleasure of course, but one that needed to be 'balanced' with other pulls on our time.

We are also very grateful to the support and assistance of the staff at Edward Elgar, in particular Ben Booth who guided us through the initial stage from proposal to contract and, latterly, to John-Paul McDonald for his assistance in the final stages of preparing the manuscript.

Finally, we view this collection as the beginning of exciting collaboration and knowledge exchange which we anticipate will continue long beyond the book's shelf-life; towards the end of 2011 we will be launching an AHRC-funded research network on Work/Family Reconciliation. We hope that all of those who have participated in this collection will work with us as members of that network and that others, perhaps those whose interest in the area is stimulated by this book, will join us to further explore and develop many of the ideas presented here.