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Universiteit Leiden



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Title: Legal capacity in international human rights law

Issue Date: 2015-07-01

Dedication

I dedicate this book to Rusi Stanev.



‘I’m not an object, I’m a person. I need my freedom.’

- Rusi Stanev, before his hearing at the European Court of Human Rights, 10 November 2009

The Bulgarian law ‘failed to meet contemporary standards for ensuring the necessary respect for the wishes and preferences he was capable of expressing.’

- Partly dissenting opinion of Judge Kalaydjieva to the Grand Chamber judgment in the case of *Stanev v. Bulgaria*, 17 January 2012

Acknowledgments

Thank you to the following colleagues for ideas, opportunities, critique, translations, food and/or footnotes: Steven Allen, Thiago Amparo, Anna Arstein Kerslake, Dmitri Bartenev, Hasan Bermek, Jerome Bickenbach, Paul Bowen, Nicolas Bratza, Ira Burnim, Victoria Butler-Cole, Claude Cahn, Felicity Callard, Ann Campbell, Shuaib Chalklen, Luke Clements, Constantin Cojacariu, Robert Dinerstein, Neil Crowther, Jan Fiala, Eilionoir Flynn, Aneta Genova, Oana Girlescu, Sandor Gurbai, Thomas Hammarberg, Alison Hilman, Paul Hunt, Wilmah Isaboke, Jan Jařeb, Maths Jespersson, Dorottya Karsay, Caroline Kim, Itzhak Levav, Phillippa Kaufmann, Tirza Leibowitz, Denzil Lush, Emily Martinez, Maros Matiasco, Eyong Louis Mbuem, Barbara Méhes, Juan Méndez, Nell Munro, Lycette Nelson, Mandy Neville, Anna Nilssen, Michael Njenga, Gareth Owen, Georgiana Pascu, Soumitra Pathare, Jill Peay, Dainius Puras, Genevra Richardson, Lucy Series, Martha Spurrier, Éva Szeli, George Szmukler, Oliver Thorold, Carly Toepke, Yotam Tolub, Renata Uitz, Kathryn Vandever, Denis Van de Veer, Laura Watts, Aswini Weeraratne and Catherine Zennström.

Four people in particular have taught me so many things over the last decade (mostly in Budapest wine bars). Their ideas dot this book. To Peter Bartlett, thank you for taking me under your wing at a conference in Toronto in 1999 and ever since then encouraging me to be critical while toning down the edgiest aspects of the critique. To Michael Bach, thank you for sharing your vision, your ability to frame the issues and for encouraging me to never lose sight of inclusion and equality for *all*. To Anna Lawson, thank you for everything you have shown me, for fun times tripping over the stairs at the UN in New York and your encouragement right from the very start to get this PhD done. To Gerard Quinn, thank you for encouraging me to unshackle the facts from the ideas, for enhancing my dictionary usage when unravelling your papers and most of all for reminding me on several continents why the human rights project matters.

I would like to thank Sylvia, Alan and István for encouraging me to pursue this, and my grandmother for asking me consistently for the past two years whether I'd finished. Before passing away in April, my father told me how proud he was that I was on the brink of completing a PhD. 'The brains didn't come from this side of the family', he said with his usual humour.

Thanks to my former students at the Central European University, the MDAC summer school and at the Indian Law Society, because teaching is learning. Many are now talented advocates, litigators and colleagues: I am embarrassingly proud of them. Lastly, to the people deprived of legal capacity who have battled through the court system: they have risked personal retribution so that others may be treated better.

Curriculum Vitae

Oliver Lewis was born in 1975 in Bristol, UK. He serves as Executive Director of the Mental Disability Advocacy Centre, an international non-governmental organisation that uses law to secure equality, inclusion and justice for people with mental disabilities worldwide. He was MDAC's Legal Director from the organisation's inception in 2002 until 2006. He was called to the Bar of England and Wales in 2000, and is an associate barrister at Doughty Street Chambers, London. Before training as a barrister, Oliver worked a research assistant to an expert committee and subsequently for the Department of Health, on mental health law reform in the UK.

Oliver is recurrent Visiting Professor in Law at the Central European University in Budapest where since 2003 he has taught a course called 'mental disability law and advocacy' to MA and LLM students. He is also Visiting Lecturer in Law at the University of Leeds, UK. Since 2009 he has been a faculty member of the International Diploma on Mental Health Law and Human Rights, run by the Indian Law Society in Pune, India.

Oliver has overseen litigation and advocacy strategies that have held both international bodies and national governments to account for the commitments they have made under international human rights law. He has worked with a variety of stakeholders, including UN treaty bodies, UN Special Rapporteurs, the European Commission and Parliament, the European Court of Human Rights, the Venice Commission, the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture. He is an experienced public speaker, trainer and facilitator and has worked on all continents of the world with disabled people's organisations, human rights activists, inspectorates, lawyers and judges.

Oliver holds an LL.B. (Hons.) from the London School of Economics and Political Science (1998), a Master of Arts in Medical Ethics and Law from King's College, London (1999) and a Master of Public Administration from the Open University Business School (2009). He is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts and a Fellow of the Institute of Leadership and Management.