

Sussex Centre for Human Rights Research

Sussex Law School (School of Law, Politics & Sociology)

RIGHTS NEWSLETTER 2018

Hello

Issue 1 - August 2018

Welcome to the first newsletter of the Sussex Centre for Human Rights Research (SCHRR), based in the School of Law, Politics and Sociology at the University of Sussex. SCHRR was established in 2015 and has gone from strength to strength in that time. The members of SCHRR are extremely active in the field of human rights through research, teaching and engagement with civil society. This newsletter sets out what we've all been up to over the past year. Please do contact us if you would like to see anything else included in the newsletter.

Notably, some of Aisling O'Sullivan's archival research into historic human rights abuses committed by the British government in Northern Ireland was influential in getting the *United Kingdom v Ireland* case revisited (albeit briefly) in the European Court of Human Rights; Samantha Velluti was lead Scientific Advisor for the HEC/NYU EU Public Interest Clinic in Paris to help Clean Clothes Campaign, whereas Maria Federica Moscati was legal counsel in the case of *Orlandi and Others v Italy* (ECtHR). Aside from this the research of our members has been used by not-for-profit organisations (including NGOs and inter-governmental organisations).

We have also been lucky enough to host a range of events as part of the *Rights Research Series*, detailed in this newsletter. PhD students continue to be actively involved in the work of the Centre, and there are number of successes to report. As the academic year draws to a close, it is also apt to report on the success of our current LLM students who have been working with NGOs, law firms and inter-governmental organisations through the Human Rights Law Clinic. We also have news on some exciting changes to the LLM in International Human Rights Law for the 2018-19 academic year.

Dr Stephanie Berry; Prof. Nuno Ferreira and Dr Charlotte Skeet
Co-Directors of SCHRR

To find out more, visit the website of the Sussex Centre for Human Rights Research:
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NEWS

Aisling O'Sullivan's Research Contributes to Revisiting of Ireland v United Kingdom

On March 20th 2018, the European Court of Human Rights rejected the Irish Government's application for a revision of the original 1978 judgment in the *Ireland v United Kingdom* case regarding the interrogation procedures known as the 'five techniques'. The 'five techniques' involved a combination of sensory deprivation techniques (hooding, wall-standing, white noise, sleep deprivation and bread/water diet) that had been applied to 14 men in unknown detention centres in Northern Ireland in August and October 1971. In the original 1978 judgment, the Court ruled that that the 'five techniques' (as a combination) were a practice of inhuman treatment but not a practice of torture in violation of article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights. This ruling continues to be a controversial decision among international human rights lawyers. The Irish Government's revision request argued that "new facts" had been discovered 'which might by [their] nature have a decisive influence' and were unknown to the Court, the Commission and the Irish Government at time of the original proceedings.

The "new facts" were discovered within archival documents in the British National Archives by the Pat Finucane Centre, the Irish Centre for Human Rights, NUI Galway and RTE. In 2014, RTE Investigations Unit broadcasted its documentary 'The Torture Files' that drew from a selection of important archival documents discovered by the three research teams.



from all three projects, constitutes digital images of tens of thousands of pages of departmental and interdepartmental letters, memos, briefings, tactic notes, legal drafts etc from the six relevant British Government department. and subsequently by the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and its legal counsel in respect of a revision request. Dr Aisling O'Sullivan was a member of the research team in the Irish Centre for Human Rights, NUI Galway, whose archival research was consulted by RTE, in preparation for its 'The Torture Files' documentary, and subsequently by the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and its legal counsel in respect of a revision request.

Aisling convenes the core LLM International Human Rights Law module *Approaches to International Law*. She also teaches on *Principles of International Law*, as well as the optional modules *Civil and Political Rights: Contemporary Challenges* and *International Crimes*. Read more about Aisling's research [here](#).

Exciting changes to the LLM in International Human Rights Law

In order to offer students more choice and the ability to benefit from the wealth of human rights expertise in Sussex Law School, we have introduced a number of new 15 credit options that will be available from the 2018-19 academic year. The options will run in the Spring term and include: Civil and Political Rights: Contemporary Challenges; Indigenous and Minority Rights; Law, Religion and Human Rights; LGBTQI Rights: International and Comparative Perspectives; Socioeconomic rights: economic violence, social justice and human rights law. The new options will complement pre-existing 30 credit options; these include Human Rights Law Clinic; Migration, Rights and Governance; and Women and Human Rights amongst others. For further information about the options available on the LLM International Human Rights Law, please visit our [course webpage](#).

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Dr Samantha Velluti - Lead Scientific Advisor for the HEC/NYU EU Public Interest Clinic in Paris

Dr Samantha Velluti acted as Lead Scientific Advisor for a project of the École des Hautes Études Commerciales de Paris (HEC)/New York University (NYU) European Union (EU) [Public Interest Clinic](#) to help the [Clean Clothes Campaign](#) - a global alliance bringing together trade unions and NGOs- and the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) to file a complaint with the EU Ombudsman for a case of alleged maladministration concerning the European Commission's failure to launch an investigation into the status of Bangladesh under the Generalised System of Trade Preferences Regulation ([Regulation \(EU\) No. 978/2012](#)).

The Ready-Made-Garment (RMG) industry accounts for a large majority of Bangladesh's total merchandise exports employing millions of workers, the EU being its main trading partner.

As argued in the complaint, the discretion afforded to the Commission under the provisions of the GSP regulation is not unfettered. The Commission is bound to respect the EU's human

rights obligations, legal rules and principles. The Treaty on European Union (TEU) provides that the EU is founded on respect for human rights, which has also become a requirement of the lawfulness of European acts. In addition, Article 21 TEU and Article 207 Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU) make it unequivocally clear that this requirement extends to the EU's external action, including the field of commercial policy. Moreover, the Commission's failure to create a transparent and objective process for deciding whether to investigate a beneficiary country also constitutes maladministration, as it is not in line with EU rules related to good administration as enshrined in Article 41 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights (CFR), confirmed by the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) and further set out in the European Code of Good Administrative Behaviour.

Samantha teaches on the optional LLM International Human Rights Law module on *Migration, Rights and Governance*.

Read more about Samantha's research [here](#).

Members of Law, Politics and Sociology contribute to Women and Equality Committee inquiry

Elizabeth Craig, Carmelo Danisi, Moira Dustin, Nuno Ferreira, Nina Held, Susan Millns, Paul Taggart, Samantha Velluti and Mark Walters all contributed to a report submitted to the UK's Parliament's Women and Equality Committee's inquiry 'Ensuring strong equalities legislation after the EU exit'. In their submission, they drew attention to some of the many ways the EU has supported the development of an equality framework and culture in the UK. They welcomed the Committee's recognition of the need to prevent any regression in the UK's equality framework as a result of leaving the EU, and were particularly pleased to see their concern about EU research funding picked up as one of the reports main recommendations. The LPS submission can be viewed [here](#), and the Committee's report [here](#).

Maria Federica Moscati - legal counsellor on successful same-sex marriage case in the European Court of Human Rights

Maria Federica Moscati was recently involved in the case of *Orlandi and Others v Italy*. The case, decided by the ECtHR found that the refusal of Italian authorities to register same-sex marriages contracted abroad, in so far as at the time of the application the Italian legal framework did not allow marriage between same-sex partners, constituted a violation of article 8. Maria Federica, together with Antonio Rotelli, Raffaele Torino and Francesco Bilotta, was one of the legal counsellors. She has extensive experience of working as a cause lawyer with an Italian organisation of lawyers – Avvocatura per i Diritti LGBTI - having previously participated in litigation strategies concerning the rights of same-sex couples, and trans-gender persons in Italy. Cause lawyering is also one of the research and teaching interests that Maria Federica pursues at the University of Sussex.

Maria Federica teaches on the optional LLM International Human Rights Law module



LGBTQI Rights: International and Comparative Perspectives. Read more about Maria Federica's research [here](#).

Gender and Queer Perspectives on Brexit

Moira Dustin, Nuno Ferreira and Susan Millns are currently completing a project exploring the opportunities and challenges, the rights and wrongs, and the prospects and risks of the Brexit debate from a particular perspective – that of gender and sexuality. While much is being written about Brexit from legal, political, social and economic perspectives, there has as yet been relatively little debate about Brexit from a gendered and queer point of view and little analysis of the effects of Brexit on women and gender/sexual minorities who have historically been more marginalised and whose voices have tended to be less audible in political debates – both nationally and at the European level. This project will in essence explore how Brexit might change the equality, human rights and social justice landscape, but from the viewpoint of women and gender/sexual minorities. We envisage that Brexit will impact upon women and gender/sexual minorities in a variety of ways and will potentially present particular challenges for these groups.

The project will culminate in an edited collection published by Palgrave Macmillan.

Edward Guntrip works with UN Independent Expert

Edward Guntrip has contributed research to the recent report of Juan Pablo Bohoslavsky (the UN Independent Expert on the effects of foreign debt and other related international financial obligations of States on the full enjoyment of all human rights, particularly economic, social and cultural rights) on the human rights implications of debt disputes being submitted to the international investment arbitration system. You can read the full report [here](#).

Stephanie Berry teams up with Minority Rights Group International

Stephanie Berry has recently authored a report for Minority Rights Group International on 'Mainstreaming a minority rights-based approach to refugee and migrant communities in Europe', funded by the Centre Maurits Coppetiers. She argues that a minority rights based approach helps to forge cohesive societies. Although the scale of the current situation and the specific groups of people arriving at Europe's borders may be new, the challenges facing European states are not; the same challenges have been present for centuries. Consequently, we can build on this experience, and learn to recognise diversity as a strength, rather than a threat. The report can be accessed [here](#) and a podcast from the launch of the report [here](#).



Steph is co-Convenor of the LLM in International Human Rights Law and co-Director of the Sussex Centre for Human Rights Research. She convenes the core LLM International Human Rights Law module *International Human Rights Law* and the optional module *Human Rights Law Clinic*. She also teaches on *Approaches to International Law, Civil and Political Rights: Contemporary Challenges, Indigenous and Minority Rights* and *LGBTQI Rights: International and Comparative Perspectives*. Read more about Steph's research [here](#).

Sussex Academics work with OSCE for project on Freedom of Religion or Belief

Stephanie Berry is working with Fabio Petito (School of Global Studies) on a funded project, to co-produce innovative knowledge on interreligious engagement (dialogue and collaboration) as a policy tool to combat intolerance based on religion and advance freedom of religion and belief (FORB) for all. It will be achieved through a multi-stakeholder consultation process led by [FoRB&FPI](#) in partnership with the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR) under the 2018 Italian OSCE Chairmanship.

The project began with a workshop on 6 March 2018 in Bologna on "Interreligious Engagement and Sustainable Peace" organised by [ISPI](#) and the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In July, further consultations with stakeholders from academia, civil society, international organisations and the foreign policy sphere were held at the House of Commons and Lambeth Palace.



UPDATES

Partnership between LPS and the Equality and Diversity Forum (EDF)

SCHRR member Moira Dustin is leading a [partnership](#) between LPS and the Equality and Diversity Forum (EDF) to promote knowledge exchange on equality, human rights and social justice and improve policy and legislation in these areas. This includes developing a hub of resources on Brexit and gender equality on the EDF website.

SOGICA Project

A flurry of activity has been taking place in the context of the [SOGICA project](#), which concentrates on



claims of asylum on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) and is led by Professor [Nuno Ferreira](#). In January, Nuno was interviewed on [Newshour – BBC World Service](#) on the Court of Justice of the EU's judgment in the [F case](#) regarding evidence standards in sexual orientation asylum cases (18'25"). Nuno has also published a review essay on '[Sexuality and citizenship in Europe: socio-legal and human rights perspectives](#)' (2018 *Social & Legal Studies*, Vol. 27(2), 253–265), which uses

SOGI asylum as a case study. More recently, Nuno also taught [Roma Tre University](#) students as a Visiting Professor about SOGI asylum claims. Finally Dr Carmelo Danisi has organised a conference on '[Vulnerability and Asylum: Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Claims](#)' in Forlì, Italy, in cooperation with the Department of Political and Social Science of the University of Bologna.

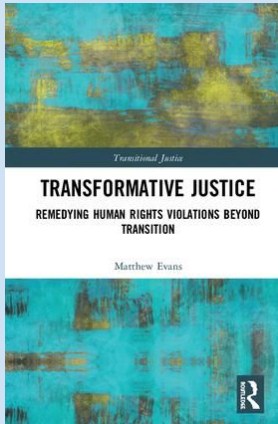
Association of Human Rights Institutes Conference 2018

The Sussex Centre for Human Rights Research will apply to become a member of the [Association of Human Rights Institutes](#) (AHRI) at AHRI's biannual conference hosted by Edinburgh University in September 2018. Stephanie Berry and Elizabeth Craig (co-Convenors of the LLM in International Human Rights Law) are both presenting papers at this conference as is PhD student Isilay Taban. Elizabeth's paper will consider 'The Role of Minority Rights in Post-Conflict Societies: Lessons from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and Macedonia', Steph's will explore the possibility of '(De)Securitizing International Human Rights Law', whereas Isilay will make the case for 'A more inclusive approach: the right to culture for minority refugees'.

PUBLICATIONS

Matthew Evans' monograph 'Transformative Justice: Remedying Human Rights Violations Beyond Transition' published by Routledge (2018)

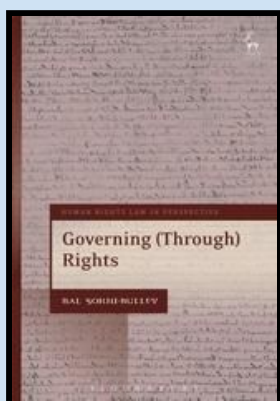
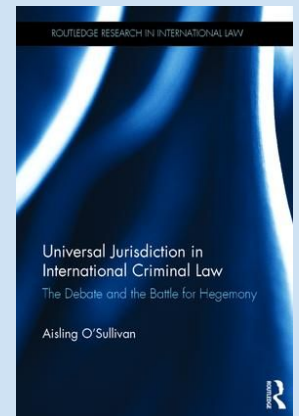
Transitional justice mechanisms employed in post-conflict and post-authoritarian contexts have largely focused upon individual violations of a narrow set of civil and political rights, as well as the provision of legal and quasi-legal remedies, such as truth commissions, amnesties and prosecutions. In contrast, this book highlights the significance of structural violence in producing and reproducing rights violations. The book further argues that, in order to remedy structural violations of human rights, there is a need to utilise a different toolkit from that typically employed in transitional justice contexts.



Matt teaches on the core LLM International Human Rights Law module *International Human Rights Law* and the optional module, Human Rights Law Clinic. He also convenes the optional module *Socioeconomic rights: economic violence, social justice and human rights law*. Read more about Matt's research [here](#).

Aisling O'Sullivan's monograph 'Universal jurisdiction in international criminal law: the debate and the battle for hegemony' published by Routledge (2017)

This book explores the debate over universal jurisdiction in international criminal law, aiming to unpack a practice in which international lawyers continue to disagree over the concept of universal jurisdiction. Using Martti Koskenniemi's work as a foil, this book exposes the argumentative techniques in operation in national and international adjudication since the 1990s.



Bal Sokhi-Bulley's monograph 'Governing (Through) Rights' published by Hart (2016)

Taking a critical attitude of dissatisfaction towards rights, the central premise of this book is that rights are technologies of governmentality. They are a regulating discourse that is itself managed through governing tactics and techniques – hence governing (through) rights.

Bal teaches on the core LLM International Human Rights Law module *International Human Rights Law*, and convenes the optional module *Migration, Rights and Governance*. Read more about Bal's research [here](#).

SCHRR's members have also published widely in academic journals and edited collections over the past year, please see individual staff profiles for further details.

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EVENTS

'Sex, gender and sexuality in Europe: Sinking in quicksand?' Professor Nuno Ferreira's Inaugural Lecture



In March 2018, SCHRR celebrated the inaugural lecture of one of its Co-Directors, Professor Nuno Ferreira. Nuno joined Sussex Law School in 2016 to take up the position of Professor of Law with research expertise in children's rights, the rights of refugees and migrants and SOGI rights. In addition to SCHRR, he also heads up the SOGICA project (see below for further information on SOGICA). In his inaugural lecture, Nuno drew on the themes of sex, gender and sexuality in Europe to explore a range of issues including the legal recognition of same-sex partnerships,

sexual identity asylum claims and male circumcision. In exploring these issues Nuno emphasised the importance of not becoming complacent. Despite recent victories in the area of sexual freedom, there are many battles that still need to be fought, such as the right to family reunification under freedom of movement in the EU for same-sex partners (the subject of a subsequent CJEU decision); disparities in adoption rights; the difficulties faced by SOGI asylum-seekers in obtaining refugee status; and the importance of addressing male circumcision from the perspective of best interests of the child and consent. In conclusion, Nuno emphasised that despite theoretical and doctrinal differences, we should strive to put individuals and families centre stage in order to ensure that the law serves people and not the other way around.

During his lecture, Nuno also spoke of his appreciation for Brighton and Hove and the University of Sussex: *'So, there is hope. And there is particularly hope in this city and University, with their long tradition of critical thinking and appreciation for diversity.'* Read more about Nuno's research [here](#).

In June 2018, SCHRR sponsored a screening of the critically acclaimed film 'A Cambodian Spring' at nearby Lewes Depot.



Guest Speakers from Amnesty International and the Equality and Human Rights Commission

As part of the *Rights Research Series*, external speakers explored the role of research in improving respect for human rights. Paola Uccellari from the Equality and Human Rights Commission spoke about 'Bridging the divide between academic and decision-makers: Using human rights to influence law, policy and practice' (November 2017), whereas Matteo De Bellis from Amnesty International introduced us to 'Research for Change: Amnesty International's work for the rights of refugees and migrants in the central Mediterranean' (April 2018).

External speaker Julija Sardelić (KU Leuven) discussed 'The Invisible Edges of Citizenship: Re-Addressing the Position of Roma from a Global Perspective' in March 2018.

Further information about the *Rights Research Series* can be found on our [website](#).

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PHD NEWS

PhD successes!

MaryFrances Lukera (pictured with her examiners) successfully defended her thesis in April 2018, examined by Prof Ann Stewart (University of Warwick) and Craig Lind (University of Sussex). Her thesis, on the subject of 'Promoting Sexual and Reproductive Health of Sex Workers in Kenya: A Human Rights Approach' was supervised by Prof Sue Millns and Dr Charlotte Skeet.

Haydar Karaman also successfully completed his thesis, after being examined by Prof Bill Bowring (Birkbeck, University of London) and Dr Tarik Kochi (University of Sussex). Haydar's thesis, entitled 'The Rights to Conscientious Objection to Military Service in Turkey: Challenging State Hegemony' was supervised by Dr Elizabeth Craig and Prof Sue Millns.

Misozi Lwatula completed her thesis, 'Gender-Based Violence in Zambia: A Feminist Critique', after being examined by Prof Rosemary Auchmuty (University of Reading) and Dr Charlotte Skeet (University of Sussex). Misozi was supervised by Prof Sue Millns and Craig Lind.

Nick Beard graduated in July after being examined by Prof Helen Stafford (University of Liverpool) and Prof Nuno Ferreira. Prof Sue Millns and Dr Charlotte Skeet supervised her thesis on 'Feminist Theory, Gender Mainstreaming and the European Union: Examining the effect of EU Gender Mainstreaming and National Law on Female Asylum Seekers in the UK and Republic of Ireland'.

Zainab Nimer Khashman passed her viva in January, after being examined by Prof Gill Hague (University of Bristol) and Prof Heather Keating. Zainab's thesis 'Law and the Protection of Women from Violence in Jordan'

was supervised by Craig Lind and Dr Charlotte Skeet.

Many congratulations to all!



ESRC Funding Success for Tom Ebbs

PhD student and member of SCHRR's doctoral working group, Tom Ebbs has been awarded a South East Network for Social Sciences (SeNSS) Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) Doctoral Studentship. The studentship covers Tom's fees and maintenance for the next two years, as well as allowing him to join their collaborative research network, participate in their Consortium, and have access to placements with external organisations. Up until now, Tom has successfully balanced his studies alongside his role as Research Director at the NGO Lawyers for Justice in Libya. The award will allow Tom to focus on his thesis, 'The Tactics and Strategies of Civil Society Organisations: A Critical Analysis of Feminist Legal Responses to Transactional Sex', supervised by Bal Sokhi-Bulley and Charlotte Skeet. Well done Tom!

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A Busy Year for SCHRR's PhD Working Group

In the 2017-18 academic year, SCHRR's PhD Working Group, headed by our PhD representative Gizem Güney, continued its good work. The termly *Doctoral Discussion* served as an excellent opportunity for academic staff and PhD students to explore contemporary debates (and to socialise afterwards): 'Fake News: Legitimate

Expression?' (Autumn term) and 'Is Dignity Culturally Relative in the Context of Human Rights?' (Spring term). PhD students Ebru Demir and Julia Winstone gave work in progress seminars for the Rights Research Series. The working group also introduced 'Coffee and PhDing' sessions as an informal environment for PhD students to present their research and receive feedback from their peers.

LLM ACTIVITIES

Another Successful Year for the Human Rights Law Clinic

LLM International Human Rights Law students enrolled on the Human Rights Law Clinic module (30 credits, Spring term) have successfully delivered their final memoranda to a range of clients working the field of human rights. Briefs included: the domestic implications of the UK's ratification of the Istanbul Convention (Savelives); the extrajudicial killing of indigenous people as a result of conservation efforts (Survival International); and pre-trial detention as a form of torture (OSCE/ODIHR). According to India Kearsley (Minority Rights Group International, 'Understanding Multiple and Intersectional Discrimination'):

The Human Rights Law Clinic was undoubtedly the most challenging module I took during my LLM course, but also the most rewarding. Having never worked for a client before, it was a great opportunity to gain experience, and I learnt a lot about managing expectations and writing for a purpose.

Lindsay Redfern (OSCE/ODIHR, 'Sexual and Gender-Based Violence as a Form of Torture or Ill-Treatment'), similarly notes:

The Human Rights Law Clinic has increased my confidence in working to a brief and interacting with clients to ensure my research is focused and of use to their aims. ... I am proud of what I have been able to achieve and would definitely do it again given the opportunity.

Thomas Thrower (Global Rights Compliance LLP, 'The Rohingya Crisis: Accountability for Human Rights Violations') has also commented that:

Being part of the Sussex Human Rights Law Clinic has been a unique and valuable experience. Being able to carry out actual research that is contributing to pursuing accountability for human rights violations against the Rohingya has been highly rewarding. Working for the clinic has provided me with valuable tools for a future career in the practice of human rights defence. The experience has been the highlight of my legal education and I would recommend it to anyone considering the course.

Visit the Human Rights Law Clinic's [webpage](#) to review a selection of this year's memoranda and to find out more.

Launch of Migration Law Clinic

After a successful pilot in the 2017-18 academic year, the Migration Law Clinic will be formally incorporated into the Clinical Legal Education module (available to final year, undergraduate students) in 2018-19.

We are currently exploring whether it will be possible for LLM International Human Rights Law students to volunteer for the Clinic.

Annual LLM Garden Party

The annual LLM garden party took place in May 2018, kindly hosted by Prof Richard Vogler at his house in Lewes. Students all brought food to share with each other and were able to relax in the sun after submitting their essays just the day before. The day culminated in a football match at the local park.

The Hague Study Trip



In December 2017, students from the LLM in International Human Rights Law joined students on the LLM International Law and LLM International Criminal Law on a study trip to the Hague. Students visited the International Criminal Court (ICC), International Court of Justice, International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and the Kosovo Specialist Chambers over the course of two days. Students were given the opportunity to witness trials in progress and, as a result of presentations, were able to benefit from the insights of those working for the different courts. LLM International Human Rights Law student, Josh Funnell, explains '[t]he best thing about the trip - aside from the buzz of observing real international criminal proceedings - was to share it with students from a whole variety of different courses and legal specialities'.

Congratulations to LLM International Human Rights Law alumni

Congratulations to Poppy Barnett, who has been offered a training contract by top human rights law firm, Leigh Day.

Congratulations are also due to Ryan Dowding who will commence his pupillage at Three Raymond Buildings in October 2018.

ALUMNI PROFILES

Esnatt Edith Gondwe



I am currently the Gender specialist on a maternal and child health program being implemented in Ghana, Malawi and Rwanda through funding from the Canadian

government. This position allows me to implement a rights based approach to programming by aligning the program interventions with acts and policies that promote and protect women and children's access to healthcare. My core responsibility is to ensure that the program interventions are addressing the gender norms, roles and relations that affect women and children's access to exercise their reproductive health rights. This work allows me to relate the law to society by helping people understand their rights through programmatic interventions and dialogues that allow the communities we work in to come to their own understanding of rights and how to work together to ensure the fulfilment of the right to health for all factions of society.

The LLM prepared me for my current position in so many ways! It opened my mind to the knowledge of all the instruments that exist to protect people's human rights. It fuelled my passion for utilizing legal, political and social methods to ensure the fulfilment of rights. The guidance of the excellent teaching team expanded the parameters of my thinking, therefore enhancing my ability to be more analytical, precise, and thoughtful.

The LLM IHRL program initiated the re-birth of my love for knowledge. Furthermore, as a result of the diversity of experiences from the different students within the program I was elevated to a new level of global understanding. I highly recommend the LLM

in IHRL for people who want to find a programme that would enhance their knowledge, strengthen their legal and analytical skill sets, and fuel their passion to bring change and protection to their society.

Ruby Mae Axelson



In 2014 I completed my LLM in International Law at Sussex University. I had previously completed my LLB at Sussex and the masters seemed to be a natural progression, as I had always been

interested in the topics of international human rights law and international criminal law. During my LLM I focused on these topics and completed my dissertation on persecution on the grounds of sexual orientation before the international criminal court. I was extremely lucky to get this work published after my LLM, through Mark Walters, Professor of Criminal Law and Criminology at Sussex. This was the catalyst for my career in international law.

Upon completion of my LLM, I joined a defence team before the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia ('ICTY') where I worked for 6 months. I then joined the team at Global Rights Compliance ('GRC') in 2015, at first as an intern, then as a paid Legal Associate. Throughout my three years with GRC I have worked alongside esteemed lawyers in the fields of international humanitarian law, international criminal law, international human rights law and business and human rights. We have projects running across the world, including Ukraine, Bangladesh, and Yemen. Currently, I am a Legal Assistant with the Stanišić Defence

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team before the Mechanism for International Criminal Tribunals ('MICT'), where I work on conducting evidential analysis, and a Legal Consultant with GRC.

Elliot Hatt

After completing the IHRL LLM in August 2017, I am now working as a Legal Research Intern at the Equal Rights Trust, a London-based human rights NGO



whose purpose is to combat discrimination and advance equality around the world. In this role I support staff by undertaking research into international legal standards and best practice, as well as documenting patterns of discrimination against protected groups.

The IHRL LLM was not only crucial to being able to secure this internship in the first place,

but it has also given me skills and knowledge which I use consistently within my work. The course allowed me to engage with and develop my knowledge of equality and discrimination issues, my main area of interest within human rights, which has proved invaluable to the work I do within this internship. For instance, I have undertaken research into domestic discrimination in and international best practice relating to sexual orientation and gender identity, which was made easier by the knowledge I acquired while writing my LLM dissertation on LGBTQ rights. The course also gave me a strong understanding of the international human rights framework which is essential to being able to effectively complete my research tasks. Overall I would highly recommend the IHRL LLM not only because of its extremely interesting and provoking content, but because it serves as great preparation for a future career in human rights.

