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years



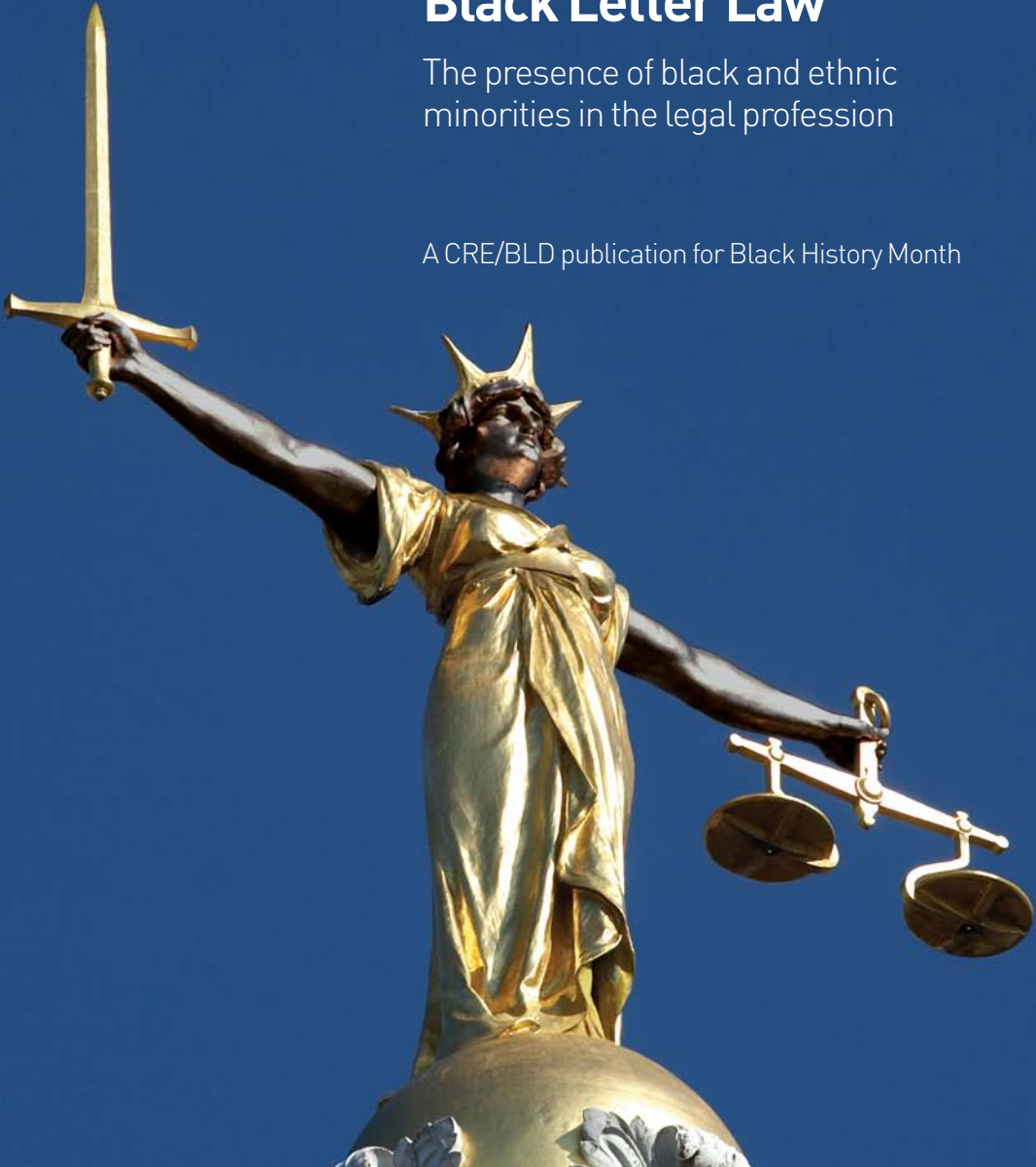
COMMISSION FOR
RACIAL EQUALITY

BLD
BLACK LAWYERS DIRECTORY
highlighting and promoting diversity in law

Black Letter Law

The presence of black and ethnic minorities in the legal profession

A CRE/BLD publication for Black History Month



Introductions

The idea to do this booklet came from Debo Nwauzu, Director of the Black Lawyers Directory (BLD). The Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) agreed to undertake this project thinking that it would be fairly simple to get the information from the Law Society and the Bar Council and put it all together. But this has not been very easy. We approached the Law Society and the Bar Council for their assistance in researching their records - they have been very helpful in making extensive enquiries - however, neither organisation had much information that was relevant.

This lack of information is significant and reflects that until fairly recently these organisations did not collect monitoring data on their members. This problem also illustrates how important it is to undertake monitoring.

This is a work in progress. We hope to build on this publication in future years so that there is a more detailed chronicle of black and minority ethnic (BME) individuals in the legal profession who are or were in the vanguard of the struggle to make the profession more diverse and representative.

We would like to apologise to those worthy individuals who because of the lack of information have been overlooked by this publication. We welcome receiving information about anyone who should be included in a future publication, or further information about any of the persons already included.

Anthony Robinson, Legal Director, CRE

I am happy that this booklet, which highlights the talent and achievements of some BME individuals in the legal profession, has come to fruition and I particularly hope that young and not so young BME are enthused and encouraged by it. This booklet could have been a lot longer, but we had a very tight deadline to meet and compiling the information was not easy due to the paucity of information about BMEs in the legal profession.

This booklet is only the beginning of much more to come. I am very grateful to the Commission for Racial Equality, particularly Anthony Robinson and his team, for their support and hard work in making it happen.

Debo Nwauzu, Founder and Director of BLD, Black Lawyers Directory

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This publication was researched and written by Vanda Lopes, Sharon Phillips and Clancy Riddiford, Legal Affairs Officers at the CRE, under the direction of Razia Karim, the Head of Legal Policy, who all undertook this task at short notice, but did so with their usual good humour and grace, and in the process have produced an important piece of work.

Legal history

Ganendra Mohan Tagore

Ganendra Tagore was the first Indian to be called to the Bar at Lincoln's Inn in 1862.

Alexander Kennedy

Alexander Kennedy, Isbiter of Hudson Bay and part Native American, was admitted to Middle Temple in 1862.

Thomas Morris Chester

Thomas Morris Chester is believed to be the first black American to qualify as a Barrister in England. He was admitted to Middle Temple in 1867 and was called to the Bar in 1870.

Thomas was the son of a slave woman who escaped from Baltimore in 1825 and thus he was born free. His father was an oysterman/restaurant owner who was part of the inner circle of political and social functions of Harrisburg.

Prior to being called to the bar, Thomas was a teacher, a school director, journalist, war correspondent and editor. In 1866, he travelled to England as an emissary of the Garnet Equal Rights League of Harrisburg. On his return to America in 1870 as a qualified barrister, he was appointed District Superintendent of education, Brigadier General of the Louisiana state militia and was president of a railroad building company.

Aviet Agabeg

Aviet Agabeg became the first Asian member of Inner Temple in 1864. From Calcutta, he attended St John's College, Cambridge and was called to the Bar in 1868.

Christian Frederick Cole

Christian Frederick Cole, second son of clergyman, Jacob Cole of Kissy of Sierra Leone, was black African. He matriculated as a non-collegiate student at Oxford University in 1873, was admitted to Inner Temple in 1879 and called to the Bar in 1883. Cole seems to have been the first black student to join Oxford University and one of the first black men to be called to the Bar.

Mahatma Gandhi

Mahatma Gandhi, the leader of the Indian nationalist movement against British rule, began his career as a lawyer. At the age of 19 he travelled to England to study at University College London before being admitted to Inner Temple. After being called to the English Bar in 1891, Gandhi returned to Bombay where he tried to establish a law practice. In April 1893 Gandhi was engaged to represent a Porbander firm in a case in South Africa and set sail for the continent.

It is widely believed that it was Gandhi's experiences as a barrister in South Africa that set him on the path to activism. In South Africa Gandhi experienced the discrimination commonly directed at blacks and Indians. One day in court in Durban the magistrate asked him to remove his turban. He refused and stormed out of the courtroom. In another incident he was thrown off a train at Pietermaritzburg, after refusing to move from the first class to a third class coach while holding a valid first class ticket. However, Gandhi's experiences in South Africa do not explain why he inculcated non-violent revolution.

Muhammad Jinnah (1876–1948)

Known as the founder of Pakistan, Muhammad Ali Jinnah was the youngest Indian to be called to the London Bar at the astonishingly young age of 20 in 1896. He had been sent to England in 1893 by his father to work as an apprentice bookkeeper but soon abandoned his account books in favour of his studies at Lincoln's Inn. He came close to staying in England and taking up a career in the law, but was persuaded to return to Karachi by his father and left London in 1895.

He went on to become the first Governor General of the newly formed Pakistan having taken over from the Viceroy of all India, Lord Mountbatten, in 1947. He has been variously described as one of the greatest legal luminaries India had produced during the first half of the 20th century, a great constitutionalist, a distinguished parliamentarian, an indefatigable freedom-fighter, a dynamic Muslim leader, a political strategist and above all one of the great nation builders of modern times.

Jawaharlal Nehru

Jawaharlal Nehru is best known as one of the most important leaders of the Indian Independence Movement, the head of the Indian National Congress, and the first Prime Minister of India upon winning its independence on 15 August 1947.

The only son to be born to an Allahabad-based barrister, Jawaharlal followed his father's footsteps by becoming a barrister in 1912. From the age of 15 to 23 he studied in England at Harrow Trinity College, Cambridge before being admitted to Inner Temple in 1910. On being called to the English Bar, Jawaharlal returned to India to practice law in the Allahabad High Court before entering into politics.

Jawaharlal remained the Prime Minister of India for 17 years and can rightly be called the architect of modern India. He set India on the path of democracy and nurtured its institutions – Parliament, a multi-party system, an independent judiciary and a free press. He was a prolific writer

in English and wrote a number of books including 'The Discovery of India', 'Glimpses of World History' and his autobiography, 'Towards Freedom' (1936), which ran nine editions in the first year alone. Emotional sensitivity and intellectual passion infused his writings, giving them unusual appeal & topicality even today. He was loved by children and his birthday is observed as Children's Day.

Cornelia Sorabji

Cornelia was called to the English Bar in 1923 and in 1924, went on to become the second barrister in India after gaining the right to practice in the Calcutta High Court.

Cornelia became the first female student of Deccan College of Poona, she received a first in English, but her gender prevented her from getting the scholarship for further studies abroad. After she had saved enough money, she went to study at Oxford University. In 1893, Cornelia became the first woman to receive a degree in England.

In 1904, she joined the Bengal civil service as Lady Legal Advisor to the Court of Wards. When women in India acquired the right to plead before the courts of law, Cornelia applied and was admitted to the rolls of the Allahabad High Court. On marrying Justice Blair of Allahabad High Court, Cornelia returned to England and became an author and a regular contributor to newspapers and journals.

Legal history in the making

Nelson Mandela



Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela was the first President of South Africa to be elected in fully representative democratic elections. Before his presidency he was a prominent anti-apartheid activist and leader of the African National Congress. He was imprisoned for 27 years for his involvement in underground armed resistance activities. Throughout his imprisonment he became the most widely-known figure in the struggle against South African apartheid, largely because he consistently refused to compromise his political position to obtain freedom. After his release in 1990, Mandela facilitated a peaceful transition to fully-representative democracy in South Africa.

Nelson's contribution to the British legal profession was to be elected an Honorary Bencher of Lincoln's Inn in 1994. He was made an Honorary Queens Counsel by the Department of Constitutional Affairs in 2000.

Dr John Roberts QC

Dr John Roberts QC was the first person of African ancestry to be appointed Queens Council in 1988 and the first to be Head of his Chambers. He was also the first person of African ancestry to be made a Recorder of the Crown Court in 1987 and to be appointed by the British Government as a judge of the Supreme Court of the British Virgin Islands and Anguilla in 1992.

John was born in Sierra Leone in 1928. He initially came to the UK in 1952 to join the Royal Air Force (RAF). After a distinguished career in the RAF, John decided to read law part-time at the Inns of Court School of law whilst working. He was called to the Bar (Gray's Inn) in 1969. In 1970 he helped set up 9 Stone Buildings where he was the effective Head but was not

able to be the actual Head because of the requirements of the length of Call to the Bar. In 1975 John set up his own Chambers, 2 Stone Buildings, which he ensured had an ethnically diverse membership. John was also the first Head of Chambers to take on seven female barristers at one time. Apart from the English Bar, John has also been called to the Bars of nine other countries, which may well be a record. He is a Master Bencher at Gray's Inn and is also a member of Lincoln's Inn. John retired from the bench in 1998 aged 70 as required, but remains a practicing barrister at Warwick Court Chambers. He also sits as an Arbitrator for the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators.

Baroness Scotland QC

Baroness Scotland made legal history in 1991 when she became the first black female QC and one of the youngest ever QCs at the age of 35.

Born in Dominica in 1955, Baroness Scotland came to Britain at the age of two with her parents and nine other siblings. She was called to the Bar (Middle Temple) in 1977 having graduated from London University in 1976. She is also a member of the Bar of Antigua and the Commonwealth of Dominica. Baroness Scotland distinguished herself at the Bar and was a founder member and former Head of Chambers of Gray's Inn Square. She specialised in family and public law and has chaired a number of major inquiries relating to child abuse, mental health and housing.

Baroness Scotland was approved to sit as a Deputy High Court Judge of the Family Division by the Conservative Government under John Major but was swiftly made a Minister by Tony Blair following the Labour Party's success at the 1997 general election. She was made a Bencher of the Middle Temple in 1997 and in the same year was created a peer as Baroness Scotland of Asthal, in the County of Oxfordshire and appointed to the House of Lords. She was raised to the Privy Council in 2001.

Baroness Scotland was the Parliamentary Under-Secretary



of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office between 1999 and 2001 and Parliamentary Secretary at the Lord Chancellor's Department between 2001 and 2003. Baroness Scotland became the Home Office Minister of State for Criminal Justice System and Law Reform in 2003 and since May 2005, the Home Office Minister for Criminal Justice System and Offender Management. She is spokesperson for the DTI on Women and Equality Issues in the House of Lords and has received numerous awards, commendations and honorary doctorates.

Mirza Ahmad



Mirza Ahmad is the Chief Legal & Monitoring Officer for Birmingham City Council, one of the UK's and Europe's largest local authority and most populated city outside London. He manages the Council's Legal & Democratic Services Department which has over 300 staff and an annual trading budget in excess of £60 million.

Mirza graduated from Keele University in 1983 where he studied law and politics. He was called to the Bar (Gray's Inn) in 1984 and went on to obtain an MBA from Manchester Metropolitan University and a Masters in Law (LLM) from Leicester University in 1992.

Mirza has been the Chairman of the Bar Association for Local Government & Public Service since 1998 and was named one of the Top 5 Lawyers in Local Government in 2005. In 2000 he was the first local government manager to obtain a '3 star – excellent rating' under the Government's Best Value regime. Under his leadership his department won the Local Government Chronicle's "Legal Team of the Year 2005".

Oba Nsugbe QC

Oba Nsugbe was educated at Hull University where he was awarded an LLB (Hons) before being called to the Bar in 1985 (Gray's Inn). He became a Recorder (part-time judge) in 2000

and was appointed Queens Council in 2002. Oba specialises in health and safety and environmental law, insolvency, directors disqualifications and serious fraud. He has also been a member of the Criminal Committee of the Judicial Studies Board, the Bar Council Professional Conduct Committee and Glidewell Committee on Judicial Appointments and Silks. He is also a Senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN).

Shaun Wallace

Shaun Wallace a barrister from Wembley, London made television history on 5 December 2004 by becoming the second person from an ethnic minority background to reach the finals and the first black person to win Mastermind.

A practicing barrister for over 20 years, Shaun Wallace could have chosen law as his specialist subject; instead he opted for FA Cup Finals since 1970.

Katie Ghose



Katie Ghose is a public affairs specialist and lawyer who is currently the Director of the British Institute of Human Rights (BIHR).

Katie practiced as a barrister specialising in immigration and human rights law between 1997 and 1999. Katie has extensive campaigns and political expertise, having worked in the Commons for Greville Janner, for Citizens Advice Bureau as their Parliamentary Liaison Officer and as Campaign Manager for the Child Accident Prevention Trust. Katie has worked for several not-for profit organisations including, most recently, Age Concern England, where she was the Campaigns and Parliamentary Unit Manager responsible for the strategic planning and direction of campaigns and parliamentary activities.

Katie is a trustee for both Stonewall and Bail for Immigration Detainees (BID), and has previously been the Chair of Trustees at Asylum Aid and BID. Katie was a member

of the taskforce advising the government on the Commission for Equality and Human Rights that will come into existence in 2007. In 2005 Legal Action Group published Katie's first book: *Beyond the Courtroom: a lawyer's guide to campaigning*.

Paul Boateng MP



In 1987, Paul Boateng was one of four new parliamentarians to be the first members of the House from an ethnic minority background. In 1997, Paul became the first black MP to hold a ministerial office in government.

Prior to becoming an MP, Paul had been a solicitor since 1975 and a barrister since 1989 when he was called to the Bar. His practice both as a solicitor and barrister centered on civil rights.

As a civil rights lawyer, Paul gained some notoriety through this work in Lambeth, London in the late 1970s and was a familiar figure at protests against the kinds of police activity that built up to the 1981 Brixton Riot. He was elected to the GLC in 1981 and became the chairman of its police committee and the vice-chairman of its ethnic minorities committee.

Mrs Justice Linda Dobbs DBE



The Honourable Mrs Justice Dobbs DBE became the first black High Court Judge in 2003. Justice Dobbs went beyond her father's achievements (a lawyer and High Court judge in Sierra Leone) to become the first ever black barrister in England and Wales to reach beyond the rank of circuit judge.

Justice Dobbs was called to the Bar in 1981 and took silk in 1998. Her practice was predominantly criminal law, although she had considerable experience in various professional disciplinary tribunals. As a High Court judge, Justice Dobbs sits in the Queen's Bench Division of the High Court dealing with civil litigation, the Court of Appeal (Criminal Division), the Divisional Court, the Administrative Court and spends a

substantial amount of the year out of London on circuit, trying serious criminal cases.

Justice Dobbs is also a contributing editor to a number of legal publications and lecturer to university and bar students, magistrates, the police and other professionals. She has also been an occasional consultant for television programmes and has appeared on television and radio both in the UK and abroad. Justice Dobbs is also involved in pro-bono work and helps to train young lawyers and advocates in South Africa.

Rabinder Singh QC



Rabinder was one of the youngest barristers to be appointed Queens Counsel in 2002 and went on to become a Deputy High Court Judge in 2003 and a Recorder of the Crown Court in 2004.

Rabinder was called to the Bar in 1989 having earned a double first in law at Trinity College, Cambridge in 1985, earning an LLM at the University of California at Berkeley and working as a law lecturer at the University of Nottingham between 1986 and 1988. Over the next ten years he specialised in public and administrative law, Employment law, European Community law, human rights law, commercial law and media law at Gray's Inn Square and went on to set up Matrix Chambers with Cherie Booth QC in 2000.

Rabinder was named the Barrister of the Year by *The Lawyer* magazine in 2001. He has been a visiting Professor of Law at the London School of Economics since 2003 and is the author of 'The Future of Human Rights in the United Kingdom' published in 1997.

District Judge Ray Singh

Ray Singh was the first judge on the Welsh bench from an ethnic minority. He was appointed Deputy District Judge in 1992, District Judge in 1997 and currently works on the Wales and Chester Circuit.

He has been a member of the Welsh Advisory Committee on Drug and Alcohol Misuse, the Judicial Studies Board, Family Court Services Committee, National Assembly Advisory Group and the South and South West Wales Criminal Justice Liaison Committee. He is a former Commissioner of the Commission for Racial Equality (1996–2002), a former member of the Race Relations Committee, General Council of the Bar and is a former part-time Chair of the Child Support Appeals Tribunal.

Keith Vaz MP



Before becoming a Member of Parliament for Leicester East in 1987, Keith Vaz was a solicitor at Richmond Council in 1982, Senior Solicitor at the London Borough of Islington between 1982 and 1985 and solicitor at Highfields and Belgrave Law Centre in Leicester between 1985 and 1987.

Keith was born in Aden, Yemen in 1956 and moved to the UK with his family, originally from Goa, India, in 1965. He received a BA in 1979 and an MA in 1987 from Cambridge University.

Keith has held a number of Government posts: Minister of State for Europe (1999–2001); Parliamentary Secretary (Minister), Lord Chancellor's Department (May–Oct 1999); Parliamentary Private Secretary to the Attorney General, John Morris and Solicitor General, Lord Falconer QC (Jun 1997–May 1999). He currently serves as a Member of the Constitutional Affairs Select Committee and has previously been a member of the Home Affairs Select Committee (1987–1992). Between 1993 and 1994 he was a Member of the Executive Committee of the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

Thelma Stober

Thelma is the Director of Law, Governance and Procurement at the London Development Agency (LDA), which is responsible for promoting and supporting the growth of businesses, the

creation of new jobs and the development of new communities in London. Thelma was instrumental in securing the London 2012 Olympics by defending the LDA's ability to deliver the games and the legal powers it had to secure the land needed for the international event. The Lawyer magazine voted her as one of the Hot 100 lawyers shaping the law in 2006.

Thelma was born in Sierra Leone in 1960 and studied law at Leicester University. After being called to the Bar in 1981 (Middle Temple) and completing her pupillage, Thelma spent 6 months in Sierra Leone where she was also called to the Bar before returning to the UK to continue her practice here. After leaving the Bar in 1978, Thelma went on to work at the Tooting Law Centre and the London Borough of Hackney's Race Equality Unit. Thelma re-qualified as a solicitor in 1993 and went on to head the Council's legal department in 1995. Thelma also worked as a Planning Lawyer at the Greater London Authority providing advice to the Mayor in before joining the LDA in 2002.

Shami Chakrabarti

Shami Chakrabarti, a champion of human rights, has been the Director of Liberty since 2003 after joining the organisation as in-house counsel on 10 September 2001.

Shami was born in London in 1969 and graduated in law at the London School of Economics in 1991. She was called to the Bar (Middle Temple) in 1994 and did her pupillage at 39 Essex Street Chambers. Shami worked as a lawyer at the Home Office between 1996 and 2001, where she worked on policy, legislation and litigation in the areas of counter-terrorism, asylum and criminal justice and on the implementation of the Human Rights Act.

Since joining Liberty, Shami has campaigned vigorously against anti-terrorist measures and legislation in the wake of the 9/11 and 7/7 terrorists' attacks. She has also written, spoken and broadcast widely on the importance of the post-WW2 human rights framework as an essential component of democratic society.



Photo: Christopher Cox

Shami is a Governor of the London School of Economics and sits on the Advisory Board of the British Institute of Human Rights and the Executive Committee of the Administrative Law Bar Association.

Courtenay Griffiths QC



Courtenay was born in Kingston Jamaica in 1955 and moved to Coventry at the age of five. He was called to the Bar in 1980 after graduating from the London School of Economics in 1978. He was appointed Queens Council in 1998 and a Recorder of the Crown Court (a part-time judge) in 1999. He is the joint Head of Garden Court Chambers (with Owen Davies QC), one of the best known, largest, radical and respected Chambers in the UK and is also a Bencher of Gray's Inn. His main areas of practice are Crime, claims against the Police and Public Authorities and Inquests.

Courtenay has been counsel in some of the most famous trials and inquests in the UK including the Damilola Taylor murder trial, Goswell v Commissioner of Police for the Metropolis (which for some time was the highest award of damages made by a jury against a police force), the Brighton bombing, the Harrods bombing, the Canary Wharf bombing and the 'M25' appeal. He has chaired the Public Affairs committee of the Bar Council and was for several years the Chair of its Race Relations Committee. Courtenay has also written and lectured extensively on all aspects of the criminal justice system and has spoken on these issues on television and radio, both in the UK and internationally.

Anesta Weekes QC

Highlights of Anesta Weekes' distinguished career include being Counsel to the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry and representing convicted persons on capital cases before the Privy Council and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. She was The Times newspaper's Woman of the

year runner-up in 1999.

Anesta was called to the Bar in 1981 and is a member of the Crime team at 36 Bedford Row Chambers. In 1999, she was appointed Queens Counsel and Recorder of the Crown Court. She is currently a member of the Criminal Bar Association and the Employment Law Bar Association and was appointed a Bencher of Gray's Inn in 2003. Between 2000 and 2003, Anesta was the Vice-Chair of the Bar Council's Equal Opportunities Committee.

Anesta's main area of practice is criminal law, acting as both defence counsel and on behalf of the CPS. She sits as a part-time Chair of the Employment Tribunal and is an Arbitrator of the Commonwealth Secretariat Arbitral Tribunal. Anesta is a specialist trainer in advocacy skills. She was a member of a team of lawyers sponsored by the UK government to train South African lawyers in advocacy skill. She has also been a member of the Gambling Review Commission.

Sadiq Khan MP



Today, Sadiq Khan is more commonly known as the Labour MP for Tooting. Winner of the 'Newcomer of the Year' award by the Spectator Magazine Parliamentarian of the Year awards 2005 and nominated for Channel 4's 'Rising Star' award, he has been described as 'one to watch' in parliament.

Prior to becoming the MP, Sadiq was a Human Rights solicitor and a founding partner of one of the country's leading Human Rights firms, Christian Khan. A practicing solicitor for 11 years, he was listed as one of the country's leading lawyers in 2 separate categories of law in the Chambers and Partners directory 2004-05 (Human rights and Police law).

Sadiq has acted in a number of landmark cases in all major courts (including the European Court of Human Rights, House of Lords, Court of Appeal), and Tribunals. More recently in 2004, he represented two British families whose relatives were being held at Guantánamo Bay. He is also a lecturer and author of legal texts.

District Judge Shamim Qureshi

Shamim Qureshi was appointed as a District Judge (Magistrates' Court) in Wolverhampton in 2004.

He was born in 1960 and spent his early years in Kashmir Pakistan before moving to England at the age of five. He obtained his law degree at Bristol Polytechnic and was called to the Bar in 1982, having won a Gray's Inn scholarship. He was a Senior Crown Prosecutor between 1984 and 1989 and practiced at the Bristol Bar between 1989 and 2002. He was a part time Judge Advocate at Courts Martial in 2001 and went on to become an Immigration Adjudicator between 2002 and 2004. Judge Qureshi also served in the Territorial Army between 1986 and 2001, becoming a Captain in 1998.

David Lammy MP

David Lammy became the youngest qualifying barrister in England in 1994 and went on to become the youngest Member of Parliament at the age of 27. He was also the first black Britain to attend Harvard Law School, graduating with a Masters in law in 1996.

David was born in Tottenham, London on 19 July 1972. At the age of eleven David's singing voice won him a scholarship as a chorister at the exclusive King's School in Peterborough after he was heard singing in a gospel choir. He studied law at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), then at the Inns of Court School of Law. He was politically active throughout university, and worked part-time as a volunteer for the Free Representation Unit. He did a placement in Jamaica, working for Amnesty International and volunteered in Thailand for Prisoners Abroad.

David has practised as a lawyer in London and in California, specialising in medical ethics, negligence and commercial litigation. On his return to England he ventured into politics. Having been elected onto the Greater London Authority he was then elected as the Labour Party MP for Tottenham.



Icah Peart QC

Icah Peart was called to the Bar in 1978 (Middle Temple). He specialises in criminal law with particular expertise in public order offences, armed robbery, conspiracy to defraud, terrorism, murder and large-scale drugs conspiracy/importation. Icah became an Assistant Recorder in 1997, a Recorder in 2000 and was appointed Queens Counsel in 2002. He has also been a member of the London School of Economics Lawyers Group and the Bar Race Relations Committee.

Trevor Faure

Trevor Faure is the Europe, Middle East and Africa's General Counsel for Tyco International Ltd.

Tyco is an American manufacturing and service company with a total worldwide revenue of \$39.7 billion in the 2004/2005 fiscal year.

Trevor read law at Queen Mary College University of London. He is a barrister and was called to Bar (Middle Temple) in 1988.

Gifty Edila

Gifty Edila has been the Director of Law and Administration at the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea since 2001. The local authority is one of the wealthiest local authorities in the UK and the home of Europe's biggest carnival, the Notting Hill Carnival.

Born in 1956 in Accra, Ghana, Gifty was called to the Bar (Inner Temple) in 1979 and is a non-practising Barrister. She is also a practising solicitor, admitted in 1998. Between 1988 and 2001, Gifty was the Head of Law at the London Borough of Newham and was involved in a lot of the projects that totally transformed Newham, which is the 2012 Olympic host local authority. She has led award winning teams both at Newham



and Kensington & Chelsea. Her current team won the Local Government Chronicle (LGC) 2004 Legal Department of the Year award.

Gifty was President of the Association of Council Secretaries and Solicitors (ACSeS) until November 2005. She won the Excel Ghana Professional award for the Lawyer of the Year 2002. She has written a number of articles on legal issues, often speaks at conferences and is an accredited mediator.

Chris Boothman



Chris Boothman is the first Head of Legal Services of the Standards Board of England which was set up in 2002 to promote ethical behaviour across thousands of public sector authorities and to investigate breaches of its code of conduct.

Chris read Business Law at Moorgate School of Business Studies (now known as City University). After graduating in 1979, he stayed on at Moorgate School of Business Studies to do his Solicitor's Finals and he was admitted as a solicitor in 1982.

Chris worked at the former Greater London Council (GLC) as a legal officer in the 1980s and then at the London Borough of Hackney. Chris joined the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) in 1991 as the Director of Law where he remained for ten years.

During his time at the CRE, as well as being involved in many ground breaking discrimination cases and investigations, he played a crucial background role during the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry as significant recommendations adopted in the McPherson report were initiated by the CRE legal team and went on to become enshrined in the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.

Leila Seth

Leila Seth was the first woman to top the Bar examinations in London, three months after giving birth to her youngest child.

She went on to become the first woman judge in the Delhi High Court and the first woman Chief Justice in India.

Leila studied law in London because it was the only course where attendance was not strict. On returning to India, Leila started practicing law in the Patna and Calcutta High Courts in 1959, at a time when woman lawyers were considered rare commodities. Leila argued on a variety of matters, from tax to civil procedure to constitutional law. Her efforts got her elected as a Senior Advocate of the Supreme Court of India in 1977.

Leila chairs the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative as well as the Multiple Action Research Group and serves as the Vice President of the World Wildlife Fund. She has also been a passionate advocate of free and compulsory education of children.

Lord John Taylor



Lord Taylor of Warwick became the first black peer and also one of the youngest peers in the House of Lords in 1996 at the age of 42. He was called to the Bar in 1978, when he won the Gray's Inn Advocacy Award.

Born in Birmingham in 1952, his father was a professional cricketer who played for Warwickshire and the West Indies. Lord Taylor attended Moseley Grammar School and Keele University before joining the Inns of Court School of Law.

Lord Taylor was a Special Adviser to the Home Secretary and Minister of State between 1990 and 1991, when his portfolio included Inner Cities, Legal Services and crime prevention. He introduced and carried through all its stages the legislative bill which is now the Criminal Evidence Amendment Act.

Lord Taylor is the Patron of various children's charities, including Kidscape and Parents for Children. He is also the President of the national small Business Bureau and the British Board of Film Classification. Lord Taylor was awarded an Honorary Doctorate in Laws (LLD) at Warwick University in 1999.

Peter Herbert



Peter Herbert is the current national Chair of the Society of Black Lawyers. As Chair, he has campaigned for racial equality within the criminal justice system and the legal profession as a whole.

Peter's areas of practice include employment law and discrimination, actions against the police, judicial review, professional negligence, mental health and human rights. Peter has sat as an immigration judge since 1996 and was recently appointed an Employment Tribunal Chair and a Recorder in the Crown Court. Peter is a member of the Attorney General's Race Advisory Committee, and Chairs the pan-London independent Race Hate Crimes Forum, helping to combat racial violence in the capital. In 2002 he was awarded the American Bar Association diversity award.

Imran Khan

Imran Khan, solicitor and human rights activist, is perhaps best known for representing the family of Stephen Lawrence following Stephen's murder in 1993.

He was born in Karachi Pakistan and moved to the UK with his family in 1968 at the age of four. He went on to study law at the University of East London, then known as the North East London Polytechnic. After taking his solicitor's finals at the College of Law he completed his legal training at the well known London human rights firm of B. M Birnberg & Co. He went on to head up a criminal law department at a solicitor's firm in Ealing, where he developed the firm's human rights case load and focused particularly on cases involving racism. He is now a partner in his own firm, Imran Khan & Partners based in Central London.

He has spoken and written widely on issues of racism and the Stephen Lawrence case, Human Rights, Criminal Justice, Immigration/Asylum and Anti-Terrorism legislation both in the UK and Europe. This has included giving evidence to parliamentary and Privy Council Committees on Anti-

Terrorism legislation on behalf of the Forum Against Islamophobia and Racism (FAIR). In 1999 Imran received The Lawyer magazine's Legal Personality of the Year Award and the Ethnic Minority Multi-cultural Personality of the Year award.

Grace Ononiwu



In April 2005, Grace Ononiwu became the first black Chief Crown Prosecutor of African/Caribbean origin.

Grace a qualified Solicitor since 1990 began her career working for a private firm based in High Wycombe practicing Criminal Law. In 1991, she joined the CPS as a Crown Prosecutor and was promoted to Senior Crown Prosecutor in 1993. In 1998 she promoted to Acting Prosecution Team Leader in Croydon and tasked with the implementation of the Narey initiative (Croydon was identified as the pilot site). In 2001 she was appointed Project Manager for the Holborn Glidewell Project and tasked with planning and implementation of the first co-located unit in the Metropolitan police area. In 2002 Grace was promoted to Borough Crown Prosecutor and Head of Holborn Glidewell Criminal Justice Unit. This was followed in 2003 with the promotion to District Crown Prosecutor and Head of the Blackfriars Trial Unit. In 2004 she created and was appointed the Head of the first Combined Unit in London before becoming a Chief Crown Prosecutor.



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