



MANUEL BARCA QC
Call: 1986 | Silk: 2011

Registered name on the Bar Standards
Board Register: Manuel David Barca QC
Vat Number: 494646011

Overview

Manuel is a seasoned practitioner at the Media, Communications and Information Law Bar. He has a wealth of experience, both from his time as an established leading junior and as a silk, acting for both claimants and defendants in defamation, malicious falsehood ('trade libel'), privacy/confidentiality, contempt/reporting-restrictions, and data/information claims generally. He was Chambers and Partners "Defamation Silk of the Year" in 2017.

Both as a junior, and since taking silk in 2011, Manuel has regularly appeared in ground-breaking cases at all levels, including the High Court, the Court of Appeal, the House of Lords and Supreme Court. He has also advised in the Far East (Hong Kong, Singapore, and Brunei) and appeared as an advocate in Strasbourg and the Cayman Islands (High Court and Court of Appeal).

As well as acting for all the major broadcasters (BBC, Channel Four, ITV, ITN, Channel Five, BskyB) and publishers (e.g. The Times, Guardian, Express, Mail and Mirror groups), Manuel has also advised individuals ranging from the august (HRH Crown Prince Nayef Al-Saud, Lord Attenborough, Lord Winston, Gore Vidal, Rt Hon Gordon Brown...), to the celebrated (Sharon & Ozzy Osbourne, Geri Halliwell, Charlotte Rampling, Martin Clunes...), and even the notorious (Ronnie and Reggie Kray).

Manuel has long been in demand for litigation and reputation-management work on behalf of corporate clients, both blue-chip commercial (Amazon, Barclays, British Airways, Lloyds of London, Johnson & Johnson, RBS, Sony...) and public/not-for-profit (the Advertising Standards Authority, the Charity Commission, the International Rugby Board, the London Symphony Orchestra...).

Recognition

Silk of the Year (IT, IP and Media), The Legal 500 Awards 2018

Defamation Silk of the Year, Chambers and Partners Bar Awards 2017

Highly sought-after media silk with expertise covering the full breadth of reputation management, defamation and privacy. He is instructed by major media organisations and broadcasters, as well as blue-chip companies, and is highlighted for his well-honed advocacy style. Manuel is "very assured and commands the court in a quiet but confident manner." "Thorough and committed in trial preparation. He has an utterly professional style of advocacy." Chambers and Partners 2019

'Always provides measured, sensible and commercial guidance.' The Legal 500 2018

"Laser-like in focusing on the important points, he is fearless when it comes to pointing out the weaknesses and advantages of any course of action." "He is an exceptionally persuasive advocate, who is able to present complex arguments clearly." Chambers and Partners 2018 (Defamation/Privacy)

"An exceptional advocate" The Legal 500 2018 (Defamation and Privacy)

"He gives consistently good advice and is very good with clients." "He is robust, gutsy and friendly." Chambers and Partners 2017

"Thorough and committed in trial preparation and utterly professional in his style of advocacy." The Legal 500 2016

"He is pragmatic and good at fighting the client's corner. He's aggressive when he needs to be, and nuanced when a subtle approach is required." "He is robust, gutsy and user-friendly." Chambers and Partners 2016

"A top-level advocate with a sure sense for the killer points at trial." The Legal 500 2015



“Tremendously good at gauging what the court needs.” “His advocacy is very direct but it’s also calibrated towards his audience. He’s good at pitching it at the right level.” “He has an excellent brain and takes an analytical and pragmatic approach to his work.” “A superb advocate who is very approachable and down to earth.” Chambers and Partners 2015

Manuel has quickly settled into his silk’s practice and is a greatly admired lawyer whose principal strength is his superb advocacy. Sources further laud his ability to quickly get to grips with complicated, heavyweight cases. *“Robust in his advice, he stays true to his beliefs and his beliefs are always correct.” “One of those barristers you can trust to bring up difficult issues from the outset, so we have everything ready for trial. He’s very approachable, has a very warm manner, and builds relationships with clients.”* Chambers and Partners 2014

Manuel Barca QC has forged a fine reputation as *“a very good man to turn to in a tight spot,”* as he is *“an assertive advocate whom you can turn to for clever, measured and sensible advice”*. Those that instruct Barca say that *“he is always happy to take up the baton, no matter where he is”*. *This accessibility combined with the tremendous work ethic he displays makes him a clear client favourite.* Chambers and Partners 2013

Since taking silk in 2011, Manuel Barca QC has developed a strong reputation for his *“fantastic advocacy skills”* and *“robust approach, which makes him particularly good at cross-examination”*. The Legal 500 2012/13

“A punchy advocate who is very hard-working and intellectually robust” Chambers and Partners 2012

Manuel Barca *“has a nice turn of phrase and a beguiling manner.”* Coupled with this, *“he can take a tough approach in court as he is determined to get what his clients want”*. His practice centres around defamation and reputation management. Barca is fearless in court and will *“try his absolute best and never throw in the towel.”* **Chambers and Partners 2011**

Barca *“gives people confidence and in libel, someone who inspires confidence is critical”*. He *“produces papers when promised with spot-on advice.”* The Legal 500 2009/10

Representative Cases

Khuja (formerly PNM) v Times Newspapers Ltd [2017] UKSC 49; [2014] EWCA Civ 1132; [2013] EWHC 3177 (QB) – Appeared (leading Hannah Ready) on the landmark application for a privacy injunction to prevent the identification by the media of an individual who was arrested (and “de-arrested”) for - but never charged with - sex offences against minors, but who was later tangentially named during the criminal trial of those actually indicted. The case was ultimately heard before a special seven-member panel of the Supreme Court, two members of which dissented from the majority and would have granted the injunction sought.

Lachaux v AOL (UK) Ltd [2017] EWCA Civ 1334; [2015] EWHC 2242 (QB) – Appeared (leading Hannah Ready) for the publishers of the *Huffington Post* in a seminal preliminary-issue trial involving consideration of the ‘serious harm test’ under section 1(1) of the Defamation Act 2013; subsequently appeared (with Andrew Caldecott QC and Hannah Ready) in the Court of Appeal, which gave the now leading judgment on the proper construction and scope of section 1(1).

Economou v de Freitas [2016] EWHC 1853 (QB) – Appeared (leading Ian Helme) for the successful defendant in the first defamation trial concerning the new defence of publication on a matter of public interest under section 4 of the Defamation Act 2013. The defendant successfully argued that five of the seven publications were not actionable under section 1 of the Defamation Act 2013, and that all seven publications fell within the scope of the new section 4 defence. (The claimant’s appeal was heard by the Court of Appeal in April 2018.)

Simpson v MGN Ltd [2016] EWCA 772 – Appeared for the claimant (a well-known Premiership footballer) in an appeal which introduced for the first time a hitherto unappreciated distinction between the meaning and the ‘sting’ of a defamatory allegation, with potentially far-reaching ramifications for the law of defamation.

Stocker v Stocker [2016] EWHC 474 (QB) – Appeared for the successful claimant (in a claim brought against his ex-wife) in one of the very first defamation trials arising from postings on Facebook. (The defendant’s appeal was heard by the Court of Appeal in January 2018).

Mahmood v BBC [2014] EWCA Civ 1567; [2014] EWHC 4207 (QB) – Appeared for the BBC, both at first instance and in the Court of Appeal, in successfully seeing off an attempt by the claimant (an undercover reporter notoriously known as



the 'Fake Sheikh') to obtain a privacy injunction to prevent the broadcast of his physical appearance in an edition of the BBC1 programme *Panorama* dealing with alleged journalistic wrongdoing.

Miller v Associated Newspapers [2014] EWCA Civ 39; [2012] EWHC 3721 (QB) – Appeared for the claimant, a retired management consultant, in the trial of a libel action (and subsequently on the defendant's unsuccessful appeal against liability and damages award of £65,000) arising from articles in the *Daily Mail* ventilating suspicions of improper conduct and cronyism in the award of Metropolitan Police contracts.

Sir Elton John v Times Newspapers Ltd [2012] EWHC 2751 (QB) – **Appeared** for the defendant in the successful dismissal of a libel claim brought by the well-known singer on the grounds that articles published in *The Times* were incapable of imputing any defamatory imputation of the claimant's participation (or suspected participation) in immoral tax-avoidance.

Publications and Seminars

Citizen Journalism and the Public Interest, One Brick Court Seminar *Broken Boundaries: New Frontiers in Media and Information Law*, June 2017

Reputation Management in 2014: A Practical Guide (with Jonathan Scherbel-Ball), Seminar at Pinsent Masons, 2014

Contempt of Court: A New Lease of Life? or 'Contempt has risen from the Grave!' A Year (or so) in Review, Informa Media Law Conference, 2012

Privacy in the Courts (just over) A Year in Review, Informa Media Law Conference, 2011

Qualifications

MA Hons, Law Tripos, University of Cambridge

Inns of Court School of Law; Lincoln's Inn Levitt Scholarship, 1986

Admitted to the Caymanian Bar, 2011

Bilingual English/Spanish; fluent French; good working Italian and Portuguese