

# LEXHELP

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2006 - 2013

## Of Counsel

### **Dr. Daniel Sokol**

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Dear Dan,

What a pleasure to hear from you and especially to get such good news! My warmest congratulations on your marriage. I look forward to meeting Alice and seeing you again here in France. My apologies not only for my late reply to your December 10<sup>th</sup> letter, but I have a prior letter from you dated 11 February 2011 which I have not yet answered.

I read with a special interest your book on your tenure at Alabama Law School and the challenges you faced. I remember well when you left Virginia for that post and as my law school roommate, Wray Eckl, is an Alabaman I have maintained an interest in the state. You also succeeded in your portrait comments in educating me about Woodrow Wilson. I did not realize how little I knew about him.

Although I enter before long into my 74<sup>th</sup> year I seem to be blessed with a good genetic heritage. I continue to practice law full time, to litigate in the French courts, and in my leisure time to play competitive table tennis in the winter against opponents often a half century younger and tennis in the summer although no longer in competition.

Junko is well, and we get to London often to see our four children, four grandchildren, and I usually find time to see a few London-based clients. Now that our son Daniel is at the bar he invites me to dine at the Inner Temple and Lincoln's Inn and helps educate me to the intricacies of the English bar. Although the barristers practice in chambers which may have 70 or more "members" with a "Head of Chambers", each barrister is self-employed. The Chambers seems to be nothing more than a kind of office-sharing arrangement with the clerks managing both the office and the solicitors who are the source of the clients. The clerks then take a percentage of the fees which are used to run the office and to pay themselves.

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Another peculiarity is what they call the "taxicab rule". The barrister cannot refuse a client. He is like a taxicab driver. He must accept the passenger/client.

The profession is in an historical transition in that solicitors now have the right to appear in court, and a barrister can now see a client directly without going through a solicitor if he has practiced for two years and taken a course. This is called, I think, the "right of access". I am still working my way through the terminology, but with Daniel at the bar I should eventually end up more or less understanding the system.

I unfortunately published little in 2012, only one article which appeared in the International Herald Tribune and New York Times. I seemed to have difficulty getting inspired enough to write. The fact that it was an election year may have had something to do with it. I have made a New Year's Resolution to try to publish four articles this year.

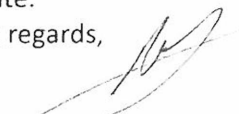
As you probably know, I tend to go on reading binges. A couple of years ago I read through all of Dickens. In 2012 I read through 12 volumes of Joseph Conrad plus a couple of biographies. I still have a volume and a half to go. He is a great writer. I had an idea a few weeks ago that one should really exchange with friends and family the best book one has read in the past year. Looking back over 2012 I can single out two books that I felt were important:

**The Checklist: How to get things right** by Atul Gawande (Profile Books, 2009), 203 pages and **Katherine Graham: Personal History** by Katherine Graham (Phoenix, 1998), 677 pages.

I think the most important book I have read in the past two years, perhaps in the past several years, was **Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945** by Tony Judt, William Heinemann (London, 2005), 831 pages. If you have not read it, I cannot recommend it too strongly. A final book that I find very important, although on a subject of particular interest to me, was **Consciousness: Creeping up on the hard problem** by Jeffrey Gray, Oxford University Press (2004), 323 pages. This latter book is not easy going; it took me about a year to get through it.

Again, I cannot tell you how much pleasure it gives me to keep up with your activities and publications. Please send me anything you write or at least references where I might find it. One thing you need to do is to write Hardy Dillard's entry for Wikipedia. You are best equipped to do that, and if you don't do it soon, it may not get done. So that should be your resolution for 2013. You can put off doing the LQC Lamar book until a later date.

Warmest regards,



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