

About BIHR

We are an independent national charity aiming to bring human rights to life in the UK – in particular as a tool to promote social justice and tackle inequalities by:

- Raising awareness of human rights
- Building capacity to use human rights based approaches
- Influencing policy change

Our training and support work

- Developing, applying and testing Human Rights Based Approaches
- Use of principles of human rights (Freda principles)
- Fairness, Respect, Equality, Dignity, Autonomy
- Developing context specific indicators
- Working with both duty-bearers and rights-holders
- Link to equality and social justice issues

What are human rights based approaches?

- The process of putting human rights principles and standards into practice
- Starting point – all people have rights
- Governments have duties to respect, protect and fulfil people's rights
- These rights and duties are set out in international and domestic human rights law

Human rights based approaches

cont

- **Putting human rights principles and standards at the heart of policy and planning**
- Universality
- Ensuring accountability
- Empowerment
- Participation and involvement
- Non-discrimination and attention to vulnerable groups

Why social justice?

- In the UK most of human rights focus is on the law
- The approach we take drawing on international approaches, more value-based, is fairly unique
- We want to see a culture of respect of human rights
- Human-rights literate population
- Forge links between human rights and wider social justice movements

Influencing

- Developing a human rights movement bringing in NGOs, public sector
- Evidence-gathering
- Rebutting myths and inaccuracies
- Demonstrating links between human rights and equality, community cohesion, social justice, poverty

Human rights and equality

- Equality is a core human rights principle
- Equality is a fundamental human right
- A human rights vision of equality is ambitious – beyond anti-discrimination
- Non-exhaustive grounds for discrimination
- Framework for balancing rights
- Protects against universally bad treatment

Equalities, diversity and human rights: a new landscape

- Single Equality Bill – harmonising all anti-discrimination legislation and levelling up protection for across protected groups (race and ethnicity, age, gender, religious and or belief, sexuality, disability, transgender)
- Institutional change (EHRC; inspectorates and other public bodies beginning to integrate equalities/HRs)
- Different approaches – beyond legislation (Equalities Review)
- Reasons – society/people changing; recognition that people don't come in neat boxes; challenges of diversity

Bringing rights home – the HRA 1998

Two major aims:

- Incorporation of ECHR rights into domestic law
- Create a new culture of respect for human rights

‘It will mark a major step change in the creation of a culture of rights and responsibilities in our society.’

Jack Straw, 1999

Culture of respect for human rights

‘A culture of respect for human rights would exist when there was a widely-shared sense of entitlement to these rights, of personal responsibility and of respect for the rights of others, and where this influenced all our institutional policies and practices’

Joint Committee on Human Rights

Where do human rights begin?

“Where, after all, do universal human rights begin? In small places, close to home - so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any maps of the world. Yet they are the world of the individual person; the neighbourhood he lives in; the school or college he attends; the factory, farm, or office where he works. Such are the places where every man, woman, and child seeks equal justice, equal opportunity, equal dignity without discrimination. Unless these rights have meaning there, they have little meaning anywhere.”

Eleanor Roosevelt

The film

- How should this man fight his case?
- Can human rights help? And How?
- What is the role of private actors in realising his rights and what is the relationship between private actors and the state?
- How can this individual fight this interference given the interference is 'lawful' and therefore justified in national and European law?
- What is the role of other laws and relationship between other laws and human rights?
- What does this case tell us about the role of human rights values and principles, and the development of a culture of respect for human rights?