

## Amber Melville-Brown

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### Amber is a partner in our [media and reputation team](#).

She is a media law specialist operating wherever there is an interface, be it welcome or unwanted, with third parties including the media, other organisations and individuals. She advises our clients in respect of reputation, brand, communication and information issues.

Amber is experienced in defamation, privacy, breach of confidence, data protection (including 'the right to be forgotten' and voicemail interception (i.e. phone-hacking)), harassment and blackmail law, and she uses her legal acumen in conjunction with industry knowledge and experience in dealing with a range of publication, messaging and crisis management issues for our clients.

During her time as deputy head of the litigation and arbitration team, Amber assisted in the management of the department through its most significant period of growth, as it broadened its international reach and range of services. With growth now including the expansion of the media and reputation offering in America, Amber operates predominantly out of the New York office.

Amber's expertise extends well beyond black-letter law and incorporates a more holistic approach, factoring in all aspects of communications and messaging between her clients and their employees, shareholders, customers, family members and associates and other third parties, to the public at large and via the media. Alongside the firm's team, she provides a 24/7 crisis management service.

Amber studied modern languages at University College London, and English law at the College (now University) of Law in London before practicing as a media specialist lawyer for more than twenty years. However, the firm recognized the increasingly global nature of its client base and the global issues they face, and in 2018, Amber obtained an American LLM, focusing on media law from Fordham University, New York, graduating in the top 10% of her law school, magna cum laude. In Spring 2019 she was admitted as a New York attorney, having qualified at the New York Bar. Amber also attended Cornell University via eCornell, and is now certified by Cornell in PR

Strategy. Core elements of the certification include Crisis Communication Planning and Communicating Planning for Change, Communicating with the Media, Strategic PR Planning and Hiring and Working with PR Agencies. This respected certification adds to Amber's many years spent "at the coal face", giving clients the confidence that Amber has the practical experience, and training in this area.

Amber is uniquely placed as a dual-qualified media-specialist and crisis management lawyer to offer our global clients a worldwide service.

Amber's clients cover the gamut of society, including stars of the screen, stadium and stage, heads of state, heads of business and heads of families, public figures, private individuals charities and businesses.

Amber is a prolific writer and commentator on media law and related issues: she was one of the longest standing columnists for the English professional magazine, the Law Society Gazette, and frequently contributes to the mainstream media including respected British-based publications including The Times and The Guardian, American publishers including Newsweek and USA Today, and she is a regular contributor to the respected New York State Bar Association, Entertainment, Arts and Sports Law Journal.

Amber taught media law at the College of Law in London and was a visiting lecturer at the London School of Economics. Amber is globally recognized by Chambers as one of the leading lawyers in the Defamation/ Reputation Management category and has been ranked Band 1 in the US and has also been acknowledged for her expertise based abroad in the UK. Within those directories, she has been referred to as: "very supportive and extremely dedicated"; knowing "the business inside out"; "friendly and welcoming", "incredibly sensible and practical", "intelligent, solid, sensible and practical", and "absolutely outstanding".

Amber heads the firm's Giving Back branch, leading our global charitable initiatives.

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## Track record

### Media and crisis management

Friday afternoons are often the busiest in the world of crisis management. It is not unusual for reporters to call the subjects of their articles at the eleventh hour before publication, and for the Sunday papers, this can mean leaving this until late on Friday. We gear up into crisis mode at very short notice to stop the papers printing private information about our clients. While each and every time is different, media management like this is 'bread and butter' for our team.

### Harrassment and blackmail in separation

Hell hath no fury like a partner scorned and our top-ranked family team are no strangers to the troubles and strife that can happen at the end of married life. It is sadly the case that we often get involved when one half of the couple launches a campaign of harassment against their former partner, or where a spurned lover resorts to blackmail.

### Phone hacking cases

We are still actively pursuing phone hacking cases for our clients; naturally these remain highly confidential.

## Charities' reputations

The summer of 2015 in the UK saw an out and out media attack on charities and their reputations, with a focus on ethics and transparency. Amber worked hand in hand with our leading charity team to protect the vital reputations of many of the country's biggest charities.

## Sex discrimination case defamation

We worked with a high profile senior executive who found themselves unfairly smeared in a sex discrimination case. Our client was denied the opportunity to defend himself and his reputation after the claimant withdrew her case in its entirety after giving evidence. Press reports remained online impacting his personal and working life. We liaised with the various online and print publishers to fully explain the unfair particulars of the situation, and were able to negotiate a much fairer reporting of the proceedings. It was in the public interest to report this, but we ensured our client was not defamed in the process.

## Pressure group campaign towards a charity

A charity client was subjected to a sustained campaign by a pressure group over a period of months. High profile members of the organisation were targeted to generate publicity in print and social media. Somewhat ironically, when the charity reasonably defended itself, the pressure group threatened defamation proceedings. We fought off this action and engaged urgently with the press to correct the incorrect allegations. We then worked with the charity post-publication on their media messaging and proactive communications strategy.

## Media wedding privacy

When our client married a media darling, the press was bound to want to catch a glimpse of her, her dress, the wedding, but the couple wanted to keep the private, family affair, just that. So we talked to the media to reach a solution that we and them would be happy with - we sent some lovely authorised shots to those titles that were keen to work with us and then moved fast to remove images from the internet that were taken with long lenses and without authority.

## Proactive communications plans

As well as crisis we also develop proactive communications plans when things go well. When our clients become aware of increased media interest in their lives, it's often welcome and an exciting step, but it still should be managed and planned. We work with clients to make sure their stories are published accurately.

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## Talks

- '*Reputation in Jeopardy*,' STEP Wyoming International Estate Planning Conference - September 20, 2024, speaker
- '*Legal issues faced by founders, entrepreneurs, executives and wealthy family members amid the coronavirus outbreak*,' Withers webinar - April 17, 2020, speaker
- '*NetDiligence, privacy and the right to be forgotten in Europe*', guest speaker - June 2015
- Minerva, Female Focus, guest panel speaker - May 2015

- Young Norwood, guest introductory speaker - November 2014
- RPSCA, Brighton, Legacy Dos and Don'ts - August 2014, speaker
- American Family Association Conference, New York - April 2014, speaker
- Marsh Family Office Risk Seminar - November 2013, speaker
- Reputation and crisis management, STEP Zurich conference - October 2013
- 'Reputation Matters...for Professionals', presentation to ILAS - May 2012
- Family Office Conference, Handling the Media in the Family Court - January 2012
- 'I'm a celebrity, get me some privacy', Young Norwood - July 2010, speaker
- 'Steering the right course - ensuring your NHS charity is well placed to manage through challenging times', Association of NHS Charities - March 2010, speaker

## External publications

- 'Enforcing contempt laws in an age of global media,' The Times - June 27, 2024, authored
- 'Could Baby Reindeer 'stalker' Fiona Harvey win lawsuit against Netflix?,' The Times - June 7, 2024, quoted
- 'New Yorker's Lucy Letby story highlights deficient contempt law,' The Times - May 23, 2024, quoted
- 'King's cancer announcement does not allow information free-for-all,' The Times - March 7, 2024, author
- 'If Cupid's Stupid, Separate Smart,' WealthManagement.com - February 9, 2024, co-author
- 'Prince Harry's 'Saving His Energy' For New Media Battles,' Newsweek - February 1, 2024, quoted
- 'A picture can paint a thousand libellous words,' The Times - November 30, 2023, author
- 'What Prince Harry's Daily Mail Ruling Could Mean for Tabloid Press,' Newsweek - November 13, 2023, quoted
- 'A very public downfall: How to recover from reputational damage,' Tatler - August 28, 2023, quoted
- 'Enter the social media swamp with care,' The Times - August 2, 2023, quoted
- 'Crisis? What Crisis!,' Gentleman's Journal - July 2023, featured
- 'SCR\*W YOU! Thomas Markle exposes Meghan with concrete photo proof: put her in jail,' 24Sports - July 25, 2023, quoted
- 'Prince Harry's privacy suit against UK tabloid could drag royals to court,' International Business Times - April 10, 2023, quoted
- 'WT...FTX,' NYCBA Entertainment, Arts and Sports Law Journal - Spring 2023, author
- 'Prince Harry's Tabloid Lawsuit Could Drag Royals to the Witness Box,' Newsweek - April 6, 2023, quoted
- 'Prince Andrew's 'Ill Judged' Comeback Attempt May Hurt King Charles,' Newsweek - January 31, 2023, quoted
- 'Is Prince Andrew planning to revisit his US sex abuse case?,' CNN - January 27, 2023, quoted
- 'How Safe From Legal Jeopardy is Prince Harry Over his Memoir,' The Times - January 20, 2023, author
- 'King Charles III, Camilla could sue Prince Harry for defamation: expert,' International Business Times - January 20, 2023, quoted
- 'Royals 'May Be Seething but Will Not Sue' Prince Harry Over Privacy,' Newsweek - January 12, 2023, quoted
- 'Can A 'Rusty' Reputation Be Repaired?,' WealthManagement.com - November 14, 2022, author
- 'And the Award for Best Rehabilitated Reputation, Goes to . . .,' NYCBA Entertainment, Arts and Sports Law Journal - Fall 2022, author
- 'Harry Files New Lawsuit Against U.K. Government in Sign Tensions Remain,' Newsweek - August 4, 2022, quoted
- '[Prince Harry's New U.K. Government Lawsuit Risks Creating a 'Wild West'](#),' Newsweek - July 13, 2022, quoted
- '[Prince Andrew's Accuser Virginia Guiffre May Find Herself Being Interviewed By Oprah Winfrey, Lawyer Claims: 'It's Not Impossible'](#),' OK! - June 28, 2022, quoted
- '[Prince Andrew's sex attack accuser Virginia Giuffre is working with Monica Lewinsky's PR & 'may do Oprah interview'](#),' The Sun - June 27, 2022, quoted
- '[Meghan, Harry Conspiracy Article Promoted by Twitter in Breach of Ad Policy](#),' Newsweek - June 14, 2022, quoted
- '[It isn't about politics - it's about money': will Hollywood take Johnny Depp back?](#),' The Guardian - June 11, 2022, quoted
- '[Johnny Depp's Popularity Numbers Down Among Boomers After Trial](#),' Newsweek June 10, 2022, quoted
- '[Judge or jury: the Johnny Depp trials in two jurisdictions](#),' The Times - June 9, 2022, quoted
- 'Depp Snatches American Victory From the English Jaws of Defeat,' Entertainment, Arts and Sports Law Journal - June 3, 2022, author

'Johnny Depp Flipped the Script With His Defamation Trial Victory,' The Hollywood Reporter - June 3, 2022, quoted

'Johnny Depp Won His Defamation Suit Against Amber Heard. So What Happens Now?,' USA Today - June 2, 2022, quoted

'Amber Heard's 'Credibility in Tatters' After Losing Depp Trial -- Legal Expert,' Newsweek - June 2, 2022, quoted

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'What the Johnny Depp battle tells us about Slapps,' The Times - March 31, 2022, authored

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'Queen Under Pressure Over Whether She Helped With Prince Andrew Payoff,' MSN - February 16, 2022, quoted

'Prince Andrew's payout to Virginia Giuffre 'is worth its weight in gold' for Queen,' The Times - February 16, 2022, quoted

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'Prince Andrew told to stay out of public eye as his reputation 'damaged beyond repair',' Express - February 15, 2022, quoted

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'What's next for Prince Andrew, cast out into the royal wilderness?,' Washington Post - January 15, 2022, quoted

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'Prince Andrew's Bid to Sink Epstein Lawsuit 'Too Close to Call' as Hearing Looms,' Newsweek - January 4, 2022, quoted

'Prince Andrew's court D-Day today as judge decides if case is to go ahead,' Express - January 4, 2022, quoted

'Royals hope for jubilee reset after tumultuous 12 months,' CNN - December 31, 2021, quoted

'Prince Andrew's legal team defiant despite Ghislaine Maxwell verdict,' The Times - December 30, 2021, quoted

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'Does Meghan Markle's Court Apology Mean She Will Lose Her Case?,' The List - November 17, 2021, quoted

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*'The civil suit against Prince Andrew has wider implications for the British royal family,'* CNN - August 13, 2021, quoted

*'Johnny Depp: Through the Looking Glass of Libel Suits on Both Sides of the Atlantic,'* Entertainment, Arts and Sports Law Journal - August 11, 2021, quoted

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*'How Meghan Markle Photos With Archie Could Lead to First U.S. Tabloid Lawsuit,'* Newsweek - April 27, 2021, quoted

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*'Duchess Meghan wins legal fees from tabloid in privacy lawsuit; judge rejects publisher's appeal,'* USA Today - March 2, 2021, quoted

*'It only takes a minute,'* Intellectual Property Magazine - February 26, 2021, author

*'Meghan Markle could face appeal by tabloid after privacy win, experts say,'* Newsweek - February 11, 2021, quoted

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*'Donald Trump's tweets turn focus to social media responsibility after Capitol siege,'* The Times - January 14, 2021, quoted

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*'Legal Expert: Meghan Markle's Privacy Lawsuit Could Lead To Big Father-Daughter Showdown In Court,'* The Mix Net - May 14, 2020, featured

*'Meghan Markle's Privacy Lawsuit Could Lead to 'Big Battle' Against Her Father in Court, Legal Expert Says,'* Fox News - May 14, 2020, quoted

*'Life and law go on': How attorneys are working through New York City's lockdown,'* Spear's - May 12, 2020, author

*'Reporting with accuracy in the midst of the coronavirus,'* Withers Insight - April 27, 2020, co-author

*'Crisis brings out the Best in New York Lawyers,'* The Times - April 16, 2020, author

*'Novel Coronavirus raises novel brand issues - 5 pointers to reputation protection,'* Withers Insight - March 19, 2020, author

*'Philanthropic Lessons From Marie Osmond,'* WealthManagement.com - March 17, 2020, author

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*'And the winner is? Celebrity media should come with a warning label,'* Withers Insight - February 27, 2020, co-author

*'A New Member - a New Legal Adventure,'* New York City Bar - February 27, 2020, author

*'When Harry met his ancestors, on the way to the law courts: Volume II,'* Inform - November 8, 2019, author

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'*Meghan Markle may have leaked the contents of her own letter even before her dad gave it to the Mail on Sunday*,' Insider - October 10, 2019, quoted

'*Why did Prince Harry and Meghan choose now to sue the newspapers?*,' The Times - October 10, 2019, quoted

'*Courting more controversy: How Harry and Meghan could face 'the privacy trial of the century*,' Canadian Broadcasting Corporation - October 6, 2019, quoted

'*Why Prince Harry and Meghan are right to take newspaper to court*,' The Times - October 4, 2019, author

'*Prince Harry and Meghan break tradition by choosing aggressive law firm to sue newspaper*,' The Times - October 3, 2019, quoted

'*The Royal Precedents that could Decide Meghan Markle's Legal Battle*,' Spear's - October 3, 2019

'*Pink Feeling Blue About Social Media*,' Private Wealth - April 29, 2019, author

UK privacy chapter in the Bloomberg News International Libel & Privacy Handbook alongside specialist lawyers from across the world

'*Privacy Protections - luxury goods or essential commodity*,' International Bar Association's Media Law & Ethics in the 21st Century - 2014

## Admissions

England and Wales, 1995

New York Supreme Court, First Division, 2019

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## Education

Fordham University Law School Masters in American Law (specialising in media law), graduating magna cum laude, May 2018.

Uniform Bar Exam, February 2019

New York State Bar Exam, June 2019.

College of Law, Law Society Finals Exam and Common Professional Exams

University College London, B.A. (Hons) French

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## Languages

English

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## Memberships

The Law Society of England and Wales

New York State Bar

New York City Bar

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## Key dates

Year joined: 2009

Year became partner: 2011

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