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## Lawyer of the week Richard Todd

Richard Todd, QC, of 1 Hare Court, acted for the German heiress Katrin Radmacher in the landmark Supreme Court case that ruled that “decisive weight” could be given to prenuptial agreements in England and Wales.

**What were the main challenges in this case and possible implications?** One hundred and sixty-six years of legal orthodoxy (including a recent decision of the Privy Council) held that prenuptial or antenuptial agreements were void for public policy reasons. The Supreme Court swept this away. Now, people have the freedom to choose. Most will decide against and perhaps their marriages will be the stronger for having positively elected a full sharing partnership. Others may now marry on their own terms.

**What was your worst day as a lawyer?** As a very junior barrister I appeared in front of a hostile Court of Appeal. “It is cold outside”, said one Lord Justice,



“but you will be all right, because we intend to warm you up.” Rather than accept my fate, I quipped back: “Well, My Lord, for my part I shall endeavour to create more light than heat.” A terrible Arctic silence followed.

**What was your most memorable experience as a lawyer?** Receiving the decision of the Court of Appeal in

Radmacher [confirmed by eight judges to one by the Supreme Court].

**Who have been the most influential people in your life and why?** Sine qua non, my wife, Lissie. Matthew March who taught me economics and my politics teacher, Dr Anthony J. Bennett. Politics and economics are the bedrocks of all laws.

**Why did you become a lawyer?** I wanted a job that was people-centred and also intellectually challenging. Finally, I had to make a living. I could not afford to become an MP; even with the most imaginative expenses’ claims, the income would not pay my mortgage and the school fees.

**What would your advice be to anyone wanting a career in law?** Don’t listen to all the negativity. The pejorative expression “you are making money out of others’ misery” is as true of the doctor working in A&E as it is of

the divorce lawyer. You are choosing to help people to solve their problems; often in an environment of public conflict. That said, whoever coined the phrase “great litigation is better than great sex” was wrong, most definitely wrong.

**If you had not become a lawyer, what would you have chosen?** Historian or politician: the former because I am fascinated by the past, and the latter because I am fascinated by the future. Either way, I would have struggled with the necessary publicity — courting the media is like dancing with a crocodile; it looks good in photos and your friends are mightily impressed, but ultimately it ends with you getting ripped to pieces.

**Where do you see yourself in ten years?** The chambers of Geoffrey Kingscote, QC, 1 Hare Court, Temple.

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symposium is to create a book of working papers “to influence the Government’s Bill before it is published in January”. Sounds like a case for **Max Clifford**.

## Ascension

The newly opened shopping centre at **One New Change** occupies the site of the former **Allen & Overy** building whose central location was much appreciated. Whatever the merits of the building, however, it certainly offers the sublime opportunity of rising theatrically on an escalator out of the bowels of the earth to enjoy the vision of the east end of **St Paul’s Cathedral** (see [onenewchange.com](http://onenewchange.com) for details of the *Times* photography competition to celebrate great British buildings). A truly heavenly experience — especially after dark — which just about compensates for Allen & Overy’s displacement.

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