



HOME

A life in pursuit of the human right to adequate housing for everyone, everywhere.

"Leckie's boundless enthusiasm and love of humanity shines through..."

— Prof. Andrew Clapham, Author of *War*

SCOTT LECKIE

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*A Life in Pursuit of the Right to Adequate Housing for
Everyone, Everywhere*

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This book uses my memory of dialogue and insights that may have changed over time. Any allegations or finger pointing or contentions of human culpability that you may read in this book should be taken as my opinion and not as an assertion of fact. Because I intentionally camouflage some of this book's various identities, leading to changing the factual background on occasion, you may find that I have purposely changed the identifying features of many individuals to protect their privacy. This is my account from personal memory.

*Cover photo: Zona Norte, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic c. 1994.
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“Scott journeys from the slums of a hundred cities to presidential palaces, bearing witness to the horrors of forced eviction, conflict and climate displacement alongside the birth of new countries and the hard fought achievements of housing rights activists and the UN human rights community. His story is a powerful testament to a life well-spent in search of justice, dignity and peace. It proves that even in our darkest times, when international solidarity and the rule of law falter, the power of our shared humanity and a common future can prevail.”

Aromar Revi

Vice Chancellor, IHS University
Bengaluru, India

“Leckie’s boundless enthusiasm and love of humanity shines through—at the same time he breathes life into the abstract idea of a human right to housing.”

Andrew Clapham

Professor of International Law, Geneva Graduate Institute
Author, *War*

Scott Leckie is the real deal—a combination of fierce advocate for justice for the most oppressed in our society and a laid back late-model hippie. In between his work to single-handedly build out the international structure to protect housing rights, and protect millions of people from eviction, he drops tales of his amazing adventures finding Deadheads, building networks and sparking joy. We’re lucky that Scott came along and accomplished so much in what he accurately describes as that little window of time when the governments of the world could be pushed toward justice using the often-obscure goings on in Geneva. I hope this book helps inspire the next generation of human rights activists to push even further.

Cindy Cohn

Executive Director, Electronic Frontier Foundation
San Francisco, United States

“Scott Leckie's new book - part memoir, part indictment of the global community's failure to house the poorest on the planet should be titled: 'Renegade: One Man's Quest to House the World.' And I told him so. But, just as his long and storied career unfolds within the pages of this book, so does a sense of quiet modesty that finds its way even into the title. HOME

takes us on a multi-decade, Panglossian journey on an attempt to alter the very nature of how we view the un-housed in the 21st Century. And though the larger effort on a global scale has thus far failed, there are enough concrete victories illustrated over the course of Leckie's career to give us hope for a better world. Read at risk of being inspired and simultaneously ashamed that we haven't yet done enough for those seeking secure housing on this one planet of ours.”

Skye Fitzgerald

Filmmaker, 2x Academy® Award nominee
Portland, Oregon

“Scott Leckie’s work has continually inspired countless advocates dedicated to advancing housing, land, and property rights. The strength and clarity that define his scholarship do not arise from academic rigor and professional expertise alone; they are forged through sustained engagement with those who have lost their “home”—and with it, their sense of belonging and dignity. Only those who truly meet the gaze of people in such pain—who look beyond loss to the human right at stake—can summon the conviction required to inspire others to believe in that right as well. This book stands as another cornerstone in that enduring effort, reaffirming that the right to housing is a fundamental pillar of human dignity and justice. Thank you for inspiring me!!”

Rana Arnouk Mitri

Human Rights Lawyer
Beirut, Lebanon

“The book HOME: A Life in Pursuit of the Human Right to Adequate Housing for Everyone, Everywhere by Scott Leckie is an inspiring reflection on the global struggle for housing justice. As a long-standing friend of our works in Bangladesh, Scott has consistently stood beside climate displaced people and vulnerable communities. This book beautifully captures his dedication and reminds us that safe and dignified housing is a basic human right for all. We deeply appreciate his continued solidarity and advocacy. This work will motivate many people and organizations to keep working for housing rights and climate justice.”

Dr. Md. Arifur Rahman

Founder and Chief Executive, Yong Power in Social Action (YPSA),
Chittagong, Bangladesh

"Scott Leckie has spent five decades in the world's most difficult places—slums and war zones, climate disasters and occupied territories—fighting for one deceptively simple idea: that everyone deserves a home. HOME is his story of that pursuit, told with the humor, candor, and hard-won wisdom of someone who learned that changing the world requires audacity and persistence."

Reed Brody

Author, *To Catch a Dictator*
Barcelona, Spain

"This intriguing tome reminded me of Scott's comprehensive understanding of the United Nations and its purpose. Scott guided my delegation from the jungle through the corridors of the UN, teaching us diplomacy, protocols and introducing us to relevant personalities in the administration and other delegations. His contribution to achieving the vital UN resolutions that led to a lasting peace on Bougainville should not be underestimated. A true champion of human rights."

Mike Forster

Representative to the United Nations - Bougainville Interim Government;
Conflict Resolution Manager - Bougainville Interim Provincial
Government and Personal Attaché to President Kabui – Bougainville
Autonomous Government.

"Scott Leckie's autobiography could not be more timely. The right to housing is the most striking example of the negative impact of global neoliberal economic policies on human rights in general, and economic, social and cultural rights in particular. Scott's life as an advocate for the right to housing is a shining example for future human rights and housing rights defenders."

Manfred Nowak

Professor of International Law and Human Rights
Vienna, Austria/Venice, Italy

"I appreciate the title HOME for all that a 'home' entails and requires in the broadest sense. The amount of humans on the planet without a home is one more condemnation of how our global inequality and injustice systems operate inside borders and between Nation States. Since I met Scott in 1986, I have never not known of him working, writing, and supporting the struggle for homes for all. This book takes the reader on

parts of Scott’s life journey working to achieve this. An important takeaway is how this work and struggle play out in the global and regional human rights systems we humans—via our very complicated (to put it politely) Nation State system—have created. An equally, if not more important takeaway is when these human rights systems do not succeed (more often than not for reasons outside their control, and “above their pay grade” in our global inequality and injustice systems), Scott takes the reader back to grassroots struggle and the dignity and strength of people across the planet, no matter how daunting the obstacles. Scott tells this story his of life journey and the struggle for a HOME for all, abiding always by his credo: *Get it done but keep it fun.*”

Grahame Russell
RightsAction
Toronto, Canada

“Home is an inspirational account of what passion, principled commitment and intellectual courage can achieve. Scott’s work has transformed countless lives and left a profound imprint on the United Nations human rights system itself, shaping its standards and practice on housing, land, and property rights. Through rigorous research, tireless strategic advocacy and litigation, and visionary normative drafting, he helped move economic, social and cultural rights from the margins to the centre of international responses to displacement, urbanization, and post-conflict recovery. His book captures not only a life of remarkable impact, but the enduring force of ideas translated into action.”

Khaled Hassine
Legal Advisor, Secretariat of the United Nations
Sousse, Tunisia

“HOME beautifully chronicles Scott Leckie’s extraordinary journey but even its vivid pages fall short of capturing the true depth of his decades-long commitment to building a better world. This book stands as a testament to new generations: reject materialism and radicalism, and instead find the courage to be brutally honest with yourself and then channel that inner strength into making life better for others.”

Pablo Rueda
Co-author of *One Earth, One Politics: Building Our Shared Path Toward World Citizenship*
Punta del Este, Uruguay

“I first heard of Scott long ago, in what now feels like the “golden era” of peace support operations—before Brexit, before Trump, before COVID-19, and before Ukraine—when I was searching for restitution solutions for Roma families in Mitrovica, northern Kosovo. It was there that I came to understand the power of bringing together housing, land, and property (HLP) rights to respond to urgent needs and to protect those most vulnerable people who had endured both structural injustice and direct violence. Years later, as I began launching an HLP rights programme in the hopeful Myanmar of 2015, I reached out to him with little expectation of a reply. Since then, I have had the privilege of working alongside him to advance the HLP rights of vulnerable communities and minorities in Myanmar, persevering through the 2021 coup and the many hardships that followed. Scott is the kind of person who does not bend to the harsh winds of history. He endures, persists, and continues the work when circumstances would discourage most. Hope, after all, is a form of resistance. In these troubled times, he embodies a quiet determination that refuses to abandon the possibility of a more just and brighter future. *Home* is the story that tells it best. Gracias, amigo—¡hasta la victoria siempre!”

José Arraiza

HLP Rights Advocate
Madrid, Spain

“With over four decades of “good trouble” under his belt (and hopefully many more years of good trouble to come), Scott Leckie shares his life lessons in his new memoir, *Home*. Scott tells great stories from his eventful life that reflect his unparalleled passion for and commitment to the human right to housing. His tales from throughout the globe are also filled with fun and adventure—lots of it. And they tell of the deep human connections he has made wherever he has travelled. For Scott, there is no “us and them” as he pursues housing rights for everyone, everywhere.”

Andrew Scherer

Professor of Law and Policy Director,
Impact Center for Public Interest Law
New York Law School
New York, United States

“It's been my pleasure to read this, and my honor to have travelled parts of this journey alongside Scott as my colleague, collaborator and friend. And what a journey (so far)! Five decades in the making. Driven by his

curiosity, fuelled by his passion for humanity, surpassing his numerous milestone achievements with audacious humour and righteous conviction, and a mind fully open to parsing the lessons punctuated throughout this memoir, Scott's narrative reminds us all of the roles we could play as *good troublemakers*.”

Dan Lewis

West Coast International
Vancouver, Canada

“Scott Leckie has travelled the world promoting the human rights of fellow humans who lack shelter and protection. His personal journey and stories are full of humanity, achievements and setbacks, good humour, and the connection we all share. A fun read about how to get things done, while having a blast along the way.”

Brian Gorlick

Ex-UN Official & Lecturer, Refugee Law Initiative, University of London
Stockholm, Sweden

“The author once schooled me in Ken Wilber, keeping faith with rainbow rooms and mountain air while I muttered about enforcement clauses and airports and concrete everywhere. I wanted proof. He showed me the land maps of Palestine. Meanwhile the grandees of “international law” polished their phrases as power vaulted the railing and made off with the silver. We have lived through the great inversion. Charters glowing, bombs falling, billionaires carving up the commons like a Sunday roast. And still the ordinary punter works ragged for a door that locks and a bed. This book calls that possession out. The world is not the private estate of the well-lawyered and the heavily armed. It is not vacant land for the loudest claimant. It is stubbornly held in common. There is home for us all. It holds us. And if that sounds unruly, good. There is no country but earth.”

Michael Morehead

Lawyer
Sorrento, Australia, Earth

“I first encountered Scott in my early years at the United Nations, when I was a young human rights lawyer trying to understand how the system could be made to work for those most in need. What struck me immediately was his fearless self-belief, his mischievous humour, and his stubborn refusal to accept that injustice was inevitable. *Home* tells the

story of that same restless commitment. It is a vivid and deeply human account of decades spent pushing the boundaries of international human rights practice in pursuit of one simple idea: that everyone, everywhere deserves a safe place to call home.”

Anne T. Gallagher, AO
Director-General,
Commonwealth of Nations

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to Adequate Housing for
Everyone, Everywhere*

Scott Leckie



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For

What could have been...

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Acknowledgments

Foreword

My good friend Scott Leckie was going to call this remarkable memoir ‘Mr. Housing Rights’. He chickened out when someone who (thought they) knew better advised against it. I’m not sure about that, for this early nickname neatly captures what Scott is: a housing activist, scholar, and intellectual entrepreneur extraordinaire. I suggested ‘The Originator’, as a former Special Rapporteur on the right to housing once described him to me. Scott also rejected that too, sadly, for I think it conveys the same notion. Mind you, I can’t fault his final choice of title which draws attention to his energetic lifelong quest to ensure that everyone, everywhere has a safe and adequate home in which to live.

The reader of this memoir will find that its subject is a highly original human being, one of the most effective advocates and great characters of the international human rights scene. I must, therefore, confess that I was somewhat surprised when Scott asked me to write this foreword. Sure, a foreword would be nice. But why one by me? What has a boring, former judge from the Antipodes got to say about such a rich and varied life as is here described? Having read the memoir in various states of astonishment, bewilderment, and blushing admiration, or sometimes just blushing, I am glad that he did, for I have quite a lot to say.

I am a relatively new friend of Scott’s and his redoubtable wife Kirsten Young, whose pivotal role in his life he generously acknowledges. I am, therefore, not one of the many people who have shared his long and eventful human rights journey. He and I met through Kirsten, whom I knew through a mutual friend. I immediately felt his strong gravitational pull, surely a most valuable possession for an advocate for very hard causes. Housing justice and human rights were the usual subject of our conversations. He taught me much that I did not know as he will the readers of the memoir, although it is not designed to be a pedagogical work as such. Like the book’s back cover says, it is the story of the joyous highs and devastating lows of an eccentric human rights life (as you can see, Scott thinks a noun without an adjective is a thing undressed). The pedagogical content is there though, smuggled in amongst the numerous vignettes and deliberately folksy life lessons. Memoirs of human rights defenders of any kind are quite rare, and there is much to learn from this one both because it is just such a memoir and because it is truly unique.

Scott is a very open individual who fully exercises his right to freedom of speech and expression in this candid memoir. Inevitably there will be not enough candour for some and too much for others. He speaks in his own vernacular. You won't find much human-rights speak here. He takes us through his life's work in the slums of Santo Domingo, Bangkok and Manila, the creation of UN mechanisms on the right to housing, the wars in Kosovo, Iraq and Burma, natural disasters in Bangladesh, Japan and Maldives, 'peace' in the Republic of Georgia and Sri Lanka, the occupation and much worse in Tibet and Palestine, independence in Timor Leste and Bougainville and the climate-caused catastrophe in Kiribati. It is the story of Scott's own gradually widening interest in housing rights, in housing, land, and property rights and in climate change and displacement. His evolving path of thought now seems so natural and linear but it is really the product of a mind that is courageously self-reflective. While Scott describes events in these places which posed profound human rights challenges, he foregrounds his own deeply personal and humanitarian responses. You will see one more evolutive step in his hopes for a world that is without borders although not without government—a 'oneness world', one that is indeed one.

I have skin in the game with this foreword because I grew up in public housing and have worked all my life in the housing justice and human rights field in several capacities and still do. I support the premise of the memoir that having a secure home is indispensable for a flourishing and dignified life. This is my lodestone too. As a judge and scholar and earlier as an activist, I have sought to understand, explain and apply the right to housing. In doing so, I have drawn heavily on the International Bill of Rights, as well as the work of UN Charter and treaty bodies and Special Rapporteurs who have interpreted and elaborated this right. I consider the body of work which they have produced to be one of the UN's greatest contributions to humanity.

Scott can justly claim to have played a seminal role in the production of this work and in making that contribution. He tells with elan the story of how he helped create the Special Rapporteur on the right to adequate housing and wrote drafts of foundational UN reports, resolutions and statements that came to be officially adopted. Throughout the world, millions of people who go without adequate housing hang onto these links in the protective human rights chain for dear life. His behind-the-scenes insights will be fascinating for anyone interested in how idealistic human beings who are all flawed try to make human rights law that is not. Scott also tells, from his point of view, the story of the rise and fall of a truly great NGO, the Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions, which he established. The narrative drips with equal amounts of joy and pain, but

also much fun and humour, as there is in the memoir generally. I especially like the long list of alternative acronyms for COHRE that Scott and his colleagues used to workshop, my favourite being Change Our House Rent Easily.

More than ever today humanity needs realisation of the right to housing for everybody. You will find here the remarkable story of a human rights advocate who played a seminal role in explaining and promoting the right and in creating the international instruments and institutions that are necessary for achieving that objective.

The Hon Kevin Bell AO KC

(former Judge of the Supreme Court of Victoria, Australia)

Preface

Speak up, speak out, get in the way. Get in good trouble, necessary trouble.

—John Lewis

American civil rights legend John Lewis gained fame for many things, in particular his courageous walk on 7 March 1965 across Selma, Alabama's Edmund Pettus Bridge on "Bloody Sunday," when white state troopers and citizens viciously beat dozens of Black marchers demanding their human rights a full 100 years after the end of the bitter war that was meant to end slavery. More than 50 marchers were injured that day, many of whom required hospitalization.

Though these tragic events took place when I was just two and a half years old, somehow, the moving images of what occurred on that bridge are some of my earliest memories. I also have distinct memories of two other events around the same age. One involved me climbing onto a chair and reaching across the kitchen counter and then eating half a kilo (one pound) of raw mincemeat (hamburger meat) for a reason I have yet to decipher. My other memory relates to the first of many conversations I had with a little boy that looked exactly like me who lived underneath our Los Angeles home in the crawl space who I called Fondi and with whom I would apparently converse for hours on end as I gazed into the dark underworld covered by our home. Fondi looked just like me, I used to tell my mother. More on those memories another time.

In what was a singular moment of the Civil Rights Movement, I vividly remember watching the carnage unfold on the black and white television screens in our LA home, on the other side of the country. Unable to grasp the ruthlessness or meaning of this historic moment, somehow the screams coming from the television and the gasps by my family sitting with me in our living room, made this memory stick in a way that undoubtedly influenced the life I was about to lead, despite the fact that I had no real understanding of what took place that day other than the cruelty meted out by the men in uniform against the marchers.

Perhaps the deep Southern roots of significant elements of my family made such events more prominent in my memory than others. With a paternal grandfather, aunts, uncles, cousins and others hailing from deeply

rural Alabama, as well as regular childhood visits, the idea of "the South" was always present. However, there was no balanced discussion of its abhorrent history. In my childhood, any focus on the racial origins of the Civil War and its role in legally ending slavery barely arose.

When we took trips to the South to visit family when I was very young, it was not the Edmund Pettus bridge or other historic sites associated with the Civil Rights Movement that we visited. Rather, sojourns to Stone Mountain, glorified stories of Jefferson Davis and the Confederacy, the heroic fight against the Unionists and frequent, dismissive remarks I overheard in small towns and diners that I decoded for the first time about the "lazy (N-word) living in his (N-word) shack in his (N-word) town" dominated my recollections of those trips. I had never heard the N-word before, but it was immediately obvious that it was wrong. It was only after leaving my California home for good at the age of 17 that I began to truly grasp the racist horrors of this region—and realize that some members of my own family were perhaps on the wrong side of history.

I recently finished writing a biography of my paternal grandfather which I called *Shrewd Little Sleuth* after the many newspaper references to him using the same slogan were uncovered during my research on this amazing man. In doing so, I researched the intriguing, yet disturbing, life and times of Arthur Bernard Leckie (ABL). I have discovered that my dad's dad who died just months before I was born was—as you will see if you read the book—probably murdered while working as a private investigator for Marilyn Monroe who died in equally mysterious circumstances just 36 hours after ABL's untimely death. I also found out that he was extremely close to the FBI's J. Edgar Hoover, both during his years at the FBI in the 1930s and for all the decades after Hoover fired him in 1939. I have numerous original personal letters between these two men, as well as hundreds of pages of internal FBI documents that were provided to me following a Freedom of Information Act search by the agency that Hoover built. These documents collectively reveal that although ABL was rather unceremoniously forced by Hoover and his lover/deputy Clyde Tolson to leave the Bureau he loved so much, he nonetheless stayed in touch with the FBI boss until his death in 1962, a full 23 years later. Hoover is known for many things, but one of the traits that has become increasingly clear with each successive biography were the extremist views he held in support of white supremacy. Hoover was a proud Southerner through and through, and I have come to understand that his G-man ABL may well have tended in that direction at least during his early years, though some California reasonableness must have eroded some of the harsher edges the longer he lived there.

Other than Mexican gardeners, housecleaners and a Brazilian exchange student, my upbringing was almost exclusively white. My family was white. My neighborhood was white. My schools were white and other than watching my favorite Black USC football stars win national championships for the mighty Trojans, virtually my entire reality was white. And yet, when Los Angeles elected its first Black mayor, Tom Bradley, in 1973, I was at a neighborhood party and heard comments like, “Oh no, the voting levels in Compton are higher than expected. This is terrible. There goes the neighborhood.”

For whatever reason, I was dumbfounded and confused that people could think this way. It just didn’t make sense. I had no real understanding yet of politics, but the ten-year-old me instinctively thought it was fantastic that this guy won. He looked so cool and had the best voice I’d ever heard. It never mattered to me if he was Black or any other color though it apparently mattered to my neighbors very much. From what little I had seen on TV ads and the like, to me he seemed like a great guy that people really loved. Around the same time, I was waiting for my ride home from school and overheard a parent saying to their daughter, “Julie, I just heard the news. I am so sorry to have to tell you there is an Indian girl coming to your school”, as if this was a horrible thing surely to result in pain and agony. Again, despite my limited interactions with people of color at the time, I was completely bewildered by views such as these. And besides, I remember loving that beautiful Indian girl from the moment I met her.

Every summer between the ages of 10-15, I went to camp for two months in Massachusetts on the other side of the country, where my eyes were opened to many things—like sex, drugs, and rock and roll. However, what I enjoyed most was befriending kids from Venezuela, Colombia, Mexico, Chile, Argentina, Nicaragua and other countries, despite the many entreaties to keep my distance. I loved speaking my rudimentary Spanish with those guys and learned so much from these kids, even if they were certainly from the elite classes of countries that were not always associated with the promotion and protection of human rights, especially in the dangerous latter half of the 1970s.

At camp, I made lifelong friends with some of the first Jewish people I had ever met, after witnessing only anti-Semitic jokes and racist comments growing up. Though I knew little of Judaism and the Torah, I learned quickly and then loved helping one of my Jewish friends study for his upcoming bar mitzvah. I even learned and then memorized a whole range of Hebrew phrases, many of which stick with me to this day. However, during a sailing race against another summer camp nearby, I learned another side of the Jewish story. I was in a Mercury sailboat with

my Jewish friend Robert when an opposing boat cut us off, and one of their crew shouted, "Out of the way, kike!" I had never heard that word before but could tell it was far from kind and asked my friend what that strange sounding word meant. But before he could even answer the look on his face provided the answer; it was shattering and soul-destroying. I asked him again what it meant, but he was too shocked to even speak, and when he finally told me hours later, I just couldn't believe people could be so cruel. It was my first real experience of anti-Semitism right before my very eyes and it hit me to the core. He then told me that his grandfather had come to America and changed the family name from a very Jewish sounding one to another name that "sounded more American", as he put it.

I have countless additional stories from my childhood at home, school, camp, and in movies. But suffice it to say, despite the odds against it, I somehow knew we were all the same, all equal. Almost instinctually, I just knew from the start that there was no us and them. To me, this simply never registered, and when and if it did, it was only ever in the most positive way possible. My incredible privilege growing up in affluent southern California, travelling extensively and all the rest were things for which I have immense gratitude and, of course, I very much realize my good fortune.

But so much of my otherwise lucky youth was infused with sentiments that enraged me so much that I knew that as soon as I could I had to leave. Growing up exposed to various forms of racism and personally enduring multiple years of severe and often violent bullying, including being brutally subjected to an actual many hours-long torture session by a local politician's son on an isolated part of a field where we attended weekly football practice, and where I literally thought I might die, shaped me. Similar attacks occurred on multiple other occasions, each one perpetrated by another psychopath seemingly put on Earth solely to terrorize others. Even before I could define it, I knew I was destined to make my own kind of "good trouble," as John Lewis said. It was just a matter of figuring out how and where and when to strike. The following stories aim to articulate that journey.

For the past 40 years, in my own tiny way I have tried to be my own kind of troublemaker and plan to continue to be one until my dying day. Yes, as a child, I caused more than my fair share of bad trouble, likely in mindless response to the racism and bullying that surrounded my otherwise materially abundant childhood. However, after leaving home, I have worked hard to become the kind of troublemaker who creates the *good* trouble Mr. Lewis spoke of so eloquently. At the same time, sometimes I wonder how I mustered the courage to leave the home of my upbringing, let alone my neighborhood, town, and state. Considering the

personal traumas and tragedies that piled up year after year in my youth, I'm still amazed I left home as early as I did, as an immature, skinny 17-year-old who routinely ran more than 150 kms a week in my quest to race ever faster, speeding off into the unknown horizons of the brighter world ahead. Then, less than five years later, I saw the writing on the wall, and at the age of 22 left the country of my birth for good many decades before the flood of thousands upon thousands of expatriates now leaving the US permanently to escape the ugly and racist fascism taking root there.

Beyond what I just mentioned, during my early years my favorite uncle, Uncle Bill, is presumably killed when I am 11 years old somewhere in the middle of nowhere along the banks of the Blue Nile of Ethiopia, a story I am now putting together in my next book to be called simply *Uncle Bill*. My first girlfriend is then killed in a car crash not long after that. I am mauled on three occasions by three different German Shepherds by the age of 14. Several times I nearly die from numerous diseases and even have to deal with being abused at some disgraceful Christian camp I was coerced to attend for one night by some sweaty-palmed fundamentalist molester whose name and face I still very much remember. The list goes on. For a kid from affluent Southern California, it was a lot to deal with. No wonder I hit the road as soon as I could—and chose a troublemaker's life of human rights work.

When you know suffering up close, no matter what form it takes and who does it to whom, it gets a lot harder to look away and do nothing when you know of suffering elsewhere, and two additional moments were instrumental in making me into the person who chose a human rights life. The first is a dog story involving what were presented to us as Lion Hounds. Our family was on the North Shore of Oahu in Hawaii. It was mid-afternoon on yet another perfect island day where all was indeed perfect, all was safe—until it was not. I was 10 years old at the time. It was 1973 and we were about halfway through our trip when we took a jaunt in a rented open-topped jeep and drove around Oahu through pineapple fields and lush farmland. We ended up on the North Shore, and my dad slowed the car, turning into an abandoned parking lot next to a permanently shuttered and empty tourist shop and a house surrounded by a chain-link fence.

My mom, sister and I were confused about why my dad would stop in such an unremarkable spot in an otherwise stunning part of the world. I asked, "Why are we stopping here, dad?" He replied, looking at my mom, "Don't you remember this place when we were here years ago? Don't you remember the amazing view of the valley beyond that hedge over there?" She had absolutely no memory of the place, which to me was far from surprising. My dad turned to my sister and me and told us that he was

going to hop the fence and go check out the view to see if it was still as lovely as it once was. I was terrified but felt both tempted and proud that my dad was willing to climb over a fence just to check out the view, despite the “No Trespassing” signs and the unmissable “Warning: Lion Hounds” messages. I point these signs out to my dad. "Dad, it says not to trespass and that there are dogs guarding the place. Maybe it's not such a good idea to go in there." I saw the warning signs and heeded them. He saw the warning signs and ignored them; even saying "Everyone knows there is no such thing as Lion Hounds, Tiger." He called me Tiger forever. There is no sign of dogs anywhere, no barking and no food bowls, so maybe he was right after all.

I became immediately nervous when I saw him starting to climb the fence, especially after he again asked my eight-year-old sister and me to come in too. We both vigorously declined the offer and my sister exclaimed, "Dad, there are Lion Hounds in there! Come back!" I still remember the smile and laugh he gave us, telling us not to worry and how much we were missing by not joining him. He crossed the cracked concrete patio and disappeared through a gap in the thick hedge to find the vista point he remembered from all those years ago. For a moment, my sister and I, leaning into the chain link fence with our fingers grabbing on to the curved metal wires, just waited patiently for my dad to return. And then, with no warning the hedge began shaking violently and the terrifying screams of my dad became horrifyingly audible. He appeared at the gap with a look of fear and terror on his face, the likes of which I had never before seen. He sprinted toward us as fast as he could, but not fast enough. Two gigantic, salivating, and snarling dogs—extremely vicious Rhodesian Ridgebacks—bounded behind him, snapping at the air, and barking with violent intent, just inches away. Then, my dad reached the fence and tried to climb while his two kids, just inches away on the other side, screamed louder, crying uncontrollably in a state of complete terror. It was then that the clearly trained guard dogs got him.

Inches from our faces, these two huge hounds began trying to tear my dad to shreds, biting him everywhere they could—hands, legs, arms, bum, everywhere. I'm sure they were trying for his neck but they just couldn't reach it, thank goodness. Blood flew everywhere as my heretofore invincible dad—the man who had always seemed so powerful, so smart, and so indestructible—who once saved my life by blocking a high-speed, errant polo ball from hitting my right temple—was brutalized by two violent canines eager to do their job and guard the property. My dad would make some progress up the fence on the dog's side and then they would violently pull him down again. This happened repeatedly until a grumpy old man finally came out of a nearby building, and far too slowly and

dismissively at last cleared the dogs away, and—all the while—yelling at my bloodied dad for stupidly hopping a fence with warning signs about Lion Hounds.

My dad slowly got up, barely able to walk, offered his apologies (the dog owner did not!) and he slowly climbed over the fence to join us again. We then drove to the nearest hospital we knew about with blood dripping from every one of the numerous bites he suffered, and I went with my dad when we got there. We went inside, and my dad, in his baritone voice, said to the nurses, "I've been bitten all over by some dogs, and am bleeding everywhere." Much to my surprise, the nurses laughed, then told him we were in the maternity ward. He was a great lawyer, and always went for the underdog, but sometimes a bit clueless in normal life, my lovable dad. Needless to say, had my sister or I joined him on the other side of the fence, there is no way we would have made it out of there alive—absolutely impossible based on what we saw that day. We read the signs, took the warnings seriously and played it safe. The one who didn't, came out bloodied, traumatized and in severe pain with lifelong scars. This life lesson has never left me. It certainly hasn't stopped me from doing dangerous or risky things. But in dubious settings, when the next close shave seems to be clearly near, the admonition always comes back to me: Warning - Lion Hounds.

Life Lesson No. 1: Take risks often but trust warning signs too.

About 12 years after the incident with the lion hounds, my close friend and I were trying to stay warm in a very dilapidated and isolated cottage deep in the English countryside in Essex near Colchester. As we warmed ourselves by an ancient fireplace burning extremely malodorous chunks of coal—our only heat source on a freezing cold -14°C day in the middle of a bitterly cold British winter in that noticeably uninsulated ancient cottage I once called home—my friend and soul brother Vangelis told me he had once died and come back to life. More than intrigued, I sat back and listened.

Vangelis grew up on Amorgos, the small and beautiful isle of love in Greece, right in the middle of the Cyclades. He was nearly as beautiful as his island home—some say even more so. Like another brother from yet another mother, cosmic soul brother of mine, Mystical Matthias, every time I'd walk down the street with the Voracious Vangelis, I'd get these seriously mixed feelings. I loved being checked out so much by every passer-by, but at the same time it would inevitably dawn on me that all of those desirous and seductive stares were not intended for me at all but for my walking partners.

Little Vangelis had enjoyed a pre-modern, idyllic life, growing up barefoot on a small island that took pride in its self-sufficiency—with limited electricity and no TV. He grew up fast, as other options were scarce. Every year, before Vangelis eventually left Amorgos for England and other places beyond in his twenties, and which led us to meet for the first time at a ten-day meditation retreat in 1985, he would venture to a neighboring island to acquire liter upon liter of olive oil for the months ahead.

At the meditation event, we walked on fire together at midnight on New Year's Eve as 1985 became 1986, hand in hand across some very hot glowing coals we had spent hours preparing with a huge end of year bonfire. Days before, without searching we came across a huge patch of hundreds of psilocybin mushrooms in the paddock of the estate where the largely silent Buddhist retreat was held, exchanged muted but gleeful smiles of mutual recognition, and gathered as many as we could fit in our pockets. We then sat on an old log in the woods and ate at least three grams each, maybe more. We dedicated the next eight hours—six of which we spent meditating—to some of the most intense experiences of our lives.

Before venturing forth like a modern-day Homer in search of his very own Ithaca, Vangelis the island boy lived on rocky and dry land that somehow provided everything the island needed except the huge amounts of olive oil its small population required. So, at the tender age of 16, he went off with his father in a small boat to a neighboring island, where olive oil was abundant. An annual trip to procure as much of the sacred oil as possible ensured a permanent supply of this holy elixir. The nearby island wouldn't have been far by motorboat, but in a small boat with only oars and sails, the journey could feel like an eternity. Though people don't usually associate the Mediterranean with storms, they can happen quickly and become very dangerous and severe. They reached the olive oil island for what was meant to be a two-day, one-night trip. After pulling the boat onto the deserted beach, they walked to the olive grove where a hermit-like farmer, the island's sole occupant, lived and asked if they could buy as much olive oil as they could carry back to Amorgos.

As always, he said yes, and they began transferring container after container of the liquid gold onto the small boat when the storm struck. This vicious storm lashed the island and surrounding sea, making any open-water journey impossible. They asked the farmer if they could stay until it passed, and he—of course—invited them to stay as long as needed. Little did they know at the time, but one extra night turned into 15 long days and nights of waiting and waiting until the unusually rough seas calmed down enough for them to hop on board again and head back to the

isle of love. After more than half a month of rest, they returned to the boat with renewed energy and sailed and rowed home in record time. As they neared their island after their surprisingly long journey, in an era without cell phones or any similar technology, they noticed an eerie silence, seemingly devoid of life, as if the island had been evacuated or struck by an unknown disease that had wiped out the entire population.

They finally made it to shore and still no one was to be seen or heard, and by now Vangelis and his Pop were getting scared. Where was everyone? How can this be? They unloaded the barrels of olive oil onto the beach and went off to explore what had happened, planning to come back later to retrieve their long-awaited haul. They slowly wound their way up the sole road towards the main village and still nothing; not a person, not a sound, nothing.

Now they were terrified that something awful had happened, and just then when they had almost given up hope, they heard the faintest ringing of a church bell. Fearing it was just the wind or that somehow the bell had been dislodged by natural forces and not a human, they slowly walked towards the church, and as they rounded the bend the screams began. "God is real! They are alive!" "Thank you, Lord, my prayers have been answered." "Oh my, our olive oil men are still with us." It didn't take long for the most beautiful man in the world and his loving daddy to realize they had arrived at their own shared funeral just as it was ending. The family and friends who had just said goodbye to two empty caskets suddenly saw these men standing before them, who were then able to say, as most of us never will, that they had attended their own funerals—alive and kicking.

I tell this story because, as I suspect you also know, attending their own funerals gave Vangelis and his father a new lease on life, a new way of viewing the 30,000 days we're lucky enough, on average, to have on this planet, and a wholly new way to relate to the world. Vangelis told me on countless occasions that the experience set him on the journey he has taken ever since: massaging the sick, giving acupuncture to those in need, and helping and herbily healing anyone who asks. In his own way, he made the world better for everyone who crossed his path—except perhaps a few beloveds who stopped serving as his number one.

Maybe we can all metaphorically do the very same thing; let our old ideas die as our new, expanded, inclusive, and worldcentric views grow ever deeper. As the Buddhists metaphorically say, the ego and emotions slowly wither the more one meditates. "If you die when you are alive, you don't die when your body dies." So, too, perhaps our seemingly embedded ideas and assumptions, especially about nation-states and nationalities—the source of so many human rights violations and human suffering—may

be far better to lose than to hold on to. Prevention always beats cure.

***Life Lesson No. 2: Have enough courage to let your old ideas die.
Reassess everything and build again.***

And thus, so too have I over the past several years considered my own life, including some of the many excruciatingly close shaves I have endured, like the worst illness I have ever faced just after starting this book, which against all odds I miraculously survived. When you come so close to death (yet again!) and your inevitable end, indeed much closer than Vangelis and his father did, you ponder the life you have led. You count the victories, the losses, and the draws. As a troublemaking human rights activist for decades, I recalled the rare occasions when my efforts won the day, perhaps saving lives—or at least reducing human suffering by a bit.

People who know me often feel that it is through my irreverence that I show my greatest respect; and this is usually very true. What people often miss is that my perceived irreverence is actually the deepest form of respect that I can muster. I try to create as much equality as possible, find common ground, and spark the beginnings of smiles—hopefully followed by a shared chuckle. I want to relate to everyone I meet in a quick and real a manner as I can muster. It makes all the difference in the world. Superficiality, formality, and the *status quo* have never been my way. I haven't worn a tie for around 20 years or so, maybe more. I refuse to use the formal 'you' in Dutch, German or Spanish. I most certainly refuse to not be myself in conversations with diplomats, billionaires, or stoners in a crowded concert hall. I've never really had a boss and absolutely hated it when I had to be one. Thankfully, somehow, I found a way that enabled me to never have to commute by car or public transport to work, never have to work in a cubicle or a high-rise skyscraper, and yet travel to all corners of the world to promote human rights. I refused to drive a car a single inch for a full 30 years until I became a dad living in a semi-rural area and was forced to out of necessity. Yes, I took taxis and rode with other drivers from time to time (everyone always asks...). I have seen the absolute best and the absolute worst of what our human species has to offer. You get me for what I am and I get you for what you are. That's both fair and equal.

I've forever gone my own way, for better or worse. If I had the chance to do it over, would I have chosen to be more mainstream, more obsessed with a regular paycheck, power or prestige, more materialist, more concerned with appearance over substance? The answer is no. I am certain I was so much more productive working as a troublemaking human rights

activist than as a lifelong employee of some hierarchical organization or company. After all I have seen across all corners of our planet, the utter carnage done by fellow humans to other fellow humans, the hatred, violence, despair, and levels of anguish few outside of such places could fathom, how could I become anything other than the human rights renegade many have labeled me as over the years? *Get it done but keep it fun*, has always been my credo, and I wouldn't have changed that for the world. Work myself to the bone to make the world a better place, but throw a Frisbee to a friend, climb a mountain, jump in the ocean, embrace your true love, explore the unexplored, tend your garden and laugh as much as possible along the way—even though oppression, illness, death, and despair don't always make that very easy.

Life Lesson No. 3: Get it done but keep it fun.

Of course, I desperately wish I had helped more people, done more to achieve justice, and shown even more intensively that kindness and love beat cruelty and hate, especially to the human rights abusers among us. But even having only won the human rights battles in which I have engaged *sometimes*, on the other hand, what better life could I have led? What better way could I have spent my working life given my various strengths, and my many weaknesses? Using creativity, a bit of innovation, all couched in a sense of humor and the oneness of everything, including, you, me, and every human, I did my bit. I did what I could and will continue to do so as long as I am able. This is my eternal quest though it may look and feel different now from the days when I would travel every few days, give speeches at the UN, harass human rights violating governments and so on. Now, the aim is to universally embrace and understand the interconnections and interdependence between us all, one day (hopefully sooner than later) manifesting as world citizenship for everyone, notwithstanding where you were born, where you live now, and where you will go in the future.

Sadly, I will probably never meet you, although I hope I will. But even if we never meet, I can say without a doubt that I want all of us, including you, to share the same nationality, the same citizenship, with the same rights, same responsibilities and same obligations as everyone else. In building such a system of unified humanity, contrary to what many believe, we actually don't lose anything. We *gain* a new and bigger identity—shared by all of us—one bound to make our world a lot more livable and peaceful; something the world needs now more than ever. As Václav Havel so poignantly said: "Without a global revolution in the sphere of human consciousness, nothing will change for the better...and

the catastrophe towards which the world is headed - the ecological, social, demographic, or general breakdown of civilization - will be unavoidable."¹

Just as John Lewis was a troublemaker, so too were Václav Havel, Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King, Petra Kelly, and so many others. In a way, everyone who seeks a better world, who points out injustice and intervenes when it appears is a troublemaker themselves. The chapters that follow will seek to unveil a few life lessons I have learned being my very own sort of troublemaker all across this beautiful planet that we all share.

To those who know me already, my apologies for leaving out most of the really spicy stories you probably already know. To those I am meeting for the very first time, I hope the collection of human rights chronicles I outline below will inspire you, make you laugh at the absurdity of life and then cry about the cruelty that humans continue to inflict on other humans each and every day. Above all else, I hope that the pages that follow will unearth for you the idea that a life dedicated to human rights and reducing the suffering of our fellow humans can be a pretty captivating one, indeed. Happy reading, my friends!

Scott Leckie
04 March 2026

¹Quoted in: Arjuna Ardagh, *The Translucent Revolution: How People Just Like You Are Waking Up and Changing the World*, New World Library, 2005, pp. 397-398.

Chapter 1

So, You've Decided to be a Failure?

Since the mid-1980s, I've been what some people have called a human rights renegade—maybe even a human rights outlaw—because of my often-unorthodox way of doing things. The vim that somehow powers me forward has been the rocket fuel that has kept me going ever since. When I'm lucky enough to add a booster shot of vigor to the mix the bad guys get scared; at least I hope they do. Since my earliest days as a human rights activist, people from Manila, Myanmar, Melbourne and beyond have called me Mr. Housing Rights, a name that first popped up in lovely Vancouver, Canada in the early days of my housing rights journey.

I've worked in more than 80 countries and carried out human rights work on another 35 or 40 countries beyond those that I have visited. I've been fortunate to live in over a dozen countries for sustained periods and could happily move to any country in the world tomorrow and quickly feel at home. Though moving between places and countries has become easy, achieving justice has not. Few of those one meets during a life of troublemaking activism will tell you outright that attaining a winning record in the world of human rights is simply impossible. You need to figure that one out yourself and find ways to live with this sad truth. Moving is easy, but winning is hard.

When I left the country of my birth, the United States, forever in my early twenties, the father of one of my best friends, a man who embodied the extremes of capitalist excess, 200 kgs, pudgy face, suspenders and all the rest, at least told me the truth, though I was certainly not ready to hear it at that stage. "What's next for you then, Scott?", he asked. "I'm leaving the US forever to work on human rights wherever this path will take me", I proudly replied with a combined scent of contempt, conceit, trepidation, and pride all merged together. This larger-than-life Billy Bunter of a man quickly chortled in his retort, oozing with derision, "So, you've decided to be a failure? What are you going to do, work with some international ACLU or some other do-gooder venture like that?"

Not for the first time in my life, I was speechless and couldn't believe

these dismissive comments. As my mind raced through every expletive I knew, I walked away shaking my head in disbelief that anyone could have views such as these, especially the father of such a close friend. But as it turns out, this morbidly obese man, so proudly a lifetime member of a private golf club that for the longest time singled out and excluded certain ethnic, racial, and religious groups of people from membership, (I'll let you guess which ones), had at least one thing right, and that was this: The simple fact is that on any human rights journey, you may take the high road—and may as well make some good trouble, too—but more often than not, you will fail in your various quests; not always, but certainly mostly.

When you instinctively support the underdog or the little guy, you quickly learn that they are the little guy because the bigger guy—the one violating their rights—has set up the system to facilitate this. Now, decades after commencing my life of perpetual travel to human rights hotspots, as I reflect on what worked and what didn't, it's clear my track record fell short of my early hopes and expectations. Only recently has it dawned on me that many of the outcomes I sought to bring about or banish will have to wait for future generations' skills and humanity's evolution. I truly believed that by the time I came to the final phase of my human rights work, mass forced evictions would have been banished once and for all, Palestine and Tibet would be free and independent countries, women would earn as much as men, nationalism and racism (not to mention fascism) would have been consigned to the rubbish heap of history where they belong, and armed military invasions would have ended for good.

Coming to terms with these and other sad realities on our shared planet remains a daily challenge, one I may never fully transcend, no matter how far away from the main centers of human agglomeration I may choose to spend my final days. There is an immeasurable joy in realizing that all of us are members of the same wonderful human family, and for those of whom haven't reached that conclusion yet, I'd encourage you to get moving as fast as you can; you won't be disappointed when you reach there, I promise!

But at the same time, there is a rather daunting price to be paid in caring about the wellbeing of everyone, everywhere. Once this understanding pervades your worldview, it cannot be reversed, and why would you want it to? When you start caring about all of humanity, not just those in your immediate vicinity, you must find ways to transcend daily news announcements about human cruelty. Today, and every day, many people will be killed on battlefields. Thousands, maybe even more, will be tortured. Millions will go to bed with hunger pangs in their belly. Hundreds of millions will awake in dismal slums. And billions will breathe dangerously polluted air and face ever-growing threats brought

about by climate change. Certainly, there are good news stories to report, but all too often our civilization serves up anguish and despair when compassion would have been just as easy and so much more preferable. I don't want us to live in a world like this. Don't we deserve better? Is this really the best the human race can do?

The recollections contained in this book have been doing the rounds in my mind for a while, based on my experiences as an international human rights legal expert and advocate since 1983. As I've discussed with so many of my global friends, my entire working life has been based on my very own personal 50-year work plan, and it still is. In your mind's eye, imagine a large brick wall, full of holes, cracks, weak spots, and far too easy to surmount, symbolizing an all too flimsy human rights system that, while in place, is rather risk-free to bypass for anyone who wishes to do so. And just to be clear, what we are discussing here is the antithesis of the type of wall so often touted by Donald Trump and those who follow his autocratic cult. No, here we are talking about a human rights *protection* wall, something that is built on our shared humanity. I imagine a wall that would perpetually protect each and every one of us from the countless abuses that are meted out daily by governments and private individuals against their fellow humans. That kind of wall.

My plan was, and remains, to creatively seek to fill those gaps and strengthen the weak spots. I aim to build this wall so high and thick that human rights abusers, wherever they are, will find it increasingly difficult to violate human rights laws with impunity—through either acts or omissions. As the wall strengthens, it will become ever more difficult for them to neglect the rights of their citizens, especially the still ignored poor and disadvantaged. In the end, this will contribute to the rule of law, enhance democracy, and lead to growing equality within and between nations everywhere. I'm at about Year 40 now, 80% done. Along the way, I discovered that for whatever reason I could rather easily identify human rights gaps in laws, institutions, and practices, and keep trying my best, each and every day, to fill them, strengthening the protection wall and expanding human rights protections for everyone, everywhere. And you know what, sometimes against all odds, human rights efforts bear remarkable fruit. Usually you will fail, but on occasion you win. The failures are devastating, but the victories are joyous and make it all worthwhile.

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First and foremost, I am incredibly thankful to my parents for not only giving me the gift of life but also—perhaps unbeknownst to them—offering me my first glimpse into the real world, a world of humans just like ourselves, not just Americans but people with different accents, stemming from different lands, with unique foods, music, religions, and cultures. As children, we have no idea which influences will eventually determine our worldviews. I know now that my interactions with exchange students from Brazil and Portugal, discussions with my Norwegian house cleaner (not many of those left in California these days, I'd guess!), Mexican gardeners, and Greek family friends, combined with stories of Africa from my beloved Uncle Bill, and tales of Army life in post-war West Germany from my dad, all played a part. My first trips overseas—first to Mexico a few times as a kid and then to Europe by age 14—kick-started a lifelong journey. This wild voyage has only strengthened with time, first becoming, then fully embracing, a world citizen's perspective. I now see, deeply and profoundly, that there is no difference between people. I will keep dreaming of a world where everyone merges into a single, 8-billion-strong polity, building a cosmopolitan world of world citizens—equals—bound by a shared humanity, working as one for a sustainable future for the ages. So, to my parents and family, thank you so much for igniting a spark in me which has only grown ever brighter with the passage of time.

Special thanks, too, to the thousands of people, maybe tens of thousands and probably more with whom I have shared moments of mutual recognition, respect, and joy. Who knows really how many of the people across the globe with whom I have shared life and discussion, but with each additional interaction, each new conversation, every first glance, my conviction of our need for world citizenship gets just that much stronger. Somehow, I feel as if I remember all of you but some pop into my mind more readily than others, so special thanks to one and all. To Chichi in Santo Domingo who led me through your slum of 70,000 dwellers and who showed me just how universal compassion and care could be, thank you. To Katsuyuki in Japan, who against all odds fights for the weakest and against the strongest, with whom I have shared countless laughs and tears—we, together, from such different

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About the author

Scott Leckie (BA, LLM – www.scottleckie.com.au) is an international human rights legal expert. He hosts the popular podcast and YouTube channel @DemocracyTomorrow. He also founded Oneness World Foundation (<http://www.onenessworld.org>), a research think tank exploring questions of world-centric political evolution and new forms of global governance and world citizenship. He is also the Director and Founder of Displacement Solutions a global not-for-profit NGO dedicated to resolving displacement generated by global warming and climate change. (<http://www.displacementsolutions.org>). He hosted the podcast *Jointly Venturing - Let's Talk World Citizenship* from 2018-2020 and manages the *One House, One Family* initiative, a project in Bangladesh building homes for climate displaced families.

His interventions have: helped to protect thousands of people against planned forced evictions in popular communities in the Dominican Republic, Panama, Philippines, South Africa, Thailand, Zambia and elsewhere; restored the HLP restitution rights to tens of thousands of refugees and IDPs in Kosovo, Georgia, Timor Leste, Burma, Albania and beyond; led to the recognition of the HLP rights of communities threatened with displacement due to climate change; generated the creation of numerous new UN institutions, standards and Special Rapporteurs; and assisted in the fundamentally reshaping and strengthening of HLP rights under international human rights law.

He has established several international human rights organizations and institutions and worked in more than 80 countries. He has advised a number of United Nations agencies on housing, land and property rights issues, including the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), the Overseas Development Institute (ODI), International Finance Corporation (IFC), the International Federation of Red Cross Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), UN Habitat, the UN Development Programme (UNDP), the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the UN Transitional Authority in East Timor (UNTAET), the UN Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), the World

Bank, and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

He conceived of and was the driving force behind more than 100 international human rights legal and other normative standards, including UN resolutions, guiding principles, general comments, judicial decisions and others - most recently the *Peninsula Principles on Climate Displacement Within States*.

Scott has written 31 books and over 300 academic articles and reports on issues including land solutions for climate displacement, housing rights, economic, social, and cultural rights, forced evictions, the right to housing and property restitution for refugees and internally displaced persons and other human rights themes.

He has taught and designed several human rights courses in various top-100 universities and law schools around the world, including the world's first law school course on climate change and displacement which he has taught at the College of Law of the Australian National University, University of Melbourne Law School, Monash Law, and Mahidol University.

He is a world citizen, grows 50+ varieties of vegetables and herbs and plants at least ten trees a year. He bikes at least 10,000kms a year and tries to swim every day, even in the midst of winter. He loves, lives on and is entirely dependent upon planet Earth - just like you.