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Book: Protecting Vulnerable Groups: The European Human Rights Framework edited by Francesca Ippolito & Sara Iglesias Sánchez [Hart Publishing Oxford 2015] ISBN: **978-1-84946-685-1**

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There is an increasing focus on law's relationship with and response to human vulnerability and vulnerable groups. This book focuses on the European perspective. It is an edited volume with 20 chapters. The overarching theme is vulnerability. In the book, vulnerability is defined both from the general and the particular. It endorses the quote from Martha Fineman about the general, where 'vulnerability' is seen as a universal inevitable enduring aspect of the human condition' [p.1] However many of its chapters, deal with the particular. That is, groups which can be particularly vulnerable. The book divides vulnerable groups into five categories or parts and this mirrors the structure of the chapters.

Part one deals with groups which have 'inherent vulnerability'. In this part, Ippolito examines children's vulnerability under EU law. Seatzu examines elderly persons under the law while Weisbrock examines disability under EU law. Fines looks specifically at the European protection of women. This part therefore deals with the inherent vulnerability of children, old persons, disabled persons and women.

Ippolito's chapter is particularly interesting because it is a deconstruction of the various aspects of children's vulnerability. The state of childhood as one in transition means, that questions of the application of Article 8 ECHR as 'comprising both economic and emotional family dependency' [p.28] as well as the issue of graduated autonomy indicated by cases before the ECtHR and the CJEU, are carefully examined.

Part two deals with topics touching on minorities as a vulnerable group. Vulnerability within this group stretches across to areas of racial, religious, cultural and linguistic differences.

Dubos and Guset examine linguistic vulnerability and the protection of minority language. Ahmed examines the specific vulnerability of the Roma under the European legal framework. Bequiraj examines indigenous people and their cultural identity. Howard examines religious minorities in Europe. The final paper in this part by Ducoulombier analyses the protection of sexual minorities in European law. Ducoulombier justifies this focus by stressing that sexual minorities are 'more likely than the general population to experience human rights violations, both from domestic authorities and individuals' [p.202] She examines the use of anti-discrimination law enshrined in ECHR and EU law to give effect to protections for this group.

Part three examines the particular vulnerability of "the other". This is seen as 'being in a state which is not the state of the one's own nationality.' [p.14] This embodies the notion of "the other" in a geographical sense. This is an aspect of the book that has significant relevance for some of the topical migration issues. In this part, Sawyer examines statelessness as a 'precariat', that is, persons who lives on precarious foundations. Brandl and Czech examines persons who seek protection in the EU (Asylum-seekers). Chassin explores the contemporary vulnerabilities of climate induced migrants and Lang analyses the specific protection of free movement of persons.

The book was published pre the Brexit referendum but Lang deals excellently with the distinction between freedom of movement of EU citizens within the EU and position of non-

EU nationals and the stateless. It examines Directive 2004/38/EC which is the key piece of legislation on this issue.

Part four examines the vulnerability of victimhood. This is seen as a vulnerability which is the result of criminal conduct. There are three papers in this part which cover the position of the victim in Europe's criminal justice (Mitsilegas), the European response to victims of terror (Almqvist) and the issue of smuggled and trafficked migrants (Rodríguez). The Almqvist chapter dwells on the imbalance between responses to victims of terrorism and the drive for prevention of the next attack. The chapter highlights the legal developments including Directive 2012/29/EU.

The final part goes back in some way to the general. The categories herein are circumstantial, therefore these groups are reflective of the human condition and the consequential circumstances which may create vulnerabilities in the human condition with or without fault. Therefore, this part examines issues such as detainees in prisons (Foster), poverty as a specific social vulnerability (Schefer), and undocumented foreign nationals (Sánchez).

This is undoubtedly a strong volume on vulnerable groups. It is not intended to be exhaustive. However it is a strong offering which demonstrates the multiplicity of perspectives and protections of available under European law. The book is quite impressive and comprehensive as it covers very recent scholarship and is rigorous, in spite of the number of chapters. There is some difference in the level of critical analysis contained within each chapter but there is certainly adequate consistency for the individual chapters to hold together as a collection on the same theme. The variety of topics covered also ensures that this is representative of a wide range of vulnerable groups.

The structure of the book is reflective of the authors' perspective on vulnerability but it may be defining vulnerable groups in this way may be open to dispute. Others may put forward social policy and social responsibility constructs which may cover or overlap with some of the issues dealt with in this book.

The focus on Europe is both an advantage and a disadvantage. It is an advantage because it creates a very powerful regional analysis of the treatment of vulnerable groups but it limits the scope and relevance of the book to other regions which may not share legal frameworks which have any affinity to Europe.

Nevertheless, this work successfully captures the current picture of protections for the vulnerable groups in European human rights framework and EU law. The work analyses the two European systems highlighting areas of divergence or similarity in standards. There is substantial analysis of directives, treaties, case law and international documents relevant to illustrate the current European position, indicate areas of conflict or debate and point out recommendations for future action.

This is a book which comprehensively analyses a regional interpretation of vulnerable groups and their protections. Protecting vulnerable groups will undoubtedly enable scholars to gain a valuable insight into many issues facing vulnerable groups under European law. It is an excellent book.