

Bringing Research to LIFE

Upcoming Events

HLHP Research Institute Seminar Series with Dr. Gordon Giesbrecht

Tuesday, Feb. 15, 2011
at 10 a.m.

Conference Room A (Room 238)
Investor's Group Athletic Centre

All are welcome!

Climate Change and Crop Production: Prospects for the Northern Great Plains with Dr. Paul Bullock

Wednesday, Feb. 16, 2011
at 3:30 p.m.

Carolyn Sifton Lecture Theatre,
130 Agriculture Building

All are welcome!

Bringing Research to LIFE Speaker Series

Religious and Other Rights: What Happens When They Collide?

With Prof. Karen Busby

Wednesday, Feb. 16, 2011
at 7 p.m.

McNally Robinson Booksellers
1120 Grant Avenue

To assist us in planning seating,
RSVP to: (204) 474-9020

For more info: umanitoba.ca/research/brtl.html

Café Scientifique

Schizophrenia: Separating Fact from Fiction

Monday, Feb. 28, 2011
at 7 p.m.

McNally Robinson Booksellers
1120 Grant Avenue

To assist us in planning seating,
RSVP to: (204) 474-9020

For more info: umanitoba.ca/research/cafe_scientifique.html

Putting a value on our rights

Professor discusses the importance of religious freedom

BY MELNI GHATTORA

"Most Canadians would say they would put a very high value on the right to religious freedom but I don't think they always think through what that really means" says Karen Busby, a professor in the Faculty of Law.

Busby, whose research and teaching interests include constitutional law, in particular human rights and equality law, civil procedure and administrative law, is referring to new legislation in Québec that bans niqab – a face covering veil worn by some Muslim women.

The legislation states that if you want to access a public service, or have any interface with a public servant, you have to remove any face covering. The people this is aimed at are, of course, niqab wearing women. Furthermore the government states that they will make no accommodation.

"A very significant percentage of Canadians would say that religious freedom is important and yet 90 per cent of people or more think that the Québec law is a good one and I think how do you reconcile those two?" says Busby.

This is just one example of the types of conflict that arise when you have members of different faith groups living in the same community. Throughout history, and especially in the last century, there have been huge inter-religious group conflicts resulting in many human rights issues.

"The trickier situations are where you have a much more significant clash of values that you can't accommodate. And that would be like the polygamy situation in B.C.," says Busby. "What do you do when you think the religious practice itself is wrong? It's a matter of incompatibility with other Canadian values and those are the harder cases to resolve," explains Busby.

Cuban Honours

BY BILL PETERS

Three eminent University of Manitoba and St. Boniface Hospital researchers were awarded Medals of Honour by the University of Medical Sciences, in Holguin, Cuba, at the 2nd Cuba-Canada International Heart Symposium held in January 2011.

Naranjan S. Dhalla, Distinguished Professor in the Department of Physiology, Faculty of Medicine, and Director of Cardiovascular Developments at St. Boniface Hospital Research received the medal "in recognition of international contributions to the understanding of molecular and cellular mechanisms of diseases such as ischemic heart disease, diabetic cardiomyopathy and heart failure, and for promoting Cuban scientific development through the Cuba-Canada International Heart Symposium."



Photo by Melni Ghattora

Prof. Karen Busby, Faculty of Law, will discuss at her Feb. 16 lecture what happens when the religious rights of one group conflict with the rights of others and issues that are currently before the courts and legislators.

There is a trial before British Columbia courts regarding the constitutionality of Canada's Polygamy law. The case involves a group of Mormons who believe that they are religiously required to live in polygamous relationships. "While the criminal code prohibits polygamous relationships does the Charter guarantee the rights of freedom of religion or the government's right to pass a law prohibiting polygamous relationships?" asks Busby.

Busby's particular research interest is what happens when religious rights conflict with sexual orientation rights. According to Busby, this happens particularly in the employment context.

She refers to a case in Ontario where half of group homes for people living with mental disability are run by religious organizations. The group homes will not hire anyone who refuses to sign a statement of faith and also agree to live by their lifestyle code. This

means they will not hire non-Christians and they will not hire anybody who is gay or lesbian.

"Half of the group homes in Ontario, for people with mental disability, discriminate against non-Christians and gays and lesbians, while their funding is virtually all government funding," says Busby.

According to Busby, the government provides \$40 million a year in funding and the organizations privately raise approximately \$200,000 annually. While the group homes discriminate against who they employ, they don't refuse clients based on their religious beliefs or sexual orientation.

These cases are just a snapshot of an upcoming public lecture titled "Religious and other rights: What happens when they collide?" on Feb. 16, at 7 p.m. at McNally Robinson Booksellers, 1120 Grant Avenue, as part of the Bringing Research to Life Speaker Series.



Submitted Photos
(left to right) Physiology professors Naranjan Dhalla, Pawan Singal and Grant Pierce

development of heart disease, as well as for improving Cuban scientific development through the International Symposium on Cardiovascular Research and the Cuba-Canada Heart Symposium."

Grant Pierce, Professor of Physiology in the Faculty of Medicine and Executive Director of Research at St. Boniface Hospital Research received his medal "for his many global contributions in the area of nutraceutical research, coronary atherosclerosis and the relationship of the processes of infection and