Management Board

2014-2015
Siena Anstis, undergraduate student representative
Marika Giles Samson, graduate student representative
Dean Daniel Jutras, Chair
Victor Muñiz-Fraticelli, Associate Professor
Vrinda Narain, Associate Professor
Sarah Stroud, Associate Vice-Principal (Research & International Relations)
Jon Unruh, Associate Professor
Béatrice Vizkelety

Management Team
Colleen Sheppard, Centre Director
Nandini Ramanujam, Executive Director & Director of Programs
Sharon Webb, Program Coordinator

2015-2016
Rokeya Chowdhury, graduate student representative
Peter Grbac, undergraduate student representative
David Howes, Adjunct Professor
Dean Daniel Jutras, Chair
Victor Muñiz-Fraticelli, Associate Professor
Vrinda Narain, Associate Professor
Antonia Maioni, Associate Vice-Principal (Research & International Relations)
Béatrice Vizkelety

Management Team
François Crépeau, Centre Director
Nandini Ramanujam, Executive Director & Director of Programs
Marika Giles Samson, Interim Executive Director
Sharon Webb, Program Coordinator

This report covers the period January-December 2015.
McGill Centre for Human Rights and Legal Pluralism  
Centre sur les droits de la personne et le pluralisme juridique de McGill

Created in September 2005, the Centre for Human Rights and Legal Pluralism was formed to provide students, professors and the larger community with a locus of intellectual and physical resources for engaging critically with the ways in which law affects some of the most compelling social problems of our modern era, most notably human rights issues. Since then, the Centre has distinguished itself by its innovative legal and interdisciplinary approach to understanding and advancing human rights in a complex and legally plural global community.

www.mcgill.ca/humanrights
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OPENING REMARKS

2015 marks the tenth anniversary of the McGill Centre for Human Rights and Legal Pluralism. It also marks the passing of the torch from the Centre’s second Director to its third. Anniversaries are opportune moments both for reflection on the past and present, and to dream about the future. Are we, as a Centre, fulfilling the expectations that we set for ourselves? Are we providing our members with a locus to have challenging and thought-provoking conversations about human rights? Are we a force for good, however modest, in our community and around the world?

We are pleased to report that we are. Indeed, we are exceeding our ambitions.

2015 was a memorable one for the Centre: as the next few pages will attest, our program of activities and events is as thought-provoking as it is relevant. Our work has never been more important, not only in what we study but how we study it: collaboratively, interdisciplinarily, pluralistically. We reach out into the world and, increasingly, the world is reaching back. We are reaping the harvest of seeds sown throughout the last 10 years, and it is a bumper crop.

To give just one example, in 2015 we welcomed an extraordinary group of visiting scholars through the O’Brien Fellows program. That would be cause enough for celebration, but what makes us particularly proud is the degree to which they have been more integrated into the life of the Centre and the Faculty than ever before. We not only had the privilege of hosting Justice Johann van der Westhuizen of the South African Constitutional Court, but imagine being a first-year constitutional law student and having one of the intellectual architects of the post-apartheid South African Constitution give a guest lecture! Oren Perez of Bar-Ilan University gave a master class on legal pluralism to a group of graduate students who had spent the term wrestling with the subject in a reading group (convened by one of our O’Brien Graduate Fellows). Two of our O’Brien visitors have or will join the esteemed laureates of the Annie MacDonald Langstaff lectures, and one can scarcely imagine a roundtable more timely than that convened in late October by our visiting scholar Tanya Monforte on the Syrian crisis.

Our network of intellectual and institutional partners has blossomed in the last few years, and we can now say, with all sincerity, that the Centre has truly become a global hub for intellectual endeavor in the area of human rights and legal pluralism. We look forward to the next 10 years with confidence, commitment, and genuine excitement: if the last ten years has taught us anything, it is that there is great appetite for the kind of work that the Centre does, and how it does it, and we embrace the challenge.

The CHRLP Team
Colleen, François, Marika, Nandini, Sharon
2015 HIGHLIGHTS

Alex Neve
Secretary-General
Amnesty International
Canada

Confronting a Human Rights Scourge: Canada and the Global Struggle against Torture
January 28

Venezuela in Crisis:
The Decline of Democracy and the Repression of Human Rights
February 4

Moderated by
Irwin Cotler
Centre Member and Emeritus Professor of Law

Featuring
Carlos Vecchio
Venezuelan lawyer and political exile
Diana López
Acción por la Libertad
Jacques Frémont

RENÉ CASSIN LECTURE

The Quebec Charter of Rights and Freedoms at 40: éléments de perspective et de prospective

September 30

Dennis Edney

lawyer for Omar Khadr

The Rule of Law in an Age of Terror

Moderated by René Provost

October 21
Diane Humetewa
Judge of the Federal District of Arizona, and member of the Hopi Indian Tribe
*Practices of Justice: Courts, Adjudication, and Native American Legal Traditions*
October 23

Farida Shaheed
UN Special Rapporteur on Cultural Rights
*Cultural Rights: A United Nations Report*
November 2
As of September 2015, the Centre celebrates its 10th anniversary with a new dialogue series on human rights and legal pluralism

An exciting program of 9 dialogues to be convened over a two-year period, designed to highlight the innovative research and scholarship of the Centre’s members. The series is being filmed, not only for public dissemination, but also with the intention of creating thought-provoking teaching resources.

These dialogues will converge around three key themes:

- Realizing human rights in a plural world
- Justice, truth, and reconciliation
- The role of state and non-state actors in a new world order

The series was kicked off with the inaugural dialogue on October 2, 2015: Revisiting Legal Pluralism, featuring a conversation between Frédéric Mégret and René Provost, moderated by Colleen Sheppard.

Left to right: Frédéric Mégret, Colleen Sheppard, René Provost.
CENTRE LEADERSHIP AND RESEARCH COMMUNITY

Colleen Sheppard  
Centre Director (outgoing)  
2010-2015

François Crépeau  
Centre Director (incoming)  
2015-2018

Nandini Ramanujam  
Executive Director  
Director of Programs

Marika Giles Samson  
Interim Executive Director & Program Coordinator  
(2015-2016)

Sharon Webb  
Program Coordinator

31 Full Members

6 Associate Members

Left to right: Oppenheimer coordinator Isabelle Rémillard, Sharon Webb, François Crépeau, Marika Giles Samson, and O’Brien Fellows in Residence Pranoto Iskandar and S. Laurel Weldon. Photo by Amanda Ghahremani.
CENTRE MEMBERS
Although the Centre is based at the McGill Faculty of Law, and many of the Centre’s members are law professors and part-time lecturers, we are committed to an interdisciplinary approach to human rights. A significant proportion of our members are either cross-appointed or drawn from outside the Faculty of Law, and include political scientists, philosophers, anthropologists, geographers, and scholars of education, religious studies and social work.

Full Members
Payam Akhavan (Law)  Catherine Lu (Political Science)
Kirsten Anker (Law)  Marie Manikis (Law)
Adelle Blackett (Law)  Jane Matthews Glenn (Law)
Megan Bradley  Frédéric Mégret (Law)
(Political Science, International Development)  Victor Muñiz-Fraticelli
Angela Campbell (Law)  (Law, Political Science)
François Crépeau (Law)  Vrinda Narain
Allison Christians (Law)  (Law, Institute for Gender, Sexuality and
Irwin Cotler (Law)  Feminist Studies)
Myriam Denov (Social Work)  Ronald Niezen (Law, Anthropology)
Pearl Eliadis (Law)  René Provost (Law)
Evan Fox-Decent (Law)  Nandini Ramanujam (Law)
Patrick Healy (Law)  Shaheen Shariff (Integrated Studies, Education)
David Howes  Colleen Sheppard (Law)
(Anthropology, Law)  Jon Unruh (Geography)
Derek Jones  Shauna Van Praagh (Law)
(Research Group on Health & Law)  Béatrice Vizkelety (Law)
Alana Klein  Daniel Weinstock
(Law, Research Group on Health & Law)  (Law, Philosophy, Research Group on Health &
Jacob Levy (Political Science)  Law)

Associate Members
Sébastien Jodoin (Law)
Daniel Cere (Religious Studies)
Armand de Mestral (Law)
Pierre Deschamps (Law)
Aristide Nononsi,
Institute for Human Rights and Development in Africa
& UN Independent Expert, Sudan
Philip Oxhorn
(Political Science, Institute for the Study of International Development)
A Changing of the Guard

Colleen Sheppard
Former Director
(September 2010-August 2015)

The Centre is deeply grateful to Professor Colleen Sheppard for her unstinting work during her five years at the head of the CHRLP, leading the Centre’s efforts on multiple fronts. As Dean Jutras explained, “Her focus on community engagement brought new directions to the CHRLP, and extraordinary visibility and impact for the Faculty and its human rights scholars.”

François Crépeau
New Director
(Since August 2015)

François Crépeau, Full Professor in the faculty of Law, comes to the Directorship while holding the Hans & Tamar Oppenheimer Chair in Public International Law and as the current United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants. In his announcement, Dean Daniel Jutras underscored how the Faculty is “enormously grateful to François Crépeau for taking on this most important mandate. No doubt he will have many opportunities to develop synergies between the activities of the Oppenheimer Chair, his UN mandate, and the Centre.”
2015 has been an extraordinary one for many Centre members. Among the most notorious of these accomplishments are:

- Three of our members have been promoted to the rank of Full Professor: Adelle Blackett, René Provost, and Shauna van Praagh.

- In September, Centre member Angela Campbell took up the crucial role of Associate Provost (Policies, Procedures and Equity) at the heart of the McGill University administration.

- Former Centre Director Colleen Sheppard won a major 5-year SSHRC grant to study the complexities and dynamics of systemic discrimination.

- The Research Group for Health & Law (RGHL), led by Centre member Alana Klein, won two grants this year: a significant 4-year grant from the FQRSC to study the role of law in health policy from a multidisciplinary approach, and a Law for the Future foundation grant from the Canadian Bar Association for their project “The Renewal of Judicial Function in the Protection of Health: Visions in Constitutional, Criminal and Private Law”. Several Centre members are also engaged with the work of the RGHL.

- Centre member Jacob Levy was named the Founding Director of the Yan P. Lin Centre for the Study of Freedom and Global Orders in the Ancient and Modern Worlds, as well as the head of the Centre’s Constitutional Studies Research Group. Centre member Catherine Lu was named as the coordinator of the new Centre’s Global Justice Research Group.

- Centre member Frédéric Mégret was named a William Dawson Scholar by McGill University, which recognizes “scholars poised to become leaders in their fields”.

- Adelle Blackett was awarded the Pathfinder Prize, which honours an individual who has used his or her legal education in a non-traditional manner to make significant contributions to the legal community and the community at large, by the Canadian Association of Black Lawyers.

- And last, but certainly not least, Founding Centre Director René Provost has been named a Fellow of the Trudeau Foundation. The appointment comes with a significant 3-year grant to pursue his research on whether, and how, insurgent groups might enforce humanitarian law. He is also a part of a major SSHRC team grant led by new Centre member Myriam Denov on the lived realities and experiences of children born of wartime rape.
FELLOWS AND RESEARCHERS

The CHRLP attracts some of the brightest scholars from around the world. We are privileged to receive support from a range of public and private funds that allow us to offer a wide variety of fellowships to support students’ education and research initiatives. In 2015, we were pleased to host:

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[Photo by Stacey MacDonald, Human Rights internship, Colorado]
Graduate Fellows

Thanks to the generosity of alumnus David O’Brien (BCL, 1965), the Centre also awards O’Brien Fellowships to support the studies of 2-3 new graduate students every year. The students, in turn, contribute to the life of the Centre by convening reading groups, organizing events, and sitting on the Management Board. For example, this year O’Brien Fellow and DCL student Rokeya Chowdhury convened a reading group on legal pluralism, which culminated in a masterclass with O’Brien Visiting Fellow Oren Perez.

The Centre advertises the Fellowship Program in the Human Rights Quarterly and through the Legal Scholarship Network. The advertisement is circulated in English, French and Spanish on over 80 listservs, and attracts applications from very talented young scholars from all over the world.

In 2015, the Centre hosted the following O’Brien Graduate Fellows:

- Vanessa Clermont-Isabelle (LLM)
- Alvaro Cordova (DCL)
- Rokeya Chowdhury (DCL)
- Marika Giles Samson (DCL)
- Claris Harbon (DCL)
- Róisín Hennessy (DCL)
- Sabaa Khan (DCL)
- Shimelis Kene (DCL)
- Bwighane Mwenifumbo (LLM)
- Muhammad Rezaur Rahman (LLM)

The Centre congratulates past O’Brien Graduate Fellow Bethany Hastie on the completion of her doctoral studies!

In May 2015, Bethany Hastie defended her doctoral thesis, “Migrant labour and the making of unfreedom: how the law facilitates exclusion and exploitation under Canada’s Temporary Foreign Worker Programs”. Her doctoral work was completed under the supervision of incoming Centre Director François Crépeau. Dr. Hastie has taken up a position as a lecturer at the Allard School of Law, University of British Columbia.
O’Brien Fellows in Residence

**Johann van der Westhuizen** was in residence in March 2015. He is a judge of the Constitutional Court of South Africa. In addition to his extensive academic experience as a professor at the University of Pretoria’s Faculty of Law, Justice van der Westhuizen served as a member of the Independent Panel of Recognised Constitutional Experts during the drafting of South Africa’s Constitution, which advised the Constitutional Assembly, and of the Technical Refinement Team, responsible for the final drafting and editing.

**Oren Perez** was in residence in March-April 2015. He has an LLB (Magna Cum Laude) from Tel Aviv University and both a LLM (1997) and a PhD (2001) from London School of Economics and Political Science. Professor Perez specializes in environmental law as well as legal theory and e-democracy, and mentored graduate students in legal pluralism while in residence.

**Pranoto Iskandar** was in residence from September to December 2015. He is the Founding Director of the Institute for Migrant Rights and Editor of the Institute’s scholarly publication program for the advancement of international and comparative legal studies. Currently, Pranoto Iskandar is interested in developing a variety of academically rigorous and viable human rights driven proposals for law reform in the area of immigration and constitutional laws in the midst of the domestic entrenchment of international and foreign laws in non-liberal polities.

**S. Laurel Weldon** was in residence from September 2015 to January 2016. She is a Distinguished Professor of Political Science at Purdue University in Indiana, USA. She is founding Director of the Center for Research on Diversity and Inclusion, and has served as Interim Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs as well as Acting Provost. Her work focuses on social movements, institutions and social policy. In particular, she examines the role of social movements in influencing public policy, and is an expert on policies on violence against women.

**Tanya Monforte** was in residence from September to December 2015. She is the former Director of the International Human Rights M.A. Program at the American University in Cairo, where she was also a professor of law and served on the steering committee of the Institute for Gender and Women’s Studies. Tanya Monforte’s background in the sociology of law has contributed to her interdisciplinary approach.
Justice Johann van der Westhuizen of the Constitutional Court of South Africa visits first year constitutional class

“Justice van der Westhuizen’s knowledge and experience - from the drafting of the South African Constitution to hearing constitutional cases interpreting the very provisions he had helped to draft - proved fascinating to the students. He was so inspiring, approachable and encouraging that as soon as the class ended, I found the students rushing to meet him to continue the discussion in his office!” - Centre member Vrinda Narain on O’Brien Fellow Justice Johann van der Westhuizen

Associate Fellows

Associate Fellows are independent scholars whose work advances the intellectual objects of the Centre, and who wish to be affiliated with the Centre but are not members of the Centre. This year, the Centre was pleased to welcome 3 new Associate Fellows:

Éloge Butera is a human rights activist with an active involvement in Canadian public life, having worked in Parliament as a research and legislative assistant to Senator Roméo Dallaire and articling student to Irwin Cotler.

Edin Hodžić is co-founder, Director and Head of Public Law Program at Analitika, Center for Social Research from Sarajevo, a think-tank in Bosnia and Herzegovina. He has worked on war crimes cases at the Prosecutor’s Office of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Noam Schimmel holds a PhD in Media and Communication, and a MSc in Philosophy, Policy and Social Value, from the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE). His research interests include the ethical and rhetorical aspects of human rights.

Post-Doctoral Fellows

The Centre is currently hosting the following Post-Doctoral Fellows:

Hassan Razavi, who conducts his research under the supervision of Centre Member (and Canada Research Chair in Human Rights and Legal Pluralism) Frédéric Mégret. Dr. Razavi, who holds a PhD in law from the University of Neuchatel, Switzerland, wrote his doctoral thesis on international trade under the supervision of Petros Mavroidis (Columbia Law School). He also teaches International Trade Law and Human Rights at the Faculty of Law.

Mulry Mondelice, who conducts his research under the supervision of Centre Director François Crépeau, researches the functioning of national human rights institutions, particularly those of his native Haiti. Dr. Mondelice wrote his doctoral thesis under the supervision of Olivier Delas (Université Laval) on the subject of international law and the construction of the rule of law, using Haiti as an example.
STUDENT RESEARCHERS & COORDINATORS

The Centre is also invigorated by the creative and diligent work of its student researchers and coordinators, without whom we would not be able to undertake our ambitious agenda of programs and research initiatives. Among others, Nadia Lefter served as Program Coordinator for the McGill-Echenberg Fellows Network and the International Young Leaders Forum, and provides much needed event support. Alizeh Ladak acts as the student coordinator for the O’Brien Fellows in Residence Program, replacing Claire Gunner. In 2015, Guilhem de Roquefeuil and Lucia Westin took over from Charlotte-Anne Malischewski and Alyssa Clutterbuck as the student coordinators for the International Human Rights Internships Program. Vanessa Clermont-Isabelle served as coordinator for the Interdisciplinary Research Network on Discrimination and Inclusion. Yuan Stevens wears many hats at the Centre including designer and editor of the monthly Centre newsletter.

Aisenstadt Summer Researchers

Further to a generous donation of the Nussia and André Aisenstadt Foundation, the Centre had the pleasure of welcoming six student research assistants from both the McGill Faculty of Law and the Faculté de droit at l’Université de Montréal. Over the summer, the Aisenstadt summer researchers helped with a range of Centre projects and supported research and other initiatives undertaken by Centre members, as follows:

- Stephanie Chow worked with Nandini Ramanujam
- Valentine Fau worked with Shauna Van Praagh and Angela Campbell
- Chloé Normand worked with Derek J. Jones and Jane Matthews Glenn
- Iñaki Navarrete worked with Professor René Provost
- Alizeh Ladak worked on the disability seminar series (with Iñaki Navarrete)
- Raphael Vagliano worked with Frédéric Mégret

Rathlyn Disability & the Law Seminar Series Coordinators

With the generous support of the Rathlyn Fund, the Centre hires BCL/LLB students as Rathlyn Coordinators each academic year to design and convene the year-long Disability and the Law Seminar Series. The Series is now in its fourth year.

The Rathlyn Coordinators for 2014-2015 were Steve Payette, Margery Pazdor and Izabella Karapetyan (photo left, left to right)

The 2015-2016 coordinators are Alizeh Ladak and Iñaki Navarrete. (photo right, left to right)
**Visiting Researchers**

Each year the Centre welcomes a number of Visiting Researchers, who are in residence at McGill for a limited time period.

In 2015, the Centre welcomed one new Visiting Researcher, Marie-Ève Loiselle, who worked with Associate Fellow Béatrice Vizkelety (who arrived at the Centre in 2013) and Pierre Bosset (who was at the Centre for the 2014-2015 academic year). Marie-Ève is completing a PhD at the Australian National University's (ANU), Centre for International Governance and Justice, where she studies the regulatory influence of physical partitions on territories and nations. Prior to that, she was a research officer on the Australian Research Council’s linkage project “Strengthening the rule of law through the United Nations Security Council?” also at ANU.

**Scholars at Risk Network Partnership**

The Centre is proud of its continued partnership with the Scholars at Risk Network. Dedicated to promoting academic freedom and defending scholars and universities worldwide, SAR has so far provided assistance to more than 400 academics who had been facing harassment, censorship, surveillance and intimidation in their home countries, including a risk of arrest on false charges, detention without trial, torture, disappearance and murder. For their vision, dedication, and support of academics at risk, SAR were recently short-listed for the Dutch Foreign Ministry's Human Rights Tulip Award.

In 2015, the Centre welcomed its second Scholar at Risk, Dr. Destaw Andargie Yigzaw. Prior to fleeing his native Ethiopia, Dr. Yigzaw was a full time faculty at the School of Law and International Studies of Unity University, where he taught human rights law, jurisprudence, and business law for several years. He was also a part time lecturer of business law at the Commercial College of Addis Ababa University.

Speaking of his experience at the Centre, Dr. Yigzaw said: “*Yet, the most valuable opportunity, I would say, was that everyone at the Centre for Human Rights and Legal Pluralism that I have had the opportunity to meet was highly supportive. ... The project I was working on while at McGill is now near completion, and it will, hopefully, be published in the next few months.*”

Dr. Yigzaw is now working as a Lecturer in Law at RMIT Vietnam. A third Scholar at Risk is due to join the Centre in 2016, and the Scholars At Risk Network has selected McGill as the host of its Global Congress in June 2016.


PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Confronting a Human Rights Scourge: Canada and the Global Struggle against Torture
January 28

Speaker: Alex Neve, Secretary General, Amnesty International Canada

“No one shall be subjected to torture. No one. Anywhere. Anytime.”

So began Alex Neve’s address to a packed room 312, which signalled the Montreal launch of Amnesty International’s Stop Torture campaign. Mr. Neve, one of the country’s (if not the world’s) leading human rights activists provided a comprehensive summary of the state of the world and the state of the nation when it comes to combatting torture. Frank, frequently heart-wrenching, and even occasionally funny, Neve’s account clearly identified the need for action, and he concluded by saying:

“As long as torture continues, anywhere – we all remain diminished by it; and we all remain vulnerable to it. Torture must be stopped. It can be stopped. And friends, I know that at the end of the day, torture will be stopped.”

Venezuela in Crisis: The Decline of Democracy and the Repression of Human Rights
February 4

The Moot Court was packed as people came to listen to two key witnesses of state repression in Venezuela, and its most brazen manifestation in the incarceration of opposition leader Leopoldo López: Carlos Vecchio, a Venezuelan lawyer and political exile, and Diana López, sister of Leopoldo López and Director of “Acción por la Libertad”, an initiative in defense of human rights in Venezuela.

They discussed the grassroots causes of the protests and shared their stories. They were joined by Professor emeritus, former Justice Minister and Attorney General of Canada, Centre Member Irwin Cotler.
2015 marks the 40th anniversary of the Québec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms, and the Centre was pleased to mark the occasion by inviting the President of the Quebec Human Rights and Youth Rights Commission, Jacques Frémont, to give the René Cassin Lecture in Human Rights. Mr. Frémont did not disappoint, reflecting on how far we have come and what is next on the human rights agenda. Perhaps most exciting of all, Mr. Frémont used this opportunity to announce just a few of the results of a survey conducted by the Commission to ascertain public attitudes towards human rights, and what drives those attitudes.

Mr. Edney shared the painful facts of Khadr’s capture in Afghanistan at the age of 15 and unthinkable mistreatment by authorities for more than ten years, first while still in hospital at Bagram Air Force base, and later during his incarceration at Guantánamo Bay. He spoke of the Canadian government’s failure to repatriate Khadr despite knowing that he was being tortured and subjected to a wholly unfair military prosecution, even after all other foreign nationals had been sent home from Guantánamo. Mr. Edney made real the impact of apathy, the mechanisms of state-sanctioned torture, and the perversion of torturers being hailed as heroes. He movingly spoke of his own inability to abandon the fight at any stage for fear that others would not take it up, and that Omar Khadr would never make it out of prison, and how that led to his and his family’s extraordinary decision to welcome Omar Khadr into their home.

Moderated by Centre member René Provost
FOSTERING COMMUNITIES OF SCHOLARSHIP AND REFLECTION

SEMINAR SERIES

Disability, Human Rights and the Law Seminar Series

In 2015, the Centre hosted two seminars as part of its 2014-2015 seminar series on “Built Environments and Accessibility of Persons with Disabilities”:

**Work and Economic Security** (January 26)
Moderator: Colleen Sheppard (Director, CHRLP)
Speakers: Anne-Marie LaFlamme (Professor of Law, Université de Laval), and Carole Foisy (Chef d’équipe au Comité d’adaptation de la main-d’œuvre [CAMO])

**Family and Sexuality** (March 16)
Moderator: Izabella Karapetyan (BCL/LLB candidate, McGill Faculty of Law)
Speakers: Natalia Acevedo Guerrero (LLM candidate, McGill Faculty of Law); Bonnie Brayton (National Executive Director, Disabled Women’ Network [DAWN-RAFH Canada]), and Angela Campbell (Associate Professor, McGill Faculty of Law).

The Centre also launched its fourth seminar series, entitled “Liberty and Security of Person with Disabilities: Rhetoric and Reality”. Two of seminars in the series took place in 2015:

**Disability and the Criminal Justice System** (September 21)
Moderator: Marie Manikis
Speakers: Patrick Healy (Judge, Court of Quebec), Laurent Morrissette (RAPLIQ), Bekithemba Mlauzi (LLM student), and Dianah Msipa (Prosecutor, Zimbabwe)

**Prisons: the New Asylums for People with Disabilities?**” (November 9)
Moderator: Robert Israel
Speakers: Kim Pate (Executive Director, Elizabeth Fry Societies), Adelina Iftene (postdoctoral researcher, Osgoode Hall Law School), and Chris Chapman (Assistant Professor of Social Work, York University)

The series will continue in 2016 with a third seminar on “Involuntary Confinement and Involuntary Treatment” and a fourth seminar on “Autonomy and Security in the Context of Independent Living”.

The series is co-sponsored by the CHRLP, the McGill Faculty of Law, the Human Rights Working Group (Disability and the Law Portfolio), the Canada Research Chair in Human Rights and Legal Pluralism, the Aisenstadt Community Justice Initiative, and the Rathlyn Fund for Disability Rights.
Dance performance – « Lewis et Lucie, Une évocation poétique de la marginalité, de la solitude et des petites cassures de la vie »
February 9 & December 3

The Disability and Human Rights Law seminar series also presented a live dance performance with dancers and choreographers Daniel Firth and Jane Mappin. Lewis et Lucie is a poetic evocation of marginality, solitude, and the tiny, crushing burdens of the past. Lewis et Lucie is also a trilogy. The first part was performed in Moot Court on February 9; the second part was offered in the Atrium on International Disability Day, December 3.

Interdisciplinary Research Network on Discrimination and Inclusion

The Centre hosts the Interdisciplinary Research Network on Discrimination and Inclusion, directed by Colleen Sheppard, includes researchers, practitioners as well as collaborators from community-based organizations. By including various disciplines from different universities and countries, this research network is able to explore, in-depth and from diverse perspectives, the subject of discrimination. The Network convened two meetings in 2015:

Olivia Smith, "Litigating Discrimination on Grounds of Family Status"
March 12
Professor Smith presented the discrimination based on the family status in Ireland, comparing this situation with Canada

Suzanne Gagnon, "Beyond belonging and identification: Towards organizational models of change supporting inclusion and social equality"
March 31
This presentation considered the limits of the law in sounding individual opinions, and about the utility of empirical studies to prove systemic discrimination in courts.

The Research Network will continue to organize these meetings next year, starting with presentations by Marie-Thérèse Chicha and Genevieve Painter in February 2016.
SEMINARS

The Green Economy Paradox:
A Critical Inquiry into Sustainability Indexes
April 2

O’Brien Fellow in Residence Oren Perez (Faculty of Law, Bar-Ilan University) elaborated on his research in progress, the “green economy paradox”, in which he challenged the popular claim that the goals of classical economic growth and sustainable development can be achieved concurrently. In particular, Professor Perez explored the tension between the dual roles of the world’s leading sustainability indexes – as financial products and as instruments of corporate social responsibility - and developed policy recommendations to make the indexes more meaningful.

Legitimacy, Legal Development and Change:
The Indonesian Case
September 15

David Keith Linnan (Associate Professor of Law, USC School of Law) explored the best way in social science terms to capture what actually goes on in legal development work at the individual level. He discussed the background in empirical comparative law terms and then explored the social science behind the process of understanding of how claimants see and sort themselves into groups pursuing different legal processes under different legal systems, describing this as legal pluralism in action. This talk and the related paper are an attempt to get whether and how legal development actually works, particularly in non-Western societies.
Engaging Moral Business amidst Uncertainties: Fostering Democracy in the New Indonesia
November 30

In a lunchtime seminar, O’Brien Visiting Fellow Pranoto Iskandar (Founding Director, The Institute for Migrant Rights, Indonesia), gave a personal and frequently moving “from the trenches” account about the challenges of starting up a NGO in an authoritarian state. This talk included significant detail about the Indonesian legal, political, and academic context, but ultimately set out a roadmap for success (so far), that included finding the right location to set up, making the right friends, and the value of academic credentials.
January 19

Sorbonne-educated and the author of almost 30 books, Ramin Jahanbegloo, a philosopher of non-violence in the tradition of Tolstoy and Gandhi, was arrested and detained in Iran’s notorious Evin prison in 2006. Centre member Payam Akhavan and Mr. Jahanbegloo had a conversation about the author’s memoir of these experiences, in which he recounts his confinement, his fear for his life, and his concern for the well-being of his family. This discussion was followed by a lively Q&A with the audience.

Uprooted, Unprotected: Libya’s Post-Gaddafi Displacement Crisis
January 27

Speaker: Centre Member Megan Bradley, Department of Political Science and Institute for the Study of International Development (ISID), McGill University

Drawing on the results of interviews conducted in 2013 and 2014 with government officials, diplomats, civil society, UN staff members and displaced persons in Libya and Tunisia, this presentation explored the dynamics of Libya’s ongoing displacement crisis. Beyond the instability that continues to wrack post-Gaddafi Libya, the presentation highlighted how highly flawed transitional justice processes have become obstacles to the resolution of Libyans’ displacement.
**Human Rights, Democracy, and the Conception of Persons as Equals**  
February 13

Centre member **Catherine Lu** convened this Philosophy Lecture Series talk with **Jiewuh Song**, post-doctoral Fellow, Yale University, co-sponsored by CHRLP and the Department of Political Science of Concordia University. In her presentation of a work-in-progress, Dr. Song argued for a human right to democracy, a right that she understands as offering, in a way that is consistent with understanding persons as equals, (i) an institutional safeguard against threats to basic interests in political participation; and (ii) a solution to the problem of coordinating diverse political opinions.

**Book talk with Glen Coulthard**  
*“Red Skin, White Masks”*  
April 10

Centre member **Adelle Blackett**, in collaboration with the CHRLP, hosted an Author-meets-Readers session in her Race Theory Seminar with **Sean Glen Coulthard** (Yellowknives Dene), Assistant Professor in the First Nations Studies Program and the Department of Political Science at the University of British Columbia. In preparation for this discussion, students read Coulthard's book (*Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition*) and wrote book reviews, which they then presented to the author, sparking significant discussion during the Q&A period.

**Annual Graduate Law Students Conference: “Inside and Out: Probing the Boundaries of Law”**  
May 29-30

Supported by the Centre, the theme of this year’s conference “Inside and Out: Probing the Boundaries of Law” encouraged participants to think beyond the traditional frontiers of state-made-law and law as a distinctive discipline. O’Brien Graduate Fellow **Vanessa Clermont-Isabelle** was Co-Chair of the Conference Planning Team, and O’Brien Graduate Fellow **Marika Giles Samson** designed and co-convened a pre-conference Presentation Skills Workshop to help students enhance their public speaking, presentation structure, and use of technology. This was followed up during the conference with a Peer Feedback Programme, which enabled participants to receive constructive, individualized critiques on the manner of their presentations.
Reconciling Sovereignties: Combining Traditional Law and Contemporary Western Law to See Truth and Reconciliation

September 21

As part of Aboriginal Awareness week, CHRLP co-presented, in conjunction with the Aboriginal Law Students Association (ALSA) and the McGill Social Equity and Diversity Education Office (SEDE), a public lecture featuring Anishinaabe Elder Fred Kelly. Consistent with the aspirations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s 28th Call to Action, Elder Kelly provided a rapt audience with a primer on Midewin (the Sacred Law). Elder Kelly’s address considered how indigenous law and contemporary western legal mechanisms could work together as part of reconciliation. Mohawk Elder John Cree opened the event with a prayer, after which Centre member Shauna Van Praagh contextualized the presentation in the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Before Nuremberg: Early International Criminal Tribunals

September 25

The creation of an international criminal tribunal at Nuremberg after World War II, considered the first of its kind, is widely regarded as the ‘birth’ of international criminal law (ICL). But Dr. Ziv Bohrer (Faculty of Law, Bar-Ilan University) challenged this consensus with examples of similar tribunals in every century since late-medieval times. These tribunals were shown to be doctrinally related (to each other, as well as to contemporary ICL), since war crimes have been regarded as universal wrongs for centuries. In doing so, he revealed that ICL is not a post-WWII innovation, but rather has a long past, and discussed the central causes of the pretermission of this history, concluding with a consideration of the contemporary significance of ICL’s neglected past.

Practices of Justice: Courts, Adjudication, and Native American Legal Traditions

October 23

Judge Diane Humetewa discussed the contrasts between practicing justice in the Hopi court and the US courts, and how Native American legal traditions are being included and embraced in the American legal system.

Diane Humetewa is a member of the Hopi Indian Tribe located in northeastern Arizona. She was the U.S. Attorney for the District of Arizona from 2006 to 2009. She was the first Native American female to be presidentially appointed to that position, where she presided over one of the largest U.S. Attorney Offices with one of the highest caseloads in the nation.
Cultural Rights: A United Nations Report
November 2

Farida Shaheed captivated the crowd as she reflected on her six years as the first United Nations Special Rapporteur on Cultural Rights (2009-2015), including her interpretation of the scope of the mandate, her views on culture and gender, her fascination with what constitutes cultural heritage, and her decision to take up, in her last two reports, the question of intellectual property and the controversy that followed.

Ms. Shaheed is a sociologist, and the Executive Director of Shirkat Gah-Women’s Resource Centre in Pakistan.

Gendered Federal Systems:
Informal Institutions, Intersectionality and Change
November 23

As part of the Annie Macdonald Langstaff lecture series, O’Brien Visiting Fellow Laurel Weldon (Purdue University) presented some work in progress from her time in residence with the Centre, which distinguishes formal from informal institutions and theorizes the role that social movements can play in furthering gender equality. Her goal is to contribute an intersectional approach to the study of gender and federalism that takes into account both the importance of informal institutions and the role of activism in sparking change towards greater gender equality.
ROUNDTABLES AND PANEL DISCUSSIONS

Roundtable Discussion: 
Mental Health Information Privacy & Equality in the Workplace 
January 16

Organized by the CHRLP, 15 participants from different horizons were invited to discuss Mental Health reflections, questions, initiatives and context. This event is a part of the Mental Health Information Privacy & Equality in the Workplace Project conducted by Centre members Derek Jones (Project Leader) and Colleen Sheppard (Co-Researcher), with the assistance of Eliza Bateman (DCL candidate) and Joanna Richardson (LL.M. student).

The Syrian Crisis: Challenging Dominant Narratives 
October 23

This roundtable, convened by visiting O’Brien Fellow in Residence Tanya Monforte and featuring Centre member Frédéric Mégret, Canada Research Chair in the Law of Human Rights and Legal Pluralism (McGill); and Stefan Winter, a scholar of the history of the Middle East and the Maghreb (Department of History, UQAM), canvassed a variety of approaches to explore the origins of the conflict of the Syrian Civil War and its impacts regionally and globally. Moderated by Interim Executive Director Marika Giles Samson.

Tanya Monforte, Stefan Winter, Frédéric Mégret and Marika Giles Samson. Photo by Sharon Webb
INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH COLLABORATIONS

Rule of Law and Economic Development Research Group
Program Director: Centre member Nandini Ramanujam.
Researchers and collaborators: Nicholas Caivano, James Burman, and Stephanie Chow

The Rule of Law and Economic Development Research Group (ROLED) brings together international and Canadian researchers and thinkers interested in the links between rule of law and economic development.

In 2015, ROLED published a new article in JSRLP Online related to its latest research axis on food security in developing contexts. The paper is authored by Nandini Ramanujam (Centre Executive Director), Nicholas Caivano (Amnesty International), and Semahagn Abebe (former Centre Visiting Fellow, now of the University of Connecticut): “From Justiciability to Justice: Realizing the Human Right to Food”.

Nandini Ramanujam also presented a paper, “A dignity based approach to food security: Comparative Perspectives from India and China”, at a conference in Beijing in September 5-6, 2015 to celebrate the 800th anniversary of the Magna Carta, “The Past, Present and the Future of the Rule of Law”. The paper has been accepted for publication in the English language journal of Renmin University, Frontiers of Law. Professor Ramanujam will also be attending the third Asia-Pacific Round Roundtable on Food Safety Governance Roundtable hosted by the East China University of Science and Technology in Shanghai on December 5-6, 2015.

Photo by Olivier Beaubien on his internship in Disability Rights Watch, Lusaka, Zambia.
Economic Justice Working Group
Socio-economic inequality and poverty constitute critical human rights challenges in an increasingly globalized world. Not only does poverty result in tangible, material inequities that affect everyday life, it also undermines human dignity. Individuals and communities marginalized by social exclusion seek greater economic justice as well as political and social recognition and respect as citizens. In the discourse of human rights law, therefore, to address the harm of poverty, it is important to be attentive to the full panoply of civil, political, social, economic and cultural rights. This working group, which includes Centre members Colleen Sheppard, Nandini Ramanujam, Francois Crépeau, Adelle Blackett, Jane M. Glenn, Alana Klein and Catherine Lu, is committed to examining the intersection between socio-economic injustice and human rights. Drawing on interdisciplinary insights, it seeks to re-situate human rights debates about economic justice and the role of law.

Mental Health Information Privacy: Interface with Equality in the Workplace
Researchers: Centre members Derek J. Jones and Colleen Sheppard

Sponsored by the Privacy Commission of Canada and led by Derek J. Jones, this project aims to identify issues and questions, best practices, and standards that can be used in the development of a guidance document for managing mental health information privacy in the workplace. Preliminary results of the research were presented to the Tribunal des droits de la personne du Québec at an educational training seminar on mental health and discrimination at work in February 2014, and the work of the project continues.

Disability and Human Rights Consortium
Centre Liaison: Nandini Ramanujam

Under the stewardship of Open Society Foundation, the Disability and Human Rights Consortium brings together seven institutions, including McGill, that demonstrate cutting edge capacity for legal education in disability rights. Since 2011, the Centre has hosted two LLM students from Southern Africa and South America who are supported by this program and focus their studies on disability law.

The Centre is also leading a project of the Consortium that seeks to establish an open-source research portal on disability and human rights. The portal will serve as a landing page for the Consortium to disseminate research and news about disability rights issues, and will house a searchable database for articles, reports, legal judgments from many jurisdictions, and other resources related to disability and human rights.

Systemic Discrimination: Complexities and Dynamics
This research initiative, led by Centre member Colleen Sheppard, focuses on the problem of effectively identifying and remediying systemic or structural discrimination. Using comparative and interdisciplinary lenses, its primary objectives include: (i) clarifying the conceptual difficulties confronting anti-discrimination law and practice in relation to systemic and structural inequalities; and (ii) elaborating new and creative strategies for, and approaches to identifying and remediying systemic or structural discrimination. The project is closely linked as well to both the Interdisciplinary Network on Discrimination and Inclusion and the Aisenstadt Equality and Community Initiative.
Aisenstadt Equality and Community Initiative
Coordinator: Centre member Colleen Sheppard

The Initiative is aimed at generating insights and new knowledge about inequality and obstacles to effective access to justice within local communities, strengthening the capacity of community-based organizations to identify and contest the systemic and recurrent violations of equality, and promoting transformative human rights education. In 2015, the initiative supported the Disability & Law seminar series, Glenn Coulthard’s book talk, a workshop on systemic discrimination and related work by Research Assistant Anne-Claire Gayet, and the Aboriginal Awareness week event. On November 19, Colleen Sheppard also gave a training workshop for students working with Pro Bono Students Canada.
Evaluating the Transformative Power of Clinical Legal Education in Personal and Professional Development
Principal Investigator: Centre member Nandini Ramanujam

This project aims to fill an empirical void by conducting a comprehensive evaluation of McGill Faculty of Law’s International Human Rights Internship Program (IHRIP), one of the country’s most extensive international field placement programs. The IHRIP promotes comprehensive engagement with human rights approaches through legal and extra-legal strategies by supporting law students to undertake placements with human rights organizations in Canada and abroad. The research will collect data from more than 100 IHRIP alumni on their post-graduation career interests and choices. These findings will be compared to data collected from a control group to draw clear findings on the transformative impact of clinical programs.
International Human Rights Internship Program

The International Human Rights Internship Program provides students with opportunities to serve as global citizens while contributing to important human rights work in the field. Many prospective and present students cite the Internship Program as a factor in their decision to study law at McGill, and the opportunities it affords create a unique and important contribution to our students’ education in human rights.

In the summer of 2015, 24 students participated in the Internship Program. Photographs taken during their placements feature prominently throughout their report.
2015 SUMMER INTERNS

Vallery Bayly – Avocats Sans Frontières, Quebec City
Olivier Beaubien – Disability Rights Watch, Lusaka, Zambia
Michel Bélanger-Roy – Women For A Change, Buea, Cameroon
Dominic Bell – Maliiganik Tukisiiniakvik Legal Services, Iqaluit, Nunavut
Michael Blashko – First Nations Child & Family Caring Society of Canada, Ottawa
Claire K. Boychuk – Disability Rights International, Mexico City, Mexico
Jeansil Bruyère – Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network, Toronto, Canada
Sarah Chênevert-Beaudoin – Conseil National des droits de l’homme, Rabat, Maroc
Victoria Cichalewska – The Canadian Human Rights Foundation (Equitas), Montreal, Canada
Margherita Cinà – Center for Health, Human Rights and Development, Uganda
Jessica De Santi – Mahanirban Calcutta Research Group (CRG), Calcutta, India
Anna Gilmer – Justice Department at the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne, Akwasasne
Humera Jabir – Human Rights Watch, New York City, USA
Kaley Lachapelle – Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Costa Rica
Laura MacLean – One Earth Future Foundation, Colorado, USA
Carly Meredith – Oceans Beyond Piracy, One Earth Future Foundation, Colorado, USA
Broddie Noga – Cambodian League for the Promotion & Defence of Human Rights, Phnom Penh, Cambodia
Maria Rodriguez – Equality Effect, Kenya
Yuan Stevens – The Canadian Human Rights Foundation (Equitas), Montreal, Canada
Frédérique St-Jean – L’organisation Aswat Nissa (Voix de femmes), Tunis, Tunisia
Dan Snyder – Ateneo Centre for Human Rights, Manila, the Philippines
Marilyn Venney – One Earth Future Foundation, Colorado, USA
Max Zidel – Mental Disability Advocacy Centre, Budapest, Hungary

Interns at MDAC in Budapest, summer 2015. Photo courtesy of Max Zidel.
Students receive 6 course credits that require the completion of a 12-week placement with a human rights organization, a report on the placement, and a research paper. Participants also enroll in a corresponding seminar, *Critical Engagement with Discourses of Human Rights*, taught by the Program Director, Nandini Ramanujam. The seminar serves to provide students with a structured and supportive environment in which to reflect on their internship with their peers, and to place their experience within the broader context of critical engagements with human rights law in theory and in practice.

The Centre enjoys collaboration with a wide spectrum of human rights organizations, and we are pleased to be offering four new internships for 2016:

- **Canadian Civil Liberties Association/Association canadienne des libertés civiles** – Toronto, Canada
- **Yukon Human Rights Commission** – Whitehorse, Yukon Territory
- **Instituto de Derechos Humanos y Democracia, Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú** – Magdalena, Peru
- **Law Reform & Development Commission** – Windhoek, Namibia

**International Human Rights Internship Program Working Paper Series**

The Centre’s Working Paper Series enables the dissemination of papers by students who have participated in the International Human Rights Internship Program. Students enroll in the seminar *Critical Engagement with Discourses of Human Rights* seminar that allows them to write a research paper through a peer review and support process. The papers in this series are intended to showcase and disseminate original and innovative scholarship by our student interns, as well as to elicit feedback and encourage debate on important public policy challenges.
**International Clerkships**

McGill is the only Canadian university invited to send candidates to the Judicial Assistants Programme of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA). (The only other universities invited to do so are New York University, Columbia, Yale, Michigan, Geneva and Strasbourg.) The Centre is the Faculty’s representative to these international courts and selects a shortlist of law students to forward to each court for consideration. In 2015, Jessica Joly Hébert was selected to clerk at the ICJ and Rana Hatata was selected to clerk at the PCA for the 2014-2015 program. The program is supported by the Ministère des Relations internationales du Québec.

**Program in Global Governance**

Based at the Institute for the Study of International Development (ISID) in the Faculty of Arts, the Program in Global Governance is a collaborative effort with the CHRLP at the Faculty of Law. The Program welcomes Professors of Practice in Global Governance, including Stephen Lewis who has delivered the Wallenberg Human Rights Lecture at the Centre. As part of the program, the Centre has organized three student human rights internships with the One Earth Future (OEF) Foundation, a non-profit organization in Colorado, which aspires to develop effective systems of governance to achieve a world beyond war.
LOOKING FORWARD TO 2016

As the incoming Director, I can take very little credit for what appears in this report, but I am very well-positioned to pay tribute to the extraordinary leaders of the Centre in its first decade, my predecessor Directors René Provost and Colleen Sheppard, and the Executive Director Nandini Ramanujam. We are reaping the benefits of the hard work that they have done in establishing firm and credible intellectual roots, a clear vision, and a sense of purpose in what is a crowded field. Through their creativity, moral fibre and intellectual strength, they have established the Centre as a leading hub of innovation in research, teaching and public dialogue.

This Annual Report confirms that 2015 has been our busiest year yet. Far from resting on our laurels, 2016 looks to be even busier. In the winter term, we expect to have as many as six O’Brien Scholars in Residence, bringing with them a wide range of interests and hailing from different corners of the globe: Syria, South Africa, England, Italy, Pakistan, and Canada. In March, the Centre will be convening what promises to be an innovative conference on aboriginal justice in Canada. In June, the Centre will be hosting the Scholars at Risk Network as they convene their Global Congress. Throughout 2016, we will continue to convene our anniversary Dialogue Series. And we have already been inundated with requests from scholars and partners who would like to work with us in the fall term and beyond.

As I begin my Directorship, I will focus on building on and expanding the Centre’s partnerships. With my tenure, the Centre’s relationship with the Hans and Tamar Oppenheimer Chair in Public International Law obviously deepens, but our focus does not narrow. Indeed, in this academic year, we have endeavoured to magnify the scope of our work in the field of aboriginal law in particular, in line with the Calls to Action from the Final Report of the Truth & Reconciliation Commission. In this and in all of our efforts, we are looking to expand our relationships with relevant student groups, chair-holders, research centres and civil society organisations, both throughout the university and around the world. We shall also strive to reinforce our relationships with our philanthropic partners, and create new ones.

In all of these discussions and activities, what the Centre brings to the table is clearer and more substantial than it ever has been, and I will represent the Centre with unabashed pride.

François Crépeau
Centre Director
McGill Centre for Human Rights and Legal Pluralism

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This report has been prepared by the staff of the Centre, and particularly Valentine Fau, Sharon Webb, and Marika Giles Samson. The original design of this report was done by Nicholas Caivano in 2014, and substantial editorial assistance and illumination were provided by Nandini Ramanujam and Colleen Sheppard.

Back cover photo Laura MacLean, summer intern at One Earth Future Foundation, Colorado