



McGill

O'BRIEN GRADUATE FELLOWS
AND FELLOWS IN RESIDENCE

2006-2015

A special report prepared for

Mr. David P. O'Brien, OC
BCL'65



McGill Centre for
Human Rights
and Legal Pluralism



Centre sur les droits
de la personne et le
pluralisme juridique
de McGill

McGill Centre for Human Rights and Legal Pluralism

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

O'Brien Graduate Fellows and Fellows in Residence Programs

The O'Brien Graduate Fellowships were established in 2005 for outstanding graduate students studying in the area of human rights and legal pluralism. The Fellowship is awarded annually by the Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies Office upon recommendation of the Faculty of Law.

www.mcgill.ca/humanrights/obrien/grad-fellowships

The O'Brien Fellows in Residence program, established in 2011, aims to provide opportunities for human rights professionals to visit and contribute to the Centre. The program is meant to enrich the intellectual life at the Centre and serve as a professional development opportunity for the Fellows.

www.mcgill.ca/humanrights/obrien/fellows-residence



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INTRODUCTION

McGill Centre for Human Rights and Legal Pluralism

The McGill Centre for Human Rights and Legal Pluralism's ambitious mission includes the advancement of innovative research on human rights and the role of law in a legally plural world. Thanks to your enormous generosity in creating the *O'Brien Fellowships for Human Rights and Legal Pluralism* and the *O'Brien Human Rights Fellows in Residence Program*, the Centre has been able to host a remarkable group of legal experts whose presence has made an invaluable contribution to the Centre.

The programs you have funded have provided vital support and encouragement to 37 Fellows who in turn have strengthened the intellectual community nurtured by the Centre, contributed to the debates it fosters, energized the Centre's members, and served as a model for McGill students both in the Faculty of Law and beyond.

The McGill Centre for Human Rights and Legal Pluralism provides the institutional home and the core intellectual community for all O'Brien Fellows, whether they are Graduate Fellows or Fellows in Residence. While the core membership of the Centre is drawn from the faculty of McGill University, the O'Brien Program has played a key role in connecting the Centre to the larger human rights community, keeping us on our intellectual toes by introducing new ideas and inspiration, and providing rich opportunities for collaboration.

In 2015, the McGill Centre for Human Rights and Legal Pluralism celebrated its 10th anniversary, and had one of its busiest years yet. We hosted 29 events that ranged from large, two-day conferences to smaller, intimate roundtables. Through our working groups and seminar series, we continue to develop the Centre's approach on key themes, while remaining nimble enough to lead the conversation on emerging issues, such as the Syrian refugee crisis and the repercussions of the Final Report of Canada's Truth & Reconciliation Commission.

Moreover, in 2015, the Centre welcomed its third Director, Professor François Crépeau, whose scholarship and dedication to human rights is longstanding and internationally recognized. In addition to holding the Oppenheimer Chair in Public International Law at the Faculty of Law, and being recognized as an Advocate Emeritus by the Barreau du Québec, François is the current United Nations Special Rapporteur for the Human Rights of Migrants.

François takes over the Directorship of the Centre from Professor Colleen Sheppard who, after five years heading the Centre, was awarded in 2015 a five-year SSHRC grant to study the complexities and dynamics of systemic discrimination. Colleen, in turn, succeeded Founding Director Professor René Provost, who in 2015 was awarded a prestigious Trudeau Fellowship to pursue his research on whether, and how, insurgent groups might enforce humanitarian law. With academic work of this calibre coming out of the Centre, it is little wonder that the O'Brien program has attracted the most extraordinary people to join the Centre, as will be evident in the next few pages.

We are delighted to share with you a 10-year retrospective report on the impact of your giving to the McGill Centre for Human Rights and Legal Pluralism through the *O'Brien Human Rights Fellows in Residence Program* and the *O'Brien Fellowships for Human Rights and Legal Pluralism*.



WORDS OF APPRECIATION

Dear Mr. O'Brien,

Your continuous and generous support of the Centre for Human Rights and Legal Pluralism, since its inception, has played a pivotal role in realizing the Centre's aspiration of fostering a diverse and international community of human rights professionals.

Since 2006, the O'Brien Graduate Fellowships Program has brought to us outstanding Doctoral and Master's students from different corners of the world. The O'Brien Graduate Fellowships have allowed young and talented individuals from Bangladesh, Eritrea, Panama, Iran, and many other countries of the global South to engage with cutting edge human rights themes in an internationally acclaimed Law Faculty. These awards also facilitate the meeting of minds and ideas leading to collaborative projects among Fellows and Centre members.

Upon graduation, the Fellows have continued their engagement with human rights in the Canadian and international academy and international organizations such as the United Nations. The founder of the Analitika Center for Social Research in Sarajevo, for example, proudly bears an affiliation with the O'Brien Fellowship alumni network. In our 10th anniversary year, we have an already impressive alumni network, which continues to grow.

The commitment and efforts of the Centre to internationalize and diversify its community were reaffirmed through the launch of the O'Brien Fellows in Residence Program in 2011. This innovative and flexible program has allowed the Centre to welcome human rights activists, advocates, and professionals from places near and far. The Fellows in Residence Program has brought new voices and rich perspectives on human rights issues to the Centre, the Faculty, and the University. In collaboration with the Scholars at Risk Network, the Fellows Program has also allowed the Centre to provide a safe haven for scholars fleeing state persecution. Fellows and faculty alike benefit from the many formal and informal opportunities afforded by these residencies.

The two O'Brien Programs have become an important conduit for bringing new expertise and new knowledge on global human rights challenges to the Faculty of Law. The Fellows, through their active engagement, richly contribute to the teaching, research, and community outreach agendas of the Centre, the Faculty, and McGill University.

As we celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Centre, we also celebrate our O'Brien Fellows across the world for their continuing engagement with the promotion and protection of human rights. We thank our Fellows for putting the Centre on the global map and connecting us to important local, regional, and international human rights networks. And we thank you, Mr. O'Brien, for your vision and commitment to support these important initiatives, which have made the Centre a hub for conversations and collaborations on the pressing human rights challenges of the 21st century.

Nandini Ramanujam

O'Brien Program Director

François Crépeau

Centre for Human Rights and Legal Pluralism Director

Sharon Webb

O'Brien Program Administrator



THE O'BRIEN TEAM



Nandini Ramanujam, Program Director

Dr. Nandini Ramanujam is an Associate Professor (Professional) in the Faculty of Law, and has been the Executive Director and Director of Programs at the Centre since its founding in 2005. In that time, the Centre has grown from a passion project into an interdisciplinary social justice powerhouse in the university, the city, and the world. And Nandini does not just lead the Centre, she embodies it: in announcing in April 2016 that Nandini was being awarded the McGill Award for Equity and Community Building, Dean Daniel Jutras noted that “the University recognizes Nandini’s exceptional contributions over the past decade, her quiet leadership within the Centre for Human Rights and Legal Pluralism, her extraordinary skill in mentoring students – who describe their encounter with Nandini as “a transformative experience” – and her ability to build bridges between students, faculty members, and multiple social justice community organizations.” Nandini is a peerless leader for the Centre, the Program, and a wonderful primary contact for all O’Brien Fellows.

Sharon Webb, Program Administrator

Since being hired to support the Centre’s programs and activities in 2012, the O’Brien Program has been a labour of love for Sharon Webb, who has been tireless in her efforts both logistically (arranging visas, travel, accommodation, and all matters administrative) and intellectually (brainstorming new ways for Fellows to present their work and interact with the Centre community). Sharon has diligently supported Fellows before, during, and after their residencies, and her degree in English and eye for detail have even been to be put to good use to provide editorial support to Fellows. Sharon’s apparently limitless reserves of dedication, energy, and ingenuity are inspired, according to her, by the remarkable people that she has the privilege of meeting and working with at the Centre, not least the extraordinary O’Brien Fellows.

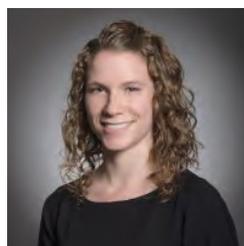


Program Student Coordinators

The Program Student Coordinator is the first person to welcome incoming Fellows in Residence and acts as the primary on-site host, giving tours, making introductions, and attending social functions and talks. In doing so, the student coordinator meets and works with these extraordinary scholars and activists, and participates in events and activities intended to showcase the Fellows’ research and deepen their local engagement, thereby enriching the student’s academic and professional network.



Kirby Smith
2011-2013
BCL/LLB 2013



Claire Gunner
2013-2015
BCL/LLB 2015



Alizeh Ladak
2015-present
BCL/LLB 2017
(anticipated)



THE O'BRIEN FELLOWS: 2006-2015

The *O'Brien Human Rights Fellows in Residence Program*, established in 2011, aims to provide opportunities for human rights professionals to visit and contribute to the Centre. The program is meant to enrich the intellectual life at the Centre and serve as a professional development opportunity for the Fellows.

The *O'Brien Fellowships for Human Rights and Legal Pluralism* were established in 2005 for outstanding graduate students studying in the area of human rights and legal pluralism. The Fellowship is awarded annually by the Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies Office upon recommendation of the Faculty of Law.

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FELLOWS IN RESIDENCE
since 2012

Esmeralda Thornhill
Anthony Fernando
Jeffrey Khan
Anne-Marie Cotter
Semahagn Abebe
Dzodzi Tsikata
Annyssa Bellal
Noam Schimmel
Charles Ngwena
Zoneziwoh Mbondgulo Wondieh
Destaw Andargie Yigzaw
Johann van der Westhuizen
Oren Perez
Laurel Weldon
Pranoto Iskandar
Tanya Monforte

21
GRADUATE FELLOWS
since 2006

Maureen T. Duffy
Futsum Tesfatsion Abbay
Carlos Iván Fuentes
Edin Hodžić
Salma Sharifi Khajedehe
Jing Guan
Kate Glover
Amar Khoday
John Hursh
Bethany Hastie
Bekithemba Mlauzi
Claris Harbon
Róisín Hennessy
Sabaa Khan
Marika Giles Samson
Shimelis Mulugeta Kene
Alvaro R. Córdova Flores
Vanessa Clermont-Isabelle
Rokeya Chowdhury
Bwighane Mwenifumbo
Muhammad Rezaur Rahman



O'BRIEN FELLOWS IN RESIDENCE

Professor Esmeralda MA Thornhill

Inaugural O'Brien Fellow in Residence - Law Professor, Schulich School of Law, Dalhousie University

Dates of Fellowship: October-November 2012

Country of Origin: Canada

Professor Thornhill has researched, written, and lectured widely on the "material reality" of racism in law, education, and public services to legal, academic, government, public, and grassroots audiences.

Highlights of the Fellowship

- Support from CHRLP and the Faculty
- Giving the Annie MacDonald Langstaff public lecture
- 15th anniversary R v. RDS seminar
- Meeting with and advising O'Brien Graduate Fellows

Accomplishments while at CHRLP

- Worked on a research project that consisted of refining for publication both a study on the Fundamentals of Racism and a Compendium of 'Race' and Law in Canada

Teaching & Public Engagement

- Gave a talk on "Race Literacy and the Legal Profession: An Ethical Imperative for Cap, Bar and Bench"

After the Fellowship

- First James Robinson Johnston Endowed Chair in Black Canadian Studies, Schulich School of Law, Dalhousie University
- Research Associate with the Simone de Beauvoir Institute, Concordia University (July-Dec 2015)



"The O'Brien Fellowship in Residence represents a mother-lode of un-mined potential, and the Law Faculty and McGill University will be the definitive beneficiaries of such progressive initiatives."



Justice Anthony Fernando

Justice of the Court of Appeal of The Seychelles

Dates of Fellowship: January-March 2013

Country of Origin: The Seychelles

Anthony Francis Tissa Fernando is a Justice of Appeal of the Court of Appeal of The Seychelles, the final appellate court of that republic. Prior to his appointment to the bench in January 2009, he was the Attorney General of the Seychelles from January 1999 to December 2008.

Highlights of the Fellowship

- Benefiting from the invaluable advice of the late Professor Roderick Macdonald and applying it in a workshop on 'The Importance of the Separation of Powers: The Impeachment of Sri Lanka's Chief Justice'
- The experience helped bring a clearer human rights perspective for him as a Justice of Appeal

Accomplishments while at CHRLP

- Wrote a paper examining the Constitution of Sri Lanka, including a comparative study of the impeachment procedures for judges in other countries
- His experience during the Fellowship term has helped shaped lectures that he has delivered for the post-graduate diploma in Legal Practice at the University of Seychelles and for the Masters in Social Leadership at the National University of Ireland

Teaching & Public Engagement

- Gave guest lectures in several classes on the fundamental components for the protection of human rights: rule of law, doctrine of separation of powers, independence of the judiciary

After the Fellowship

- Appointed Chairman of the Judicial College of Seychelles in October 2013 and the Chairman of the Sentencing Guidelines Committee in February 2015
- Appointed to the Fijian bench in 2015



"I am very grateful to Mr. David O'Brien, the benefactor of the O'Brien Fellowship in Residence program, and the Centre for Human Rights and Legal Pluralism for affording me this opportunity in the cause of human rights."



O'BRIEN FELLOWS IN RESIDENCE

Professor Jeffrey Kahn

Professor of Constitutional and Administrative Law, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, TX

Dates of Fellowship: September-December 2013

Country of Origin: United States

Jeffrey Kahn joined the SMU Law Faculty in Fall 2006, where he teaches and writes on American constitutional law, Russian law, human rights, and national security law. His work on Russian law has been noted by name by the editors of the *New York Times* and published in various law reviews as well as the peer-reviewed *Post-Soviet Affairs* and the *Review of Central and East European Law*. His latest research has focused primarily on the influence in Russia of the European Convention on Human Rights. Professor Kahn is also a founding member of the Advisory Board for the SMU Embrey Human Rights Education Program.

Highlights of the Fellowship

- Fruitful discussions with various members of the McGill Law faculty
- Serendipitous interactions with visitors from other universities

Accomplishments while at CHRLP

- Submitted an essay to the President of the American Bar Association for publication: "The Law is a Causeway: Metaphor and the Rule of Law in Russia", in J.R. Silkenat et al. (eds.), *The Legal Doctrines of the Rule of Law and the Legal State (Rechtsstaat)*, *Ius Gentium: Comparative Perspectives on Law and Justice* 38 (2014)
- Conducted research for a textbook he is co-authoring on U.S. national security law
- Advised O'Brien Graduate Fellows, particularly on the human rights situation in Russia
- Served as an expert witness in *Ibrahim v Dep't of Homeland Security*, the first case challenging the constitutionality of no-fly lists to be tried in the U.S.

Teaching & Public Engagement

- Guest lectured in Critical Engagements with Human Rights (convened by Professor Nandini Ramanujam) on the relationship between fighting corruption and building the rule of law
- Also lectured on freedom of movement and the use of terrorist watch lists (such as the U.S. 'No Fly List') in Centre Member Pearl Eliadis' Civil Liberties class

After the Fellowship

- Returned to his faculty position at SMU Dedman School of Law, where he is a very popular teacher, and where he continues to pursue his research. Professor Kahn frequently presents his research in the U.S. and internationally and he writes prolifically, including for leading blogs and the popular press.



"It gives me great pleasure to report that I can think of no place where I could have found a better academic environment more conducive to productive work, or a friendlier atmosphere in which to engage in that work."



O'BRIEN FELLOWS IN RESIDENCE

Dr. Anne-Marie Cotter

Member (Administrative Law Judge), Veterans Review Tribunal

Dates of Fellowship: September 2013-February 2014

Country of Origin: Canada

Dr. Anne-Marie Mooney Cotter, Esq., earned her Bachelor's degree from McGill University at age 18, her J.D. law degree from Howard University School of Law (one of the leading civil rights institutions in the U.S.), and her Ph.D. from Concordia University, where she specialized in Political Economy and International Law, particularly focusing on the issue of equality. She has written widely on various aspects of inequality and the law from an international perspective.

Highlights of the Fellowship

- Co-writing with colleagues at McGill

Accomplishments while at CHRLP

- Collaborated with O'Brien alumnus Futsum Abbay in convening the Disability and the Law reading group
- Wrote 2 legal articles for publication
- Furthered her work on 2 legal books

Teaching & Public Engagement

- Acted as a panelist on disability rights at a Disability and the Law seminar
- Acted as Discussant for the Disability and the Law reading group

After the Fellowship

- In 2015, Dr. Cotter was hired as a Professor at the College of Law, University of Saskatchewan, where she teaches Comparative Human Rights Law
- In 2016, Dr. Cotter will be facilitating a Conference on International Employment and Human Rights Law at the University of Saskatchewan

Has written two books soon to be published: *Humanity – International Comparative Legal Analysis of Human Rights Law* (due 2016); and *Refuge - An International Legal Analysis of Immigration/Refugee Issues* (due 2016).



"I was fortunate to be chosen as an O'Brien fellow... to meet and work with leaders in their field. It has been a most wonderful experience being a Fellow at McGill."



O'BRIEN FELLOWS IN RESIDENCE

Dr. Semahagn G. Abebe

First member of the Scholars At Risk (SAR) Network to be hosted by McGill

Dates of Fellowship: September 2013-May 2014

Country of Origin: Ethiopia

Semahagn Abebe earned a LLM degree in International Economic Law and Human Rights Law from the University of Amsterdam and a LLM and PhD at the University of Goettingen. Dr. Abebe was formerly a lecturer of law at different universities in Ethiopia. Prior to coming to McGill, he was a Bank of Ireland post-doctoral fellow at the Irish Centre for Human Rights, National University of Ireland, Galway (2012-2013). He writes on a range of issues including financial sector liberalization under the World Trade Organization and the implications to the African financial sector, the opportunities, and challenges of adopting ethnic federal systems in sub-Saharan Africa, traditional institutions and legal pluralism in Africa, as well as the human rights implications of land grab in Africa.

Highlights of the Fellowship

- Bringing awareness to the work of Scholars at Risk and the challenges they face in their home countries
- Developing and teaching a course to undergraduate and graduate students
- Was featured in articles in both McGill Law's online magazine *Focus* (January 2014) and the *McGill Reporter*

Accomplishments while at CHRLP

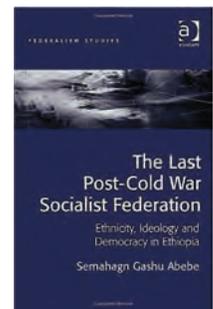
- In collaboration with Nandini Ramanujam and Nicholas Caivano, researched and prepared a paper on "The Human Right to Food in India and Ethiopia: A Justice-Based Approach to Food Security in Developing Contexts"
- Revised and published his thesis "The Last Post-Cold War Socialist Federation: Ethnicity, Ideology and Democracy in Ethiopia" (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2014)

Teaching & Public Engagement

- Taught a full-term course in Governance and Development in sub-Saharan Africa
- Co-organized and presented on a panel on Large-scale Land Acquisitions and Human Rights in the Developing World

After the Fellowship

- Engaged as a Visiting Professor at the Human Rights Institute of the University of Connecticut and, most recently, Endicott College in Massachusetts



"My O'Brien fellowship was one of the most productive experiences in my academic career. The experience I got at McGill significantly contributed to my current opportunity as a visiting professor at the Human Rights Institute of the University of Connecticut. I am very grateful for the O'Brien fellowship program, CHRLP and Faculty of Law for the unique research and teaching opportunity I got at one of the finest educational institutions!"



O'BRIEN FELLOWS IN RESIDENCE

Professor Dzodzi Tsikata

Associate Professor, Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research, University of Ghana

Dates of Fellowship: February-May 2014

Country of Origin: Ghana

Dzodzi Tsikata is Associate Professor at the Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research (ISSER) at the University of Ghana. Her research is in the areas of informal labour relations and the conditions of informal workers, particularly domestic workers; gender and development policies and practices; large-scale commercial land deals and the livelihoods of smallholders.

Highlights of the Fellowship

- Opportunity to reflect on research with scholars working on broadly similar issues in different regions of the world
- Working in close proximity to the Labour Law and Development Research Network (coordinated by Centre Member Professor Adelle Blackett)
- Access to the most recent human rights literature at the McGill Law Library

Accomplishments while at CHRLP

- Completed a book chapter on "Employer Perspectives on Domestic Work in Ghana"
- Completed a working paper on 'Social Relations of Agrarian Change'

Teaching & Public Engagement

- "Gender, Land and Food Security" at Centre Interdisciplinaire de Recherche en Développement International et Société (CIRDIS), UQAM
- "Regulating Domestic Work in an Informal Economy" at Inter-university Research Centre on Globalization and Work (CRIMT), Université de Montréal

After the Fellowship

- Elected President of the Council for the Development of Social Science Research In Africa (CODESRIA). CODESRIA is recognized as the pioneer African social research organization and the apex non-governmental centre of social knowledge production on the continent.



"The O'Brien Fellowship... helped me to consolidate embryonic relationships with a range of legal scholars and other social scientists at McGill and at UQAM and beyond. These have laid the foundation for future research collaborations with several important knowledge networks which will support my progression as a scholar but also my contribution to improvements in the regulation of informal work in Ghana."



O'BRIEN FELLOWS IN RESIDENCE

Dr. Annyssa Bellal

Human Rights Officer and Legal Advisor, Rule of Law and Democracy Section, United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

Dates of Fellowship: March-July 2014

Country of Origin: Switzerland

Dr. Annyssa Bellal is an international lawyer, specialized in international humanitarian law, human rights law, and criminal law. She received her PhD in public international law from the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies (Switzerland) and an LLM in Philosophy of Law and History of Human Rights from the University of Lyon and Grenoble (France). She also holds a Master of Advanced Studies in International Relations and an MA in Law from the University of Geneva.

Highlights of the Fellowship

- Having time dedicated to research
- Participating in the Centre's activities with Faculty members and other fellows
- Living in Montreal

Accomplishments while at CHRLP

- Wrote three articles that were subsequently published. This will help her with her professional goal of becoming a permanent faculty member at the University of Geneva
- Chaired a panel on Re-evaluating Rights at the annual 2014 McGill Graduate Law Students' Conference
- Edited an annual report on armed conflicts around the world in association with the Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights (Oxford University Press, 2016)



After the Fellowship

- Legal Advisor for Geneva Call (humanitarian NGO based in Geneva)
- Lecturer at SciencesPo, Paris School of International Affairs



"I wish to thank Mr. O'Brien and the McGill Centre for giving me this opportunity, which has proven to be an important and invaluable experience and addition to my career."



O'BRIEN FELLOWS IN RESIDENCE

Dr. Noam Schimmel

Dates of Fellowship: July 2014; September-December 2014

Country of Origin: United States

Holding a PhD in Media and Communication, Noam's particular interests are in the ethical dimensions of human rights law, the politics of human rights and humanitarian aid, and the role of rhetoric and communication in both advancing and limiting human rights. He has also done considerable work on restorative justice post-mass atrocity.

Highlights of the Fellowship

- The collegiality of the Faculty and integration of Fellows into its seminars and programs
- Excellent library resources
- Informal gatherings that fostered intellectual discussion as well as friendships

Accomplishments while at CHRLP

- Presented a paper at a graduate student day
- Conference advisor for the McGill's Annual Graduate Conference in Law
- Substantive and substantial research, resulting in 3 peer-reviewed articles

After the Fellowship

- Visiting Fellow at Kellogg College, University of Oxford for two years where he is continuing his human rights research
- Revising his doctoral dissertation into book form for publication by Palgrave MacMillan and working on several articles
- In 2016, presenting conference papers on human rights in San Diego (March) and in New York City (June)



"It was humbling, inspiring, and energizing to be an O'Brien Fellow. It was also a very special introduction to Canada - and - for this American - the beginning of what I anticipate will be a lifelong relationship of affection, appreciation, and respect for Canada seeded at McGill."



Professor Charles Ngwena

Professor, Centre for Human Rights, University of Pretoria

Dates of Fellowship: September-October 2014

Country of Origin: South Africa

Charles Ngwena, LLB, LLM (Wales), LLD (Free State), Barrister-at-Law, is a Professor in the Centre for Human Rights, University of Pretoria, South Africa. He has published widely on issues at the intersection between human rights and health care, including HIV/AIDS and reproductive and sexual health with a focus on the African region. He also writes on disability rights.

Highlights of the Fellowship

- Participating in the Disability Seminar Series
- Sharing expertise with other fellows, students and the broader Montreal community
- Profiting from the excellent library facilities (best human rights collection he has ever seen) and administrative support

Accomplishments while at CHRLP

- Advanced his own research
- Explored and reflected on institutional academic collaboration in the areas of research and teaching

Teaching & Public Engagement

- Panel member on disability rights at the September 2014 Disability & the Law seminar
- Guest lectured in Professor Colleen Sheppard's Constitutional Law class

After the Fellowship

- Co-edited a book with future O'Brien Fellow Ebenezer Durojaye titled *Strengthening Sexual and Reproductive Rights in the African Region Through Human Rights*
- Panelist at a joint publication launch by the O'Neil Institute for National and Global Health Law and Women's Link Worldwide



"My visit to the Centre for Human Rights and Legal Pluralism of McGill University in September of 2014 was fruitful in all respects. Indeed, it more than met my expectations."



O'BRIEN FELLOWS IN RESIDENCE

Zoneziwoh Mbonggulo Wondieh

Executive Director, Women For A Change Cameroon (WFAC) - a young feminist group working for the promotion of women and adolescent sexual and reproductive health rights, leadership and development

Dates of Fellowship: September-December 2014

Country of Origin: Cameroon

R. Zoneziwoh Mbonggulo Wondieh is a feminist activist, an award-winning humanitarian storyteller and blogger, with over five years of experience in gender activism, policy advocacy and youth leadership.

Highlights of the Fellowship

- Through the McGill Library system, having access to a vast number of journals and publications not accessible all over the world
- Tools available for research
- Encountering the McGill Institute for Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies

Accomplishments while at CHRLP

- Sat on a panel discussion on ending Child, Early and Forced Marriage at the U.N. head office in New York
- Sat on selection committee of Echenberg International Young Leaders Forum
- Broadened understanding and knowledge around human rights instruments and how grassroots activists and researchers can effectively use it to influence policy and drive change

After the Fellowship

- In Summer 2015, a McGill law student was sent to work as an intern at Women For A Change, Cameroon (WFAC)



"Being a McGill O'Brien fellow meant so much to both my professional and personal life. ... The resources have helped sharpen my thinking and view around human rights discourses. I really learned so much on how issues around Early, Child and Forced Marriage have been addressed in developing nations and the lessons to learn as someone working towards ending this practice in Cameroon."



O'BRIEN FELLOWS IN RESIDENCE

Dr. Destaw Andargie Yigzaw

Second Scholar at Risk to be hosted by Centre

Former Head of the Human Rights Monitoring and Research Department in the former Ethiopian Human Rights Council

Dates of Fellowship: January-February 2015

Country of Origin: Ethiopia

Dr. Destaw Yigzaw received his LLM in International Business and Economic Law and his LLD from Kyushu University. He also holds an LLM in Comparative Constitutional Law from Central European University.

Dr. Yigzaw was a member of the full time faculty at the School of Law and International Studies of Unity University in Ethiopia, where he taught human rights law and 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.

Highlights of the Fellowship

- Access to vast library collections
- Highly supportive peers at the Centre

Accomplishments while at CHRLP

- Finished a paper entitled "Hierarchy of Norms: The Case for the Primacy of Human Rights" which was subsequently published

After the Fellowship

- During his Fellowship at the CHRLP, Destaw received an offer for a permanent teaching position. Although sorry to cut short his residency at McGill, after years of exile from Ethiopia and no stable work, he happily accepted a position as Lecturer in Law at RMIT Vietnam where he remains, and confides: "I couldn't be happier."



"I am sincerely grateful to [have been] here at McGill, and will always be grateful for the opportunity, for your patience and your kindness... My time at McGill as an O'Brien Fellow was a short, but a wonderful and productive one."



Justice Johann van der Westhuizen

Judge, Constitutional Court of South Africa

Co-drafter of the post-apartheid South African Constitution

Dates of Fellowship: March 2015

Country of Origin: 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.

Highlights of the Fellowship

- Lunch with the justices of the Supreme Court of Canada in Ottawa
- Visit to the Quebec Court of Appeal

Accomplishments while at CHRLP

- Sharing experiences, meeting and discussing with faculty members, students and judges

Teaching & Public Engagement

- Gave two guest lectures in Constitutional Law (for Professors Vrinda Narain, and Colleen Sheppard & Robert Leckey)
- Gave a guest lecture in Professor François Crépeau's International Migration course

After the Fellowship

- His 12-year term on the Constitutional Court ended in January 2016
- Currently designing an elective course for LLB students, "Practising Human Rights in Law and Life", for possible implementation at the University of Pretoria
- In discussions about, and "would very favourably consider", future opportunities for a longer stay with the Centre and/or the Faculty of Law



"My time at McGill in March 2015 was, quite simply, one of the highlights of my professional and academic year. Perhaps it was the highlight.

... Lunch with Supreme Court of Canada Chief Justice Beverley McLachlin and all her colleagues, in Ottawa on 20 March, was not only a huge honour for me, but intensely enjoyable."



O'BRIEN FELLOWS IN RESIDENCE

Professor Oren Perez

Professor of Law, Bar-Ilan University, Israel

Specialist in the fields of Environmental Regulation, Transnational Law, Legal Theory and E-democracy

Dates of Fellowship: March - April 2015

Country of Origin: Israel

Oren Perez has an LLB (Magna Cum Laude) from Tel Aviv University and LLM (1997), PhD (2001) from London School of Economics and Political Science. He primarily works in the fields of Environmental Regulation, Transnational Law, Legal Theory and E-democracy. A recognized expert in legal pluralism, included among Professor Perez's most recent publications are "How Law Changes the Environmental Mind: An Experimental Study of the Effect of Legal Norms on Moral Perceptions and Civic Enforcement" (2009) (with Y. Feldman); "How Global Norms Reshape the Administrative State" (2013) (with Daphne Barak-Erez); and "Courage, Regulatory Responsibility, and the Challenge of Higher-Order Reflexivity, Regulation and Governance" (2014).

Highlights of the Fellowship

- Interacting with doctoral students

Accomplishments while at CHRLP

- Worked on a new paper that develops a pluralistic understanding of soft law (forthcoming in the *Canadian Journal of Law and Jurisprudence*)
- Presented a seminar on legal pluralism that was the capstone for a semester-long Reading Group on Legal Pluralism convened by O'Brien Graduate Fellow Rokeya Chowdhury
- Gave a very well-received workshop on "How to Publish: A Workshop for Graduate Students" to the Faculty's DCL students

Teaching & Public Engagement

- Presentation of his paper "The Green Economy Paradox: A Critical Inquiry into Sustainable Indexes"

After the Fellowship

- Attended a conference at Oxford
- Continues to teach and research in the Faculty of Law, Bar-Ilan University, in the areas of empirical legal studies; paradoxes and absurdity in law; globalization and the law; and regulation, politics, and environment.
- Published an article in the *European Journal of International Law*: "The hybrid legal-scientific dynamic of transnational scientific institutions"
- Published two book chapters: "The Administrative State Goes Global (2015)" and "Can Experts be Trusted and What Can Be Done about it? Insights from the Biases and Heuristics Literature "(2015)



"My O'Brien Fellowship in Residence at McGill enabled me to work on a new paper that develops a pluralistic understanding of soft law."



O'BRIEN FELLOWS IN RESIDENCE

Pranoto Iskandar

Founding Director, Institute for Migrant Rights

Editor of the *Indonesian Journal of International & Comparative Law*

Dates of Fellowship: September -December 2015

Country of Origin: Indonesia

Pranoto Iskandar is 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. His most recent publishing initiative through the Institute is *The Indonesian Journal of International & Comparative Law*. The Institute has been noted as the first of its kind and marked a substantial progress in Indonesia's non governmental sector. Also, he serves on the editorial board of the *International Journal of Migration and Border Studies*.

Highlights of the Fellowship

- Benefited from various engagement with many outstanding scholarly minds at McGill
- Shared this adventure with two extraordinary scholars as co-O'Brien Fellows
- Benefited from substantial editorial assistance provided by O'Brien Fellow Tanya Montforte, Program Administrator Sharon Webb, and Centre Director Professor François Crépeau

Accomplishments while at CHRLP

- Finished three articles: on the human rights regional mechanism in Southeast Asia; on the possibility for further entrenchment of international and foreign norms in Indonesia's nationalistic legal system; and on a new reading in Indonesia's fascist-leaning constitution in a way that support the acceptance of international human rights
- Wrote an op-ed with Professor François Crépeau in commemoration of International Migrants Day

Teaching & Public Engagement

- Public presentation on "Engaging Moral Business Amidst Uncertainties: Fostering Democracy in the New Indonesia"
- Gave a talk entitled "Start Accepting Rohingya as ASEAN's Problem", at the Governing Migration from the Margin Workshop, Waterloo

After the Fellowship

- Work for the development of Border(land)s and Migration Studies Online, a database documenting the current immigration, law enforcement, and regulations debates
- Ongoing discussions with Centre member Professor Frédéric Mégret about a possible book-length project on national identity as a limit for human rights entitlement from a comparative perspective



"The vibrant scholarly community has allowed me to gain some indispensable insights that eventually enrich my own perspective. Most importantly, this residency provides me an opportunity to take my previous ideas to a higher level."



O'BRIEN FELLOWS IN RESIDENCE

Professor S. Laurel Weldon

Professor of Political Science

Founding Director, Center for Research on Diversity and Inclusion, Purdue University, Indiana, USA

Dates of Fellowship: September 2015 - January 2016

Country of Origin: United States

Professor Weldon's 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. Weldon is the author of more than two dozen articles and book chapters as well as two books, *When Protest Makes Policy: How Social Movements Represent Disadvantaged Groups*, 2011 (which won the Victoria Schuck Award); and *Protest, Policy and the Problem of Violence Against Women*, 2002.

Highlights of the Fellowship

- The lectures and workshops in the Faculty of Law, the Department of Political Science, and in the Montreal academic community more generally

Accomplishments while at CHRLP

- Worked on a book outlining a global analysis of women's rights
- Research on intersectionality, federalism and transnational social movements, and transnational forms of citizenship

Teaching & Public Engagement

- Public lecture on "The Logic of Gender Justice", as part of the Lecture Series convened by the Research Group on Constitutional Studies
- Workshop on "Gender and Federalism", as part of the Working Paper Workshops convened by the Research Group on Constitutional Studies
- Presentation on "Gendered Federal Systems: Informal Institutions, Intersectionality and Change", as part of the Annie MacDonald Langstaff Workshop Series

After the Fellowship

- Continuing to work on projects developed while at McGill
- Will be assuming the Directorship of a Policy Research Institute at Purdue University



"The highlights of my time at McGill included meeting the brilliant McGill undergraduates and law students, and getting to know so many interesting faculty members especially in the political science, philosophy and law faculties."



O'BRIEN FELLOWS IN RESIDENCE

Professor Tanya Monforte

Professor of Law and former Director of the International Human Rights M.A. Program American University in Cairo

Dates of Fellowship: September - December 2015

Country of Origin: United States

Professor Monforte holds a J.D. from Harvard Law School and an M.A. in the Sociology of Law from the Oñati International Institute for the Sociology of Law. She also holds a B.A. in Philosophy and Spanish. She was a Chayes Scholar in Transitional Justice, and a Harvard Human Rights Fellow.

In addition to her leadership in the International Human Rights Program, Professor Monforte also served on the steering committee of the Institute for Gender and Women's Studies at the American University in Cairo. She has been a visiting faculty member at Brown University, Addis Ababa University, and the University of Texas.

Highlights of the Fellowship

- Integrating into a larger intellectual community, benefiting from discussions of her own research as well as the research and work of others
- More pragmatically, having access to the library resources, copy privileges, and a workspace, as well as having an academic affiliation and email address for article submission

Accomplishments while at CHRLP

- Submitted one academic article for publication and worked on a second one
- Wrote four op-eds, three of which were published in the *Huffington Post*
- Served on an interview committee for the selection of students for placement as part of the Centre's International Human Rights Internship Program
- One-on-one advising of undergraduate and graduate students

Teaching & Public Engagement

- Gave guest lectures in two courses: on the law of treaties for International Human Rights Law (Professor Frédéric Mégret); and on the NGO laws in Egypt for the Critical Engagements with Human Rights course (Centre Interim Executive Director, Marika Giles Samson)

After the Fellowship

- Gave a public lecture at the Faculty of Law on "Cultural Pluralism, Gender Equality and Treaty Making: The Case of Shari'a Reservations" as part of the Annie MacDonald Langstaff Lecture Series
- Has decided to pursue doctoral studies and has been accepted into the DCL program in the McGill Faculty of Law



"I believe the O'Brien fellow title was important for getting a foot in the door to begin publishing more popular pieces...I consider this to have been an extremely productive fellowship and I sincerely appreciate having been given the opportunity to be an O'Brien fellow."



PAST GRADUATE FELLOW



MAUREEN T. DUFFY, DCL

DATE OF FELLOWSHIP: 2006-2009

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: United States

SUPERVISOR: René Provost

GRADUATION: 2013

THESIS: Turning the Kaleidoscope: Fractured Narratives and Altered Presumptions in Anti-Terrorism Detention Practices

Maureen Duffy obtained her Juris Doctor degree, cum laude, from the Loyola University Chicago School of Law, after completing a Bachelor of Science degree in Journalism at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. After practicing for several years, Maureen completed her LLM degree, with Dean's Honours, at McGill's Institute of Comparative Law. Her thesis was written under the supervision of Professor Patrick Healy and addressed the use of the immigration system to detain terrorism suspects within the United States. During the LLM program, she worked as a legal researcher in the Special Court for Sierra Leone Clinic.

A recipient of the O'Brien Fellowship for Human Rights and Legal Pluralism and a SSHRC Fellowship, Maureen completed her doctorate in international law under the supervision of Professor René Provost. Her thesis explored shifting presumptions relating to criminal detentions, specifically focusing on these shifts in the context of terrorism detentions. She has diverse research interests, including domestic and international criminal law, constitutional law, human rights, media law, environmental law, and legal pluralism.

AFTER THE FELLOWSHIP

- Maureen was hired as an Assistant Professor at the University of Calgary Faculty of Law, teaching Constitutional Law, Advanced Public Law and International Criminal Law.



PAST GRADUATE FELLOW



FUTSUM TESFATSION ABBAY, DCL

DATE OF FELLOWSHIP: 2007-2009

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: Eritrea

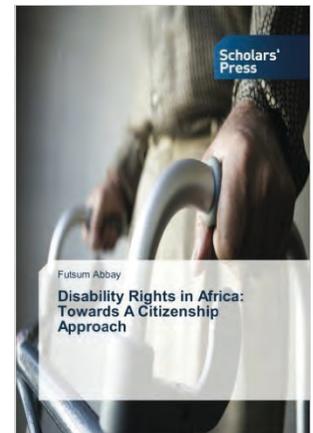
SUPERVISOR: Colleen Sheppard

GRADUATION: 2013

THESIS: Disability Rights in Africa: Towards a Citizenship Approach

Futsum Tesfatsion Abbay is a distinguished legal scholar from Eritrea. He obtained his LLB (with distinction) from the University of Asmara in 1998, following which he was appointed as a graduate assistant in the law program of the university.

Futsum has the unique distinction of being the only visually impaired academic in Eritrea. He received a USAID scholarship in 1999 that allowed him to pursue a LL.M degree at McGill. Since earning his LL.M in 2002, Futsum has been teaching at the Faculty of Law of the University of Asmara. He returned to McGill in 2007 to embark on his doctoral work under the supervision of Professor Colleen Sheppard. Futsum has committed his life to promoting the rights of persons with disabilities, particularly the rights of the visually impaired. In spite of numerous legal and political challenges, Futsum remains committed to carrying his advocacy work forward.



AFTER THE FELLOWSHIP

- Published his thesis with Scholar's Press (2013).
- Received a one-year Research Associate position at McGill to further his research and a permanent academic appointment.



O'BRIEN GRADUATE FELLOWS

PAST GRADUATE FELLOW



CARLOS IVÁN FUENTES, DCL

DATE OF FELLOWSHIP: 2007-2010

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: Panama

SUPERVISOR: Evan Fox-Decent

GRADUATION: 2014

THESIS: Normative Plurality in International Law: The Impact of International Human Rights Law in the Doctrine of Sources of International Law

Carlos Iván Fuentes obtained his Law and Political Sciences degree (summa cum laude) from the Universidad Católica Santa María La Antigua (Panama City, Panama) in 2005. In the same year, he was granted the certification to practice law in Panama. He received his LLM degree from McGill University in 2007; working under the supervision of Prof. Evan Fox-Decent, he studied Canadian Aboriginal title and proposed its redefinition using the doctrine of Indigenous right to land of the Inter-American Court on Human Rights. During his Master's studies he worked as a legal researcher for the Special Court for Sierra Leone Clinic, and received American University's 2006 Human Rights Award (Spanish) for his essay "Protegiendo el Derecho a la Salud en el Sistema Interamericano de Derechos Humanos".

Before returning to McGill to pursue his doctoral studies in the fall of 2007, Carlos Iván briefly worked for the U.S.-based management-consulting firm Casals & Associates, Inc. as a legal advisor and grant manager in USAID's Central America Transparency and Accountability Program. He was also a seasonal lecturer on philosophy of law at the Universidad Latina de Panamá. Carlos Iván is a member of the Centro de Iniciativas Democráticas (CIDEM), a Panamanian NGO dedicated to the promotion of human rights and democracy.

As an O'Brien Fellow at the Centre for Human Rights and Legal Pluralism, Carlos Iván completed his doctorate under the supervision of Prof. Evan Fox-Decent, exploring normative plurality within the international legal order, particularly international human rights law. His interests include inter-American human rights law, international humanitarian law, sustainable development, and public governance. Recent publications can be found at the American University International Law Review and the Revista Colombiana de Derecho Internacional. During his doctoral studies, he was selected through the United Nations' national competitive recruitment examination for future placement in the UN Secretariat-Office of Legal Affairs.

AFTER THE FELLOWSHIP

- Working as a legal officer in the Office of Legal Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat



O'BRIEN GRADUATE FELLOWS

PAST GRADUATE FELLOW



EDIN HODŽIĆ, DCL

DATE OF FELLOWSHIP: 2007-2010

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: Bosnia and Herzegovina

SUPERVISOR: Mark Antaki

GRADUATION: 2014

THESIS: The (not so) Gentle Civilizer of Consociations? International Human Rights Law and the Challenges of Group Political Rights

Edin Hodžić graduated from the Faculty of Law at the University of Sarajevo and obtained his Master's Degree in international human rights law (with Distinction) from the University of Oxford, for which he was supported by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Open Society Institute joint scholarship scheme.

From 2002 to 2005, Edin worked as a project coordinator at Media Center Sarajevo, following which he took up a post of an analyst at the Prosecutor's Office of Bosnia and Herzegovina, where he worked until mid-2007. He was engaged as a consultant on a number of occasions and participated in several research projects in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Since May 2006, he has been engaged as the Human Rights Editor for Open Society Fund Bosnia and Herzegovina's *The Pulse of Democracy*, a bi-monthly online publication aimed at featuring critical analysis of the current policy issues in BiH.

Edin came to Montreal in September 2007 as an O'Brien Fellow to work on his doctoral research under the supervision of Professor Mark Antaki, which he completed in 2014. His doctoral thesis is devoted to a human rights analysis of the possible approaches to constitutional engineering in, and legal recognition of ethno-cultural groups within, societies characterized by deep cleavages along ethno-cultural lines. His research interests are mostly related to constitutionalism and international human rights law, respectively, with a particular focus on theory and practice of collective and minority rights, international criminal law and transitional justice in general.

AFTER THE FELLOWSHIP

- Director and Head of the Public Law Program at Analitika Center for Social Research, Sarajevo
- Ongoing affiliation with the Centre, as an Associate Fellow



PAST GRADUATE FELLOW



SALMA SHARIFI KHAJEDEHI, LLM

DATE OF FELLOWSHIP: 2008-2009

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: Iran

SUPERVISOR: Vrinda Narain

GRADUATION: 2010

RESEARCH PROJECT (NON-THESIS): Implicit Islamophobic Expressions: Hate Speech or Exercise of Freedom?

A native of Iran, Salma received her LLM in International Trade Law from Shahid Beheshti University in Iran, and concurrently received a certificate in the same field from the Queen Mary University of London. She began her second LLM at McGill in 2008, in International Human Rights Law. The Fellowship not only afforded her the opportunity to pursue her LLM at McGill, but also helped her in her quest for freedom and justice; it led Salma to pursue an internship at the International Criminal Court in the Hague in 2014 where she was able to participate in bringing to justice the perpetrators of the most heinous crimes in international law.

AFTER THE FELLOWSHIP

- Received her PhD in International Law from the Centre de Recherche en Droit Public at Université de Montréal
- Legal Intern at the International Criminal Court in The Hague
- Volunteer at RAILS (Australia), providing free legal advice, assistance, and community education to disadvantaged people



PAST GRADUATE FELLOW



JING GUAN

DATE OF FELLOWSHIP: 2010-2012

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: China

SUPERVISOR: René Provost

GRADUATION: Withdrew before completion

Jing obtained her LLB (Distinction, 2005) and LLM (International Law, Distinction, 2008) degrees from School of Law, Xiamen University, China. She then pursued another LLM degree at Harvard Law School as a Victor and William Fung Fellow. Under the supervision of Prof. Yixin Liao (Xiamen) and Prof. William Alford (Harvard), Jing's research topics have included the International Criminal Court (ICC), state succession and UN membership, indigenous people and their human rights, and international sale of goods. Jing has several Chinese publications, including two on Chinese national key journals.

In her time as an O'Brien Fellow, Jing researched the "responsibility to protect" (R2P), a new solution aimed at replacing the notoriously controversial concept of "humanitarian intervention", particularly in light of China's traditional strong ideology of absolute state sovereignty.

AFTER THE FELLOWSHIP

- Assistant Director of the External and Cooperation Office at Chengyi College of Jimei University in China



O'BRIEN GRADUATE FELLOWS

PAST GRADUATE FELLOW



KATE GLOVER, DCL

DATE OF FELLOWSHIP: 2010-2011

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: Canada

SUPERVISOR: Hoi Kong

ANTICIPATED GRADUATION: 2016

Kate Glover earned her BA in Philosophy (with great distinction) from McGill University in 2003. She went on to study law at Dalhousie University, graduating in 2006 with more than a dozen awards for her academic achievements and community involvement. After being called to the Bar of Ontario in 2007, Kate earned an LLM in public international law and comparative law from the University of Cambridge, where she studied as the recipient of the Rt. Hon. Paul Martin Sr. Scholarship, rowed for her college crew, and spearheaded a sexual assault awareness and fundraising campaign.

Upon returning to Canada, Kate practiced law with Borden Ladner Gervais, representing clients in a variety of public law and commercial litigation matters. In 2009-2010, she served as a law clerk for Madam Justice Abella at the Supreme Court of Canada.

After beginning her doctoral studies as an O'Brien Fellow, Kate went on to win the highly prestigious Vanier Scholarship and take up the Ian Pilarczyk Teaching Fellowship in Legal Research Methodology. Her doctoral research focuses on the ways in which theories of law shape how society designs and conceives of its legal institutions, by assessing the present and future significance of the Supreme Court of Canada. Kate's primary research interests include topics in legal institutions and procedure, legal theory (especially legal pluralism), legal education, legal scholarship and methodology (including interdisciplinarity), law & society, and law/constitutional reform.

AFTER THE FELLOWSHIP

- Hired as Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Law and a member of the faculty of the School of Graduate and Postgraduate Studies, University of Western Ontario, teaching Administrative Law
- Awarded the inaugural Western Law Award for Teaching Excellence (2015-2016)



O'BRIEN GRADUATE FELLOWS

PAST GRADUATE FELLOW



AMAR KHODAY, DCL

DATE OF FELLOWSHIP: 2008-2011

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: Canada

SUPERVISOR: Frédéric Mégret

GRADUATION: 2014

THESIS: Legitimizing resistance? International refugee law and the protection of individuals resisting oppression

Amar Khoday earned his JD from the New England School of Law in Boston and his LL.M from McGill University's Faculty of Law. Amar completed his LL.M thesis under the supervision of Professor Ronald Sklar in 2008. He previously obtained his M.A. (South Asian History) and B.A. (Double Major in History and Southern Asian Studies) from Concordia University. He is a member of the Law Society of Upper Canada and the state bar of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Amar worked as an associate (and prior to that, as an articling student) at Shell Lawyers, a progressive labour and employment law firm located in Toronto. During his LL.M, he worked as a researcher for the McGill Clinic for the United Nations Special Court for Sierra Leone.

A recipient of both the O'Brien Fellowship for Human Rights and Legal Pluralism and a SSHRC Doctoral Fellowship, Amar completed his doctoral degree under the supervision of Professor Frédéric Mégret in 2014. His research explores the ways that refugee law legitimizes and in some ways legalizes otherwise illegal acts of resistance when such conduct is waged against oppressive regimes and/or normative legal systems that undermine human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

AFTER THE FELLOWSHIP

- Assistant Professor at the University of Manitoba Faculty of Law



O'BRIEN GRADUATE FELLOWS

PAST GRADUATE FELLOW



JOHN HURSH, LL.M.

DATE OF FELLOWSHIP: 2012-2014

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: United States

SUPERVISOR: Vrinda Narain

GRADUATION: 2014

THESIS: Women's rights and women's land rights in postcolonial Tunisia and Morocco: legal institutions, women's rights, discourse, and the need for continued reform

John Hursh was named an O'Brien Fellow in 2012, in order to pursue a LL.M. at McGill University's Institute of Comparative Law. His thesis work focused on the various and overlapping legal traditions that shape women's rights and, more particularly, women's land rights in North Africa. Mr. Hursh holds a J.D. from Indiana University Maurer School of Law and a M.P.A. from Indiana University School of Public and Environmental Affairs. He also holds a M.A. and B.A. from Carnegie Mellon University.

Before coming to McGill, Mr. Hursh worked as a Research Associate for Landesa, a nonprofit legal organization based in Seattle that works to secure land rights for the world's poorest people. His responsibilities included completing legal and policy research to support the organization's work, especially within Kenya and Rwanda. A member of the American Bar Association's Africa Committee and the Missouri Bar, Mr. Hursh's research interests include Islamic law – particularly within the Maghreb – critical appraisals of international law, and land tenure reform in Africa. His articles on human rights and humanitarian law have appeared in the *Berkeley Journal of Gender, Law, and Justice* and the *New York Law School Law Review*, and he has recently has a chapter on water scarcity in Morocco included in an edited volume on *Governing Access to Essential Resources* (2016).

AFTER THE FELLOWSHIP

- Has completed a research fellowship at the Lauterpacht Centre for International Law, University of Cambridge
- Served as Executive Editor of Volume 84 of the *Indiana Law Journal*



PAST GRADUATE FELLOW



BETHANY HASTIE, DCL

DATE OF FELLOWSHIP: 2011-2014

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: Canada

SUPERVISOR: François Crépeau

GRADUATION: 2015

THESIS: Migrant labour and the making of unfreedom: How the law facilitates exclusion and exploitation under Canada's temporary foreign worker programs

Bethany Hastie pursued her doctoral studies as an O'Brien Fellow in Human Rights and Legal Pluralism, as well as being affiliated with the Institute of Comparative Law at the Faculty of Law, McGill University. In addition to the O'Brien Fellowship, during her doctoral studies, Bethany was awarded a SSHRC bursary and the Ian Pilarczyk Teaching Fellowship in Legal Research Methodology. Her doctoral research, under the supervision of Professor François Crépeau, examined the status of migrant worker programs in Canada, with a particular focus on the institutional and pragmatic gaps that enable exploitation and forced labour trafficking to occur.

Bethany completed her J.D. at the University of British Columbia (2009), and LLM at McGill University (2012). She has worked with the B.C. Office to Combat Trafficking in Persons, the Canadian Council for Refugees, and as part of the UBC Human Trafficking Working Group.

AFTER THE FELLOWSHIP

- Lecturer at the Peter A. Allard School of Law, University of British Columbia, teaching courses in Torts, Public Law, Advanced Legal Research, Transnational Law, and The Charter



PAST GRADUATE FELLOW



BEKITHEMBA MLAUZI, LL.M

DATE OF FELLOWSHIP: 2014-2015

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: Zimbabwe

SUPERVISOR (NON-THESIS LL.M): Shauna van Praagh

GRADUATION: 2015

RESEARCH PROJECT (NON-THESIS): Policing and access to justice for persons with disabilities: procedures and practices in police services

Bekithemba Mlauzi completed his LL.M as an O'Brien Fellow, as well as being awarded grants through the Disability Rights Scholarship Program, James Hugessen Foundation, and the Open Society Foundation. During his LL.M, he carried out an in-depth study on disability-related statistics, as part of an overall research agenda that aims to develop disability rights jurisprudence, assist in the review of the Disabled Persons Act in Zimbabwe, and ensure that all Zimbabwean Disability laws are in sync with the CRPD and the impending African Disability Protocol.

Professionally, Bekithemba has been a Legal Researcher at Venturas & Samukange Legal Practitioners, Harare, Zimbabwe. He has served in the Zimbabwe Republic Police where he did legal work, human resources and administration management and general policing. He served in Liberia and East Timor as an advisor to the peace negotiator and a peacekeeper respectively. Bekithemba has also served on the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Human Rights and Humanitarian Law and was instrumental in the implementation of the Access to Justice for Children Program in the Zimbabwe Republic Police.

After his studies, Bekithemba intends to introduce a legal clinic for disabled persons at no cost (subject to donor funding) and/or establish a traffic law Centre to research on traffic accidents and disability in Southern Africa, among other things.

AFTER THE FELLOWSHIP

- Has published several legal articles in *Outpost* (the Zimbabwe Republic Police) magazine
- Has organized and facilitated a number of international humanitarian law/ international human rights workshops with the International Committee of the Red Cross



PAST GRADUATE FELLOW



CLARIS HARBON (DCL CANDIDATE)

DATE OF FELLOWSHIP: 2009-2011

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: Israel

SUPERVISOR: Shauna van Praagh

ANTICIPATED GRADUATION: 2016

Claris holds a LLB (1998, with honours) from Northumbria Law School, and LL.M degrees from Yale University and from Tel-Aviv University. She is a member of the Israeli Bar Association.

Claris is engaged in clinical education and social justice in Israel, mainly from a communitarian perspective. Hers is an activist legal scholarship, focused on revealing the societal causes of her clients' disadvantaged status. She focuses on disempowered groups or silenced minorities, such as Mizrahis (Jews of Arab descent), Arab-Israelis, Palestinians, Ethiopians, women, and children.

By her exploration of the presumably "neutral" role that the law plays in constructing the ethnic and racial identities of underprivileged minorities, which can result in structural, legal, and social inferiority, she seeks to develop an alternative legal discourse that reflects the needs of the community and by which the community can translate personal legal problems into social change. She argues that the differential land policies directed against Mizrahis formed the basis for their legal and social inferiority, and resulted in creating unique structural legal problems that collectively affect Mizrahis, and has represented Mizrahis and Palestinians who resisted the ruling order, especially through land and property lawbreaking. It is this notion of resistance and civil disobedience - lawbreaking as lawmaking - that she has been exploring during her doctoral research at McGill, first as an O'Brien Fellow, and then as the holder of a prestigious Trudeau Scholarship.



PAST GRADUATE FELLOW



RÓISÍN HENNESSY, DCL

DATE OF FELLOWSHIP: 2010-2013

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: Ireland

SUPERVISOR: Colleen Sheppard

GRADUATION: 2016

THESIS: Economic exploitation and child labour: Towards a structural approach to international labour law and human rights

Róisín holds a European Masters in Human Rights and Democratisation (2003) along with an LLM (2001) and a BCL (2000) from University College Cork, National University of Ireland.

From 2008 to 2010, she was a Policy and Legislative Review Officer with the Irish Human Rights Commission, National Human Rights Institution of Ireland. Previously, from 2003 to 2006, she was a Policy and Legislative Review Officer with the Irish Human Rights Commission, National Human Rights Institution of Ireland.

AFTER THE FELLOWSHIP

- Working as Senior Research and Policy Officer of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission



PAST GRADUATE FELLOW



SABAA KHAN, DCL

DATE OF FELLOWSHIP: 2011-2014

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: Canada

SUPERVISOR: Adelle Blackett

GRADUATION: 2016

THESIS: Limits of formalization and horizons of urban citizenship: Insights on law and informality through the lens of electronic waste

Sabaa Khan completed her DCL as an O'Brien Graduate Fellow of the McGill Centre for Human Rights and Legal Pluralism, and as a student affiliated with the Institute of Comparative Law. She holds an LLM in International Law from the Université de Montréal (2010, Liste d'excellence) and a Licentiate in Civil Law from the University of Ottawa (2000). She is a Member of the Barreau du Québec and has clerked at the International Labour Office, Freedom of Association Branch (Geneva).

Khan's doctoral research explored interactions between international trade, labour and environmental regimes on the issues of electronic waste and urban ore mining. She has lectured at the 2010 CÉRIUM European and International Environmental Law Seminar (Montréal) and spoken at the 2011 World Resources Forum (Davos), on behalf of the StEP E-waste Summer School initiative of the United Nations University, Institute for Sustainability and Peace.

Her work on human rights and migrant caregivers has been published in the *Canadian Journal of Law and Society* and her comparative research on the waste dimension of pervasive computing has been featured in the *Lex Electronica*. Khan is also a pianist and published composer, the author and illustrator of two children's books, and she holds a 1st dan black belt certified by the Japanese Karate Federation.

AFTER THE FELLOWSHIP

- Currently post-doctoral fellow (2-year fellowship) at the University of Eastern Finland
- Has an open-ended offer as a Senior Researcher at the University of Eastern Finland



PAST GRADUATE FELLOW



MARIKA GILES SAMSON (DCL CANDIDATE)

DATE OF FELLOWSHIP: 2012-2015

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: United Kingdom

SUPERVISOR: Frédéric Mégret

ANTICIPATED GRADUATION: 2017

The O'Brien Fellowship has afforded Marika the opportunity to explore the phenomenon of judicial persecution, that is, the use of court proceedings to marginalize and distract political opposition, under the supervision of Professor Frédéric Mégret. Marika has also been awarded a Bourse doctorale by the Fonds de recherche du Québec – société et culture (FQRSC).

Marika holds a B.A. in Communication Studies from Concordia University and a LLB from Osgoode Hall Law School. After graduating, she clerked for the Federal Court of Canada, and practiced civil litigation for six years before obtaining her LLM with a specialization in Public International Law, with distinction, from University College London in 2010, submitting a dissertation proposing a framework for the evaluation of amnesties in international criminal law, under the supervision of Professor Philippe Sands QC.

Since beginning her doctoral studies, Marika has guest lectured on international criminal law, mediation, and transitional justice, among other things. In 2015, she completed a Teaching Fellowship in 2015 in Judicial Institutions and Civil Procedure, and convened and taught the Critical Engagements in Human Rights course, the classroom component of the International Human Rights Internship Program. Marika's engagement with the Centre has been extensive: from 2013-2015, Marika served on the Centre's Management Board, and since 2013, Marika has been involved in the selection and matching of students for the IHRIP. In 2015-2016, Marika took a year's leave from her doctoral research to act as the Centre's interim Executive Director.



PAST GRADUATE FELLOW



VANESSA CLERMONT-ISABELLE, LLM

DATE OF FELLOWSHIP: 2014-2015

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: Canada

SUPERVISOR: Kirsten Anker

GRADUATION: 2016

THESIS: Discrimination à l'embauche des immigrants qualifiés: impact des normes formelles et informelles

Vanessa Clermont-Isabelle a obtenu son Baccalauréat en droit (LLB) à l'Université de Montréal avec une mention sur la Liste d'excellence de la Faculté. Son implication dans la communauté, particulièrement auprès d'un groupe aidant les travailleurs migrants, a été soulignée par le Prix d'implication communautaire McCarthy Tétrault ainsi que par une Bourse d'implication décernée par le Service aux étudiants de l'Université de Montréal. Suite au baccalauréat, elle a réussi avec succès les examens du Barreau du Québec dans le but de devenir avocate. Elle est présentement étudiante à la maîtrise en droit à l'Université McGill et récipiendaire de la bourse O'Brien.

Dans le cadre de sa thèse de maîtrise, Vanessa s'intéressera aux enjeux de la discrimination et plus particulièrement celle qui est vécue par les minorités culturelles au Canada. Elle tentera d'évaluer les limites des normes étatiques quant à la protection du droit à l'égalité de ces groupes et comment le pluralisme juridique pourrait prendre en compte la diversité culturelle de façon plus adéquate. Les autres champs de recherche qui intéressent Vanessa sont les droits des migrants ainsi que les droits humains en général. Elle travaille d'ailleurs à faire avancer ces droits de façon plus concrète par l'entremise de son implication à la Ligue des droits et liberté.

AFTER THE FELLOWSHIP

- Elle a commencé un stage du Barreau à la Confédération des syndicats nationaux (CSN) dans le but de devenir avocate. Elle a l'intention de développer une pratique en droit du travail et en droit de la personne dans le but d'utiliser le droit comme outil de justice sociale.



CURRENT FELLOW



SHIMELIS MULUGETA KENE (DCL CANDIDATE)

DATE OF FELLOWSHIP: 2013-2016

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: Ethiopia

SUPERVISOR: Payam Akhavan

Shimelis Mulugeta Kene is a Doctor of Civil Law Candidate at the Institute of Comparative Law and an O'Brien Fellow at the Centre for Human Rights and Legal Pluralism. His doctoral research, supervised by Professor Payam Akhavan, explores the interplay between authoritarianism, counterterrorism, and law by drawing on socio-legal perspectives.

Prior to joining McGill, Shimelis worked in a variety of roles and settings: as Law Clerk at the Ethiopian Federal First Instance Court; as a Senior Trainer at Organization for Social Justice in Ethiopia (a prominent human rights and social justice organization in the country); as a Human Rights expert at the Human Rights Office of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE); and as a Child Rights Officer at the United Nations Development Program (UNDP).

Shimelis completed his LLM in International Human Rights with Honors at Northwestern University's School of Law in 2010, and then, as a Postgraduate Assistant at Northwestern, he conducted field research and wrote an assessment report on the Liberian Juvenile Justice System under the auspices of UNICEF Liberia. Shimelis earned an LLB from Addis Ababa University, and during his studies, he volunteered for a number of community organizations, teaching basic Ethiopian law and human rights, and contributed a number of book reviews to local papers.



O'BRIEN GRADUATE FELLOWS

CURRENT FELLOW



ALVARO R. CÓRDOVA FLORES (DCL CANDIDATE)

DATE OF FELLOWSHIP: 2013-2016

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: Peru

SUPERVISOR: Colleen Sheppard

ANTICIPATED GRADUATION: 2016

Alvaro is a Peruvian lawyer and an O'Brien Fellowship recipient in Human Rights and Legal Pluralism. He is currently a student in the Doctoral Civil Law Program (DCL) at McGill University's Faculty of Law. He is conducting his research under the supervision of Colleen Sheppard, focusing on the intersections of the politics of identity, indigenous rights, and legal realism. His ongoing research explores how non-indigenous judges resolve indigenous rights cases, and how certain judicial approaches can recreate cultural discrimination against indigenous peoples in Peru.

He started the LLM Program at the University of Victoria, British Columbia, Canada in 2010 under the supervision of Jeremy Webber and Avigail Eisenberg. In his LLM thesis (The Right of Indigenous Self-Determination and the Right to Consultation in the Peruvian Constitutional Tribunal Jurisprudence [2005-2011]) Alvaro explored the relationship between the right of indigenous consultation and the right of indigenous self-determination in the Peruvian context.

Alvaro is a 2004 summa cum laude graduate from the University of Lima School of Law in Peru. He has extensive professional experience in areas of constitutional law and fundamental rights. Since 2004 he has worked at the Peruvian Constitutional Tribunal, and previously he worked at the Peruvian Truth and Reconciliation Commission (2002). He also taught constitutional law (Fall 2010) at the Universidad San Ignacio de Loyola (Lima, Peru).



CURRENT FELLOW



ROKEYA CHOWDHURY (DCL CANDIDATE)

DATE OF FELLOWSHIP: 2014-2017

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: Bangladesh

SUPERVISOR: Daniel Weinstock

Rokeya Chowdhury holds a teaching position in the Faculty of Law, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh. She has a keen interest in human rights issues and most of her work addresses issues and concerns relating human rights. Rokeya completed her LLB (Hons.) in 2009 and LLM in 2011 from the Faculty of Law, University of Dhaka. She completed a LLM Thesis Program at the Institute of Comparative Law, McGill University in 2013, and is now working on a her doctoral studies as an O'Brien Fellow. Rokeya's proposed doctoral thesis examines the state religion and secularism stand-off in the Constitution of Bangladesh with a law and performing arts analogy.

Rokeya's research areas and interests involve women rights, indigenous rights, comparative law, law and society, law and literature. Rokeya has not limited her activities in traditional academic teaching and learning. As a member of Empowerment through Law of the Common People (ELCOP), a voluntary research organization run by law teachers and students in Bangladesh, Rokeya has coordinated and facilitated events on human rights awareness. She has previously worked with Northern University Bangladesh, UNESCO Madanjeet South Asian Institute of Advanced Legal and Human Rights Studies (UMSAILS), Dr. Kamal Hossain and Associates, National Human Rights Commission of Bangladesh and Relief International Bangladesh.



CURRENT FELLOW



BWIGHANE MWENIFUMBO (LLM CANDIDATE)

DATE OF FELLOWSHIP: 2015-2016

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: Malawi

SUPERVISOR: François Crépeau

Bwighane Mwenifumbo is an LLM candidate with the Institute of Comparative Law at McGill University. Her work as a Legal Aid Advocate serving underprivileged people in Malawi opened her up to the challenges faced by people with disabilities during the court process, in the correctional system and society in general. The majority of her clients are women and children, and this has influenced her particular interest in their plight in Malawian society. Her LLM thesis is a comparative study that examines the implementation of disability rights legislation in relation to women and children in southern Africa.

She holds an LLB (Honours) from the University of Malawi, Chancellor College. Upon completion of her LLM, she intends to pursue a career as a human rights advocate



CURRENT FELLOW



MUHAMMAD REZAUR RAHMAN (LLM CANDIDATE)

DATE OF FELLOWSHIP: 2015-2016

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: Bangladesh

SUPERVISOR: Daniel Weinstock

Muhammad Rezaur Rahman holds a teaching position at Northern University Bangladesh. He is immensely interested in constitutional law and constitutional theory. Most of his research work focuses on constitutionalism and its application in upholding human rights especially in the context of secularism and freedom of religion. As an O'Brien Graduate Fellow at McGill, Rezaur will be working on the infusion of secularism and State Religion in the post-colonial constitutional structure in countries risking religious radicalization with a specific focus on Bangladesh

Rezaur completed his LLM from Northern University Bangladesh in 2012 and was immediately invited to come back as a lecturer. His graduate dissertation focused on the imposed constitutional identity of indigenous population and the constitutional crisis in Bangladesh. He is also a graduate of the prestigious Human Rights Summer School, a one of its kind residential human rights training program in Bangladesh. Rezaur has also prepared two national reports for the National Human Rights Commission, Bangladesh (JAMAKON). As a member of the CLR Team (Community Law Reform), he conducted an intensive research on the socio-economic rights and labor conditions of the handloom weaver community of Bangladesh. This research formed part of a publication by ELCOP, a research and training organization in Bangladesh. Rezaur is now one of the Supervisors of the current CLR projects.



FELLOWS SPEAKING

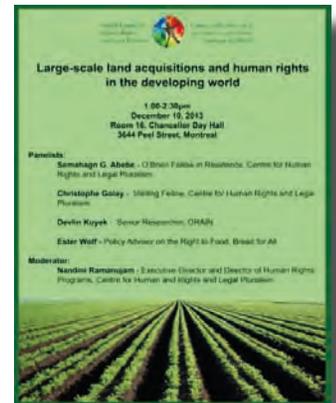


THE GREEN ECONOMY PARADOX: A CRITICAL INQUIRY INTO SUSTAINABILITY INDEXES

In April 2015, Fellow in Residence **Oren Perez** (Faculty of Law, Bar-Ilan University) and a specialist in international relations, conflict processes, and foreign policy, elaborated on his research in progress, the “Green Economy Paradox”, in which he challenges the claim that the goals of (classical) economic growth and sustainable development can be achieved concurrently.

LARGE-SCALE LAND ACQUISITIONS AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD

In a seminar organized and co-presented in December 2013 by Fellow in Residence **Semahagn Abebe**, four panelists discussed the reality of what are popularly known as ‘land grabs’ in Africa. The discussion included the contractual realities of these inequitable land transfer agreements, often facilitated by governments, which are often found to be unenforceable when promises and contractual obligations are not fulfilled. The panelists also explored the impact of large-scale land acquisitions on the local communities affected by the land transfer and the unfulfilled obligations, and the significance of such practices on the future of the world food supply.



ENGAGING MORAL BUSINESS AMIDST UNCERTAINTIES: FOSTERING DEMOCRACY IN THE NEW INDONESIA



In a lunchtime seminar in November 2015, Fellow in Residence **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 an 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, making the right friends, and the value of academic credentials.



FELLOWS SPEAKING

LIKE YOUR OWN CHILD? EMPLOYER’S PERSPECTIVES AND THE REGULATION OF DOMESTIC WORK IN GHANA

In March 2014, Fellow in Residence Professor **Dzodzi Tsikata**, a specialist in women’s studies, labour law, and social research and policy discussed her work on women’s organization in Ghana in recent years, and in particular the move toward institutionalization, rather than regulation, of previously informal labour arrangements such as domestic work, as well as hiring practices and working conditions for domestic workers. She also discussed some initiatives in progress to improve regulation of this informal industry.



THE SYRIAN CRISIS: CHALLENGING DOMINANT NARRATIVES

In October 2015, **Tanya Monforte**, former Director of the International Human Rights Law Program at the American University in Cairo, convened a roundtable 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).

The panel canvassed a variety of approaches to explore the origins of the conflict of the Syrian Civil War and its impacts regionally and globally.

ANNUAL GRADUATE LAW STUDENTS CONFERENCE

For both the 2014 and 2015 Graduate Student Conferences, Graduate Fellow **Marika Giles Samson** designed and convened a pre-conference presentation skills workshop to help students enhance their public speaking technique, presentation structure, and use of technology. This was followed up during the conference with a peer feedback program, which enabled participants to receive constructive, individualized critiques on the manner of their presentations.





FELLOWS IN ACTION

FELLOWS READING



GRADUATE FELLOW BETHANY HASTIE ORGANIZED THE CRITICAL HUMAN RIGHTS READING GROUP IN 2012-2013

Led by **Bethany Hastie**, the Critical Human Rights Reading Group met six times over the course of the 2012-13 academic year, engaging graduate students from the Faculty of Law in discussing readings such as Joseph Slaughter's "Narration in International Human Rights Law", Jack Donnelly's "The Relative Universality of Human Rights", and Upendra Baxi's "Voices of Suffering and the Future of Human Rights".

FORMER GRADUATE FELLOW FUTSUM ABBAY COORDINATED AND HOSTED A DISABILITY AND THE LAW READING GROUP IN 2013-2014

During the 2013-2014 academic year, the reading group met three times to explore topics relating to disability rights. The goal was to initiate a reading group on disability rights law and policy and to create a less formal forum for exchanging research initiatives and ideas on disability rights issues among faculty members and students within McGill University. The topics explored were: "The Right to Life or the Right to Die?"; "A Comparative Perspective of Disability Law in Europe, Africa and the Americas"; and "Disability, Accessibility and Public Spaces". All the three reading group discussions raised crucial issues in the context of the rights of persons with disabilities.



GRADUATE FELLOW ROKEYA CHOWDHURY ORGANIZED A LEGAL PLURALISM READING GROUP IN WINTER 2015

In 2015, **Rokeya Chowdhury**, Graduate Fellow and Centre member, initiated a Reading Group on Legal Pluralism to provide a forum for graduate students to think and rethink the scholarship on legal pluralism. Three consecutive monthly sessions of the reading group (January-March) progressed through key literature in the area, culminating in a fourth and final session on April 22, 2015 with Fellow in Residence, **Professor Oren Perez**. The reading group helped the participants to engage in a conversation on legal pluralism from their diverse experiences, understanding and insights.



SOME FELLOWS GRADUATING

Bethany Hastie “Migrant labour and the making of unfreedom: how the law facilitates exclusion and exploitation under Canada’s Temporary Foreign Worker Programs” (May 2015)



Carlos Ivan Fuentes, “Normative plurality in international law: The impact of international human rights law in the doctrine of sources of international law” (March 2014)

Amar Khoday, “Legitimizing resistance? International refugee law and the protection of individuals resisting oppression” (February 2014)



Edin Hodžić, “The (not so) gentle civilizer of consociations?: International human rights law and the challenges of group political rights” (May 2014)

Futsum Testafion Abbay, “Disability rights in Africa: towards a citizenship approach” (November 2012)





FELLOWS TEACHING (HIGHLIGHTS)

JUDGE ANTHONY FERNANDO LECTURED ON THE ROLE OF THE JUDICIARY

Judge Fernando gave lectures on the protection of human rights, the rule of law, the doctrine of separation of powers, and the independence of the judiciary in both Professor Vrinda Narain's Constitutional Law class, and the Rule of Law and Development class convened by Professor Nandini Ramanujam.

SEMAHAGN ABEBE CONVENEDED A SPECIAL COURSE ON REGIONAL GOVERNANCE

For the Winter 2014 term, Semahagn was invited to design, convene, and teach a course in Governance and Development in Sub-Saharan Africa, allowing him both to engage with undergraduate students and to build his teaching profile. This opportunity proved highly attractive to the Human Rights Centre at the University of Connecticut who invited him for a residency immediately following his stay at McGill, encouraged him to continue his scholarship as a Scholar at Risk, and asked him to teach the same course.

CHARLES NGWENA SPEAKS ABOUT EQUALITY AND SOCIOECONOMIC RIGHTS IN SOUTH AFRICA

Professor Ngwena gave a lecture in Professor Colleen Sheppard's Constitutional Law class on one of his key research areas: socioeconomic rights and progress in Africa.

STUDENTS LEARN CONSTITUTIONAL LAW FROM JOHANN VAN DER WESTHUIZEN, ONE OF THE DRAFTERS OF SOUTH AFRICA'S POST-APARTHEID CONSTITUTION

Justice van der Westhuizen, a very well-respected scholar as well as an accomplished jurist, discussed his experiences in both a Constitutional Law plenary facilitated by Professors Colleen Sheppard and Robert Leckey, and in the more intimate setting of Professor Vrinda Narain's Constitutional Law class.

"It was an honour and a privilege to have Justice van der Westhuizen of the Constitutional Court of South Africa visit our first year constitutional class. His knowledge and experience, from the drafting of the South African Constitution to hearing constitutional cases interpreting the very provisions he had helped 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!" -Vrinda Narain



TANYA MONFORTE LECTURES ON INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC HUMAN RIGHTS

During her time in residence, Tanya guest lectured on the law of treaties in Professor Frédéric Mégret's International Human Rights Law, and on civil liberties and the NGO laws in Egypt, in Critical Engagements with Human Rights (convened by Interim Executive Director Marika Giles Samson).



FELLOWS IN PRINT

ESMERALDA THORNHILL, THE CENTRE'S FIRST FELLOW IN RESIDENCE

Faculty of Law *In Focus* magazine article about “Race Literacy and the Legal Profession: An Ethical Imperative for Cap, Bar, and Bench”, a talk given by Professor Thornhill

Said Thornhill in her opening remarks, “I commend the CHRLP for its vision and insight in creating such a significant discursive space within the Academy, geared to promoting interdisciplinary human rights scholarship that both reflects theory and, more importantly, validates praxis and field experience.”

Full article: <http://publications.mcgill.ca/droit/2012/11/19/call-to-cap-bar-and-bench/>



Student publication ‘Contours: Voices of Women in Law’, an interview with Professor Thornhill

McGill law student and freelance journalist Lillian Boctor spoke with Dr. Thornhill in November 2012 about R v. RDS, the unfulfilled promises that this case brought forth, race literacy, women in law, racism in Canada and in legal field, and the current state of legal education in Canada.

Full article: <http://contours-mcgill.com/2013/04/05/interview-with-dr-esmeralda-m-a-thornhill>



TANYA MONFORTE, FELLOW IN RESIDENCE, AND VOICE FOR THE VOICELESS

During and immediately after her time in residence, Tanya wrote many op-eds speaking out on human rights issues, three of which have been published on the Huffington Post website:

“Hard Talks: Moving Forward From Vienna”

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/tanya-monforte/hard-talks-what-to-expect_b_8435380.html Posted on November 2, 2015

“Egypt Is No Place for Dissent”

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/tanya-monforte/egypt-no-place-for-dissent_b_8537124.html Posted on November 11, 2015

“Egypt Shuts Down Center Documenting Torture”

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/tanya-monforte/egypt-shuts-down-center-documenting-torture_b_9327704.html
Posted on March 13, 2016



FELLOWS IN ACTION

SEMAHAGN GASHU ABEBE, MCGILL'S FIRST SCHOLAR AT RISK

Excerpt from Faculty of Law *In Focus* magazine article about Dr. Abebe's life as a Scholar at Risk

"A law professor from Ethiopia, Semahagn Abebe is an O'Brien Fellow in Residence at the Centre for Human Rights and Legal Pluralism (CHRLP) at the Faculty of Law for the 2013-14 academic year. He is also McGill University's first visitor from the Scholars at Risk Network (SAR).



At McGill, Abebe is free to pursue his own academic work without the fear of reprisals he had experienced prior to fleeing Ethiopia in 2007. But he also contributes greatly to the richness of intellectual life at the Faculty of Law. For instance, he is teaching a post-graduate course on Governance and Development in Sub-Saharan Africa this semester, offering seminars on his areas of expertise, and working on various projects with the other O'Brien Fellows at the CHRLP.

While in Canada, Abebe is also doing his best to raise public awareness of the real situation in Ethiopia, on behalf of those who cannot speak freely. "I decided to go public because I want to promote human rights, and I am now living in a place where I'm safe, so I wanted to speak. That is what I have to do. The human rights situation in my country is deteriorating day by day. The situation is very serious. So, how can I be quiet about that?"

Full article: <http://publications.mcgill.ca/droit/2014/01/16/scholar-at-risk/>

Montreal Gazette Op-Ed on 'Saudi Arabia's Treatment of Ethiopians Has Been Shameful'

This article portrayed the brutality employed in the 2013 deportation of 140,000 Ethiopians from Saudi Arabia, where they had been living as undocumented workers and was published in December 2013.

Dr. Abebe also maintains an online blog and an active Google profile

Given his desire to speak for and to the people of Ethiopia, his online blog is written mostly in the Amharic language:

<http://www.goolgule.com/%E1%8B%A8%E1%88%95%E1%8C%8D-%E1%8B%AB%E1%88%88%E1%88%85/>

<http://plus.google.com/110681148120589797615>



FELLOWS IN THE WORLD

SEMAHAGN ABEBE AND DESTAW YIZGAW, SCHOLARS AT RISK

Similarly, Destaw Yizgaw's adherence to his ideas and values, and his determined pursuit of his human rights scholarship, has come at the considerable personal cost of a life in exile from his native Ethiopia. When he came to us, he was seeking a new and safe home country, a supportive institution, and a platform for his voice. A short time after his arrival at McGill, such an opportunity came along in the form of a 3-year lectureship contract in Vietnam. This has provided in a safe haven, an institutional platform, and a supportive community of new friends and colleagues. Our best wishes to Destaw.

Semahagn G. Abebe was also a former Fellow in Residence and was McGill's first Scholar at Risk. Scholars at Risk are an international network centred at New York University who defend scholars, values, and academic freedom in higher education. McGill is a member of the network and Nandini Ramanujam is the McGill representative. The Faculty of Law's ability to welcome Scholars at Risk is made possible by the O'Brien Fellows in Residence program. And McGill's engagement with the Network has been recognized: Scholars at Risk are holding their Global Congress here at the Faculty of Law in June 2016.

ZONEZIWOH MBONDGULO WONDIEH, FORMER FELLOW IN RESIDENCE, WELCOMES A MCGILL HUMAN RIGHTS INTERN TO HER ORGANIZATION IN CAMEROON FOLLOWING HER CENTRE STAY

In the summer of 2015, Women for a Change welcomed a McGill student as an intern as part of the McGill Faculty of Law's acclaimed International Human Rights Internship Program.

Zoneziwoh Mbongdulo Wondieh speaks about this experience:

"...Michel has been of great added value to Women for a Change... His experience has not been limited to outreach programs & community practicing, but also institutional visits where he was allowed to observe court rulings, audit lecture sessions in the labour Code/Law in Cameroon. Among his experiences has also been tour to some rich and historic parts of Cameroon. The wealth of knowledge and education he has had within this short period of time is immeasurable. I feel very proud of his enthusiasm and commitment to impact and transform lives. Thank you all for this exchange opportunity!"





FELLOWS IN THE WORLD

ANTHONY FERNANDO, FORMER FELLOW IN RESIDENCE, IS APPOINTED TO THE FIJIAN BENCH

In September 2015, Anthony T. Fernando was one of two new Fijian Court of Appeal judges sworn in before the Fijian head of state and senior members of the judiciary. The Hon. Mr. Justice Anthony Fernando left behind the Seychelles where he lived and worked from 1991-2015 to join a team of twelve judges in Fiji.



MARIKA GILES SAMSON, FORMER GRADUATE FELLOW, APPOINTED INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE CENTRE FOR THE 2015-2016 ACADEMIC YEAR



While Centre Executive Director Nandini Ramanujam takes a well-earned partial leave, Marika Giles Samson stepped in to coordinate a number of Centre Programs, working closely with Centre Coordinator and O'Brien Program Administrator Sharon Webb and the new Centre Director, Professor François Crépeau. Included in her responsibilities were teaching the Fall 2016 Critical Engagements with Human Rights seminar, which is one of the two components of the Centre's highly successful International Human Rights Internship Program, as well as interviewing and matching students to internship for the summer of 2016. Among a very heavy agenda of events and the celebration of the Centre's 10th anniversary, Marika was also particularly proud to spearhead the organization of a conference called From Truth to Reconciliation: Towards a Just Future for the Indigenous Peoples of Canada in March 2016, in collaboration with Centre member Professor Payam Akhavan.

Marika has been an active and passionate member of the Centre since she began her doctorate as an O'Brien Graduate Fellow in 2012, and so was delighted to deepen her engagement during the 2015-2016 academic year. And when she steps down in June 2016, she will be equally delighted to get back to (and complete) the doctoral studies that brought her to McGill and to the O'Brien Program.



FELLOWS IN ACTION

IN FELLOWSHIP

We are proud of the way that the O'Brien Program not only proactively welcomes incoming Fellows, but also works - long before the Fellows' arrival - to identify potential opportunities for collaboration and engagement. These efforts begin during the selection process itself, and are spearheaded by the Program Director, Nandini Ramanujam. The Program Administrator, Sharon Webb, attends to all of the logistical details of getting the Fellows to Canada, and to plays a key role in designing and planning events during their stay. Upon arrival, each Fellow is individually welcomed by the Student Program Coordinator, and once each cohort has settled in, a welcome event is convened to introduce the Fellows to each other, to the graduate fellows, and to the wider CHRLP community.

This is all intended to get the ball rolling, and as will be evident from the body of this report, it rolls. But what is hard to reflect in a report such as this is perhaps the most valuable and enduring legacy of the O'Brien programs: the many informal, often undocumented ways in which the Fellows have engaged in the life of the Centre, the Faculty, and the community. We have been particularly touched by the way that Fellows in Residence have generously advised and mentored students, and the many ways in which they have shared their knowledge and expertise, and drawn upon the editorial and intellectual life of the Centre in return.

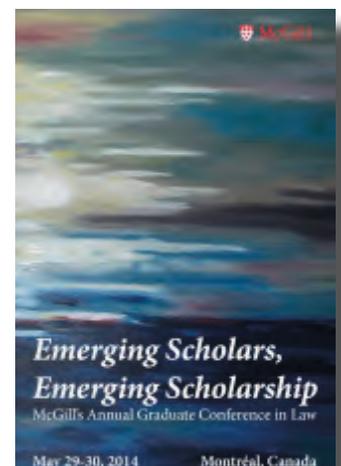


Photo: In Fall 2015, the O'Brien program welcomed three new Fellows in Residence, (Laurel Weldon (left), Pranoto Iskandar (middle), and Tanya Monforte (not pictured), two new Graduate Fellows, and a new student coordinator (Alizeh Ladak, right). All were present at a welcome lunch on September 9, the first of many occasions for them to engage with each other during the term, opportunities that were seized enthusiastically: this cohort were particularly close, attending each other's lectures and roundtables, and providing each other with personal and editorial support.

COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE GRADUATE FELLOWS AND THE FELLOWS IN RESIDENCE ON THE MCGILL ANNUAL GRADUATE CONFERENCES IN LAW

Fellow in Residence Annyssa Bellal chaired one of the panels in the 2014 conference, Emerging Scholars, Emerging Scholarship, a conference organized by a team of ten graduate students including graduate fellows Marika Giles Samson and Shimelis Kene.

And in 2015, Fellow in Residence Noam Schimmel, a recent PhD graduate himself from the London School of Economics, acted as a consultant in the planning of the annual McGill Graduate Students' conference, Inside and Out: Probing the Boundaries of Law.





FELLOWS IN ACTION

IN FELLOWSHIP

COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE O'BRIEN AND ECHENBERG PROGRAMS

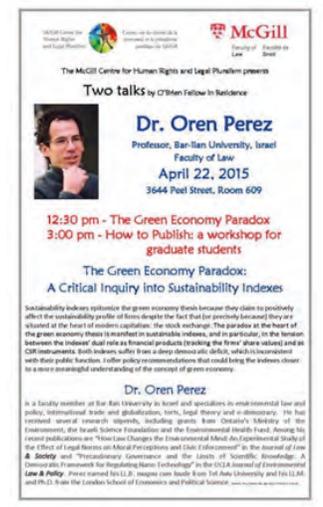


O'Brien Fellow Noam Schimmel was an invaluable collaborator for Echenberg program coordinator Nadia Leter, as well. The two worked closely together in the planning of an International Young Leaders' Forum, part of a series of Global Conferences on Human Rights that focused on building an international community of the next generation of human rights' advocates, professionals, and academics.

FELLOWS IN RESIDENCE OREN PEREZ AND JOHANN VAN DER WESTHUIZEN EACH PARTICIPATED IN A DCL COFFEE HOUR AND ENGAGED FORMALLY AND INFORMALLY WITH DOCTORAL STUDENTS

Oren Perez, O'Brien Fellow in Residence, offered two events in one day. The first, a seminar for a general audience on the Green Economy, was moderated by joint Law and School of the Environment Professor Jaye Ellis; the second, a workshop designed to help graduate students publish their work, was organized by Graduate Fellows Marika Giles Samson and Alvaro Cordova. His publishing talk was scheduled immediately before the bi-weekly DCL Coffee Hour, which he also attended to engage more informally with doctoral students and continue the conversation.

Johann van der Westhuizen, Fellow in Residence, Judge of the South African Constitutional Court, and one of the drafters of the South African constitution after apartheid, was also invited to speak and chat informally with DCL students at a Coffee Hour. An unprecedented opportunity for graduate students, it seems to have been a great pleasure for him too, and he even handed out his business cards to students for future reference!



"I wish to thank Mr. David O'Brien for making the fellowship possible; Nandini Ramanujam for inviting me and for all the arrangements and introductions; Sharon Webb for not only 100% efficient support, but also her extra-curricular kindness; Colleen Sheppard, Andrea Bjorklund, Vrinda Narain, Angela Campbell, and François Crépeau for making me feel at home; and the students for showing enthusiastic interest."

- Justice van der Westhuizen



IN FELLOWSHIP

ANNIE MACDONALD LANGSTAFF LECTURE OFFERED BY FELLOW IN RESIDENCE LAUREL WELDON



Gendered Federal Systems: Informal Institutions, Intersectionality and Change

As part of the Annie Macdonald Langstaff lecture series, which provides a forum for academics, judges, lawyers, and community activists to present scholarly research and practical insights on issues relating to women and the law, Fellow in Residence Laurel Weldon (image left, with Professors Johanne Poirier and Colleen Sheppard) presented and received feedback on a work in progress from her time on 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.

Fellows in Residence Esmeralda Thornhill and Tanya Monforte also offered Annie Macdonald Langstaff lectures during and following their fellowships, in 2012 and 2016, respectively. The seminar series welcomes specialists, advocates, and thinkers in women's rights and feminist theory.

GRADUATE FELLOWS TAKE UP ROLES IN FACULTY AND CENTRE INITIATIVES

From 2014-2016, Graduate Fellow Vanessa Clermont-Isabelle assisted former Centre Director Colleen Sheppard in coordinating and organizing the Discrimination and Inclusion Network and seminar series. The focus of this interdisciplinary network is on discussing and working through issues of systemic discrimination. This is of particular interest to Vanessa given her intention to practise in the area of labour and employment law and her desire to use law as an instrument of social justice.



For the 2015-2016 academic year, Graduate Fellow Bwighane Mwenifumbo (left) joined the team of student coordinators to contribute to the Disability & the Law seminar series. She acted as seminar rapporteur for two of the four seminars, and also assisted in organizing a disability-related dance performance on International Disability Day, December 3. Participating in this seminar series has enriched Bwighane's research in disability law and introduced her to the Canadian context.



CLOSING REMARKS

DIRECTOR FRANÇOIS CRÉPEAU'S CLOSING REMARKS AT PRANOTO ISKANDAR'S NOVEMBER 30, 2015 SEMINAR

In his remarks, Centre Director François Crépeau (centre, red tie) celebrated the richness of the O'Brien Fellowships and praised the engagement and collaboration of the Fall 2015 Fellows in Residence (Tanya Monforte, S. Laurel Weldon, and Pranoto Iskandar). Pranoto offered a seminar in which he discussed some important challenges to the struggling democracy in Indonesia. The entire 2015 O'Brien team were in attendance. (l-r: Tanya Montforte, Marika Giles Samson, Laurel Weldon, François Crépeau, Pranoto Iskandar, Student Coordinator Alizeh Ladak, and Graduate Fellows Bwighane Mwenifumbo and Rezaur Rahman; photo by Program Administrator Sharon Webb).



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The O'Brien Fellowships have allowed the Centre to create and nurture an intellectual community that remains interconnected long after the O'Brien fellows have left for new horizons. The Graduate Fellows and Fellows in Residence bring an invaluable contribution to the debates we foster, either through their participation in courses or events, or simply through the more intimate conversations that we encourage between all the members of our Centre. Through their experience, expertise and creativity, O'Brien Fellows energize us all and serve as role models for our students.

”

- François Crépeau

Director, Centre for Human Rights and Legal Pluralism



PROGRAM LEADERSHIP



Nandini Ramanujam, Program Director

O'Brien Fellows in Residence Selection Committee



François Crépeau



Frédéric Mégret



Colleen Sheppard



Shauna van Praagh

O'Brien Graduate Fellows Selection Committee



Rosalie Jukier,
Associate Dean Graduate Studies
(2012-2013)



Angela Campbell,
Associate Dean Graduate Studies
(2013-2015)



Richard Gold,
Associate Dean Graduate Studies
(2015-present)

McGill Centre for Human Rights and Legal Pluralism

Centre sur les droits de la personne et le pluralisme juridique de McGill

Centre Leadership

2011-2015

Nandini Ramanujam, Executive Director & Director of Programs

Colleen Sheppard, Centre Director

Sharon Webb, Centre Coordinator & Program Administrator

2015-2016

Nandini Ramanujam, Executive Director & Director of Programs

Marika Giles Samson, Interim Executive Director (2015-2016)

François Crépeau, Centre Director

Sharon Webb, Centre Coordinator & Program Administrator

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Report Prepared in Spring 2016