



THE RELIGION AND DIVERSITY PROJECT/RELIGION ET DIVERSITÉ

Volume 1 Issue 1 | Spring 2011

Letter from Director | Lettre de la directrice

Year one of The Religion and Diversity Project began with our first team meeting held from May 26-27, 2010 at the University of Ottawa. Team members, students, and representatives from the Canadian Human Rights Commission and the Department of Canadian Heritage were in attendance.

Our first year has had a flurry of research activity including workshops, fieldwork, brainstorming with policy partners and the building of many collaborative relationships, the details of which you'll see in the pages of this newsletter as well as on our website at www.religionaanddiversity.ca

We are reminded on an almost daily basis of the relevance of our research as issues around religious freedom and religious diversity present themselves in the news media.



Thank you to all our team members, students and representatives from our partner and stakeholder organizations for the incredible energy and research talent you've brought to the Religion and Diversity Project this year.

La première année du projet de la religion et la diversité commençait avec notre première réunion d'équipe tenue du 26-27 mai 2010 à l'Université d'Ottawa. Les membres d'équipe, les étudiants et les représentants de la Commission des droits de l'homme canadienne et du Patrimoine canadien étaient présents.

Notre première année a connu une véritable rafale d'activités de recherche incluant des ateliers, des recherches sur le terrain, des réflexions avec nos partenaires politiques et l'établissement de plusieurs collaborations, dont vous verrez les détails vous verrez dans la page de cette circulaire aussi bien que sur notre site web à www.religionaanddiversity.ca

Presque quotidiennement, on nous rappelle la pertinence de notre recherche, car l'actualité amène des questions et des enjeux liés à la liberté et la diversité religieuses.

Merci beaucoup à tous les chercheurs, étudiants et représentants de nos organisations de partenaire pour l'énergie incroyable et le talent déployés cette année dans le cadre du projet Religion et Diversité.

Lori G. Beaman

Project Director | Directrice du projet

Contents

Announcements	2	UROP Research.	5	La religion dans la sphère	
Student Caucus Leader	2	Recent Publications	5	publique... ..	7
Multiculturalism and		MITACS Fellowship	6	Varieties of Religious	
Religious Identity	3	Priority Research Areas.....	6	Establishment	7
Research Grants Year One.....	4			Upcoming Events.....	8



Announcements

We are pleased to announce that Dr. Lene van der Aa Kühle of Aarhus University will be coming to the University of Ottawa from May to December, 2011, as part of a visiting fellowship. This fellowship will give her the opportunity to work with Religion and Diversity team members in and around the Ottawa area as well as to attend related events and conferences.

Congratulations! Amélie Barras has been awarded a SSHRC Postdoctoral Fellowship, which will begin at the Université de Montréal with Solange LeFebvre in the fall of 2011.

James A. Beckford is the 2010-2011 president of the SSSR (Society for Study of Religion) and will be organising this year's Annual Meeting in Milwaukee.

Peter Beyer is the 2010-2011 president of the ASR (Association of Sociology of Religion). He will be organising this year's meeting in Las Vegas. The theme of the meeting is "Socially Engaged Religion in a Global Context" and Michael Wilkinson is this year's programme chair.



Janet Jakobsen at the Queen's University Sexual Diversity and Religious Diversity workshop.

Student Caucus Leader

Introducing Cathy Holtmann

Cathy Holtmann is a PhD student at the University of New Brunswick in Fredericton, NB studying under team member Nancy Nason-Clark. Her research interests lie in the area of women, social action and religion, particularly Catholicism. Cathy's doctoral research will look at the role that religion plays in the lives of immigrant women in Atlantic Canada, particularly when crises arise in their families.



Cathy Holtmann

As caucus leader Cathy hopes to help communicate the goals of the Religion and Diversity Project to graduate students as well as

the opportunities the Project can offer them in terms of their research. She hopes that graduate students will take advantage of the Facebook page and Project events to communicate with each other and with the team.

She was able to meet with several students at the Sexual Diversity and Religious Diversity workshop at Queen's University and participated in a breakfast conversation with Andrew Yip about his research on religion, youth and sexuality in the UK.

Cathy has organized a sociology of religion session for graduate students at the Canadian Sociological Association (CSA) meetings entitled "Religious Diversity in Canada: Emerging Scholarship." It will take place on **Tuesday 31 May from 3:15-4:45 pm.**

Pamela Dickey Young hosted a workshop titled Sexual Diversity and Religious Diversity at Queen's University March 31st – April 2nd, 2011, spanning year one and two of the project. The workshop sought to explore the many interactions and interconnections between the construction of religious identities and sexual identities. The workshop began with a public lecture by Janet Jakobsen. *More information to follow in our next issue.*

Multiculturalism and Religious Identity: Perspectives from Ottawa and Delhi.

Workshop Report

Michelle Hawkins and Leo Van Arragon

This workshop, "Multiculturalism and Religious Identity," funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council Aid to Workshops Program, Carleton University's Centre for Values and Ethics and The Religion and Diversity Project (SSHRC Major Collaborative Research Initiative), brought together scholars from India and Canada to explore the ways in which religious diversity is imagined and practised in their respective countries.

It is increasingly being recognized that the place of religion within the multicultural political model



Leo Van Arragon and Prasenjit Biswas, professor of philosophy at North Eastern Hill University



Peter Beyer and Rajeev Bhargava presented keynote lectures as part of a public session on Secularism. Sonia Sikka moderates.

urgently requires greater attention than it has received to date. We need to consider more carefully, whether, how and to what extent religious identities should be included within political practices designed to allow citizens to retain and express their distinct cultural identities while participating in the common public life of a wider society.

This interdisciplinary workshop took up this issue in relation to two nations, Canada and India, both of which have struggled to

find viable political frameworks for governing religious diversity.

Leading scholars from India and Canada met at the University of Ottawa in September, 2010. Their research engages with questions of multiculturalism and religious diversity. This workshop facilitated comparative discussions connecting theoretical analysis with policy considerations.

To read the full research report please visit:
[www.religionanddiversity.ca/
events/](http://www.religionanddiversity.ca/events/)

Research Grants Year One

In the first year of the project five research grants were awarded for individual co-investigators to conduct research in areas related to the Religion and Diversity Project.

Rukhsana Ahmed, of University of Ottawa, investigates the health



beliefs of Muslim immigrant women in Canada and the implications for

developing culturally and religiously appropriate health care practices in this population group.

Donald Boisvert, of Concordia University, is studying the current

debate within the Anglican Church of Canada with respect to



the broad issue of same-sex relationships, more specifically the blessing of same-sex marriages and the ordination of LGBT clergy. The main aim of this research is to look at the ways in which LGBT persons are talked

about and portrayed on both sides of this debate.

Avigail Eisenberg, of University of Victoria, explores how reli-



gious diversity is understood, represented and managed in democratic contexts.

Her project explores the relation between religious identification and the norms surrounding citizen participation. The research is conducted through a critical examination of primary and secondary literature and focuses on assessing the lessons to be learned about different forms of participation from Canadian case studies.

University of Toronto's **Anver Emon's** research agenda is to provide

brief introduction to how Christian and Jewish feminist movements historically have con-



tended with the role of the male scholar as feminist authority; pro-

vide an overview of the contributions of Muslim male scholars have made to the agenda of Islamic feminism; critique the works of Muslim male scholars for the implicit limits they permit on the capacity of the law to change. This research furthers the discourse on Islamic feminism at a time when questions of Islam, gender, and equality have come to the forefront of legislative and policy circles in North America and Europe.

Rubina Ramji, of Cape Breton University, examines how Cana-



dian Muslim youth, living in a post 9/11 world, are constructing their identities in relation to often

hostile and demeaning media representations of Islam and its followers. Given how global events have specifically affected Muslim images in the media, this research addresses the role of media and its impact on the adaptation and transformation of self-identity amongst Canadian Muslim immigrant youth.

UROP Research

Undergraduate Researcher

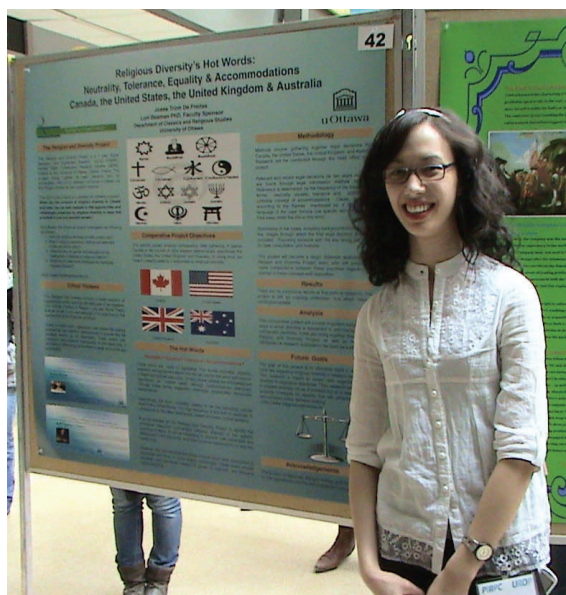
Josee Trinh de Freitas

We are pleased to announce that Josee Trinh de Freitas is working with the project at the University of Ottawa through the Undergraduate Research Opportunity Project (UROP)—a program that aims to involve undergraduate students in research in their field at the University of Ottawa.

Josee is researching recent legal decisions from Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia that used the language of neutrality, equality, accommodation and tolerance in order to begin to develop a database.

Josee is a third year student at the University of Ottawa studying Sociology and Religious Studies.

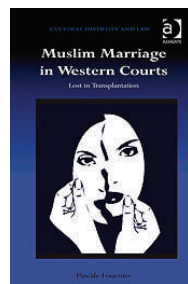
We are happy to welcome Josee to our team.



Josee Trinh de Freitas at the UROP symposium

Recent Publications

We are proud to highlight a few recent publications from our team members.



Pascale Fournier.

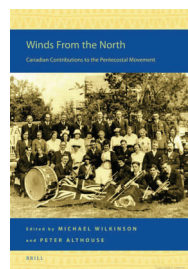
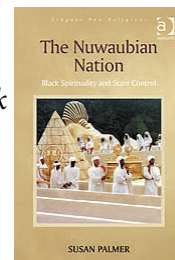
Muslim Marriage in Western Courts: Lost in Transplantation.

(Ashgate, 2010).

Susan Palmer.

The Nuwaubian Nation: Black Spirituality and State Control.

(Ashgate, 2010).



Michael Wilkinson and Peter Althouse (eds)

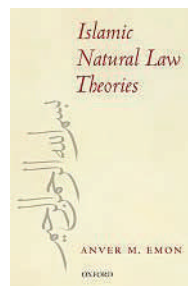
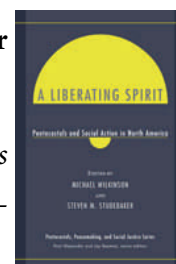
Winds from the North: Canadian Contributions to the Pentecostal Movement.

(Brill, 2010)

Michael Wilkinson and Peter Althouse (eds)

A Liberating Spirit: Pentecostals and Social Action in North America.

(Wipf and Stock, 2010).



Anver M. Emon

Islamic Natural Law Theories

(Oxford, 2010)

MITACS Fellowship

Arlene MacDonald has been awarded a MITACS Elevate Strategic Fellowship to conduct research within the parameters of the Religion and Diversity Project.

Arlene is examining the issue of Religious Diversity in Ontario workplaces. The research is divided into two phases. The first uses data from Peter Beyer's Immigrant Young Adult Project, which includes interviews and focus groups among immigrant young adults in several Canadian cities. Arlene is investigating how

these young adults view religious diversity in the workplace. The second phase of the research is to investigate religion at work in the healthcare sector through a series of case studies.

Arlene received her PhD from the University of Toronto in 2009 where she worked with Pamela Klassen on her thesis entitled "Resurrected Bodies: Individual Experiences and Collective Expression of Organ Transplant in North America."



Arlene MacDonald

MacDonald is currently a faculty member at the Institute for Medical Humanities at the University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston.

Priority Research Areas Year One

The four strands of the Religion and Diversity Project selected the following priority research areas for the first year.

Strand One, whose focus is on ways of understanding religious identity, is creating a database of representations of religious identities and diversity in a specific segment of the Canadian media, namely the internet.

Strand Two, which seeks to better understand how religion is defined and delimited, addresses questions about the definition and delimitation of religion in the con-

text of Canadian and British prisons.

Strand Three focuses on sexuality and gender as hot topics for religious debate and examines the intersections of religion, gender and violence and highlight marginalized voices. The strand projects combine literature searches with the compilation of extensive bibliographies, analysis of Bill 94 in Québec, and the creation of a database with extensive resources regarding debates over wearing the niqab.

Strand Four seeks to come up with

alternative strategies for states to manage religious diversity. To better understand the field, Strand Four is developing an extensive annotated bibliography of research on religion, law and the concepts of obligation and commandment in liberal democracies.



Gary Bouma and Kim Knott at the first annual team meeting in May 2011.

La religion dans la sphère publique

Perspectives interdisciplinaires à travers les provinces canadiennes

Compte-rendu

Solange Lefebvre et Roger Bantea Alfani

Sur les débats ayant trait à la diversité religieuse, le Québec s'est démarqué par la nature très publique de ses controverses, notamment sur la question des accommodements raisonnables. Pourtant, toutes les régions canadiennes sont concernées par des défis importants sur ces enjeux. D'où la tenue de ce colloque, à l'Université de Montréal, qui regroupa du 4



Les participants à l'Université de Montréal.

au 6 novembre 2010, des chercheurs provenant des plusieurs disciplines – sociologie, anthropologie, sciences politiques, théologie, et droit – avec comme thème *La religion dans la sphère publique : perspectives interdisciplinaires à travers les provinces canadiennes*. Ce colloque avait pour objectif de cerner les situations différentes à travers le pays, par le biais d'études de cas et d'analyses théoriques. Organisé par la titulaire de la chaire religion, culture et société, Solange Lefebvre, il constitue le premier événement organisé à Montréal dans le cadre du projet des Grands travaux de recherche concertée sur la diversité religieuse au Canada, dirigé par Mme Lori Beaman de l'Université d'Ottawa.

Lisez le compte-rendu à

www.religionanddiversity.ca/events

Varieties of Religious Establishments

Workshop Report

Tera Bradford and Leo Van Arragon

The workshop, "Varieties of Religious Establishments," funded by The Religion and Diversity Project, St. Thomas University, the Atlantic Human Rights Centre, and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada brought together scholars from Australia, the United States

and Canada to examine the role of governments in the establishment of religion.

While assertions of religious neutrality or secularism are common to states throughout the world, it is clear that they, through a variety of mechanisms and practices, privilege some types of religious

expression while marginalizing others.

This workshop examined the informal and formal ways in which states engage in religious establishment and regulation.

Read the full report at :

www.religionanddiversity.ca/events/

Upcoming Events

April 26-28, 2011

University of Ottawa

Team Meeting: Hot Spots: Exploring Sites of Contention.

CSSR Participation

May 29, 2011

- Panel: Religion, Multiculturalism and Identity. Team Members Peter Beyer and Heather Shipley.
- Roundtable: Reflexivity in Research and Writing. Team Members Peter Beyer and Rubina Ramji.
- Panel: Spiritual Understanding of a 'Good Death' in Palliative Care. Team Member Paul Bramadat

May 30, 2011

- Panel: Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity. Team members Sam Reimer and Michael Wilkinson.
- Roundtable: Religion, Citizenship and Public Policy in Canada. Team Members Lori Beaman, Paul Bowlby and Paul Bramadat.
- Panel: Inclusion and Exclusion: The Construction of Religious Identities in Canadian Mosaics: Student Team Members Leo van Arragon, Lauren Forbes, Paul L. Gareau, Qamer Hameed and Steven Tomlins.

May 30, 2011 8pm

Fredericton, NB

Religion and Diversity Project Social

Gathering.

Please contact us for more details.

November 2-3, 2011

Graduate Student Workshop Series

University of Ottawa

Research directions in the social sciences on religion and diversity

Applications due August 15, 2011.

Please see our website for more details.

For a more detailed list of upcoming events please visit our website:

www.religionanddiversity.ca and on

the Student Caucus Facebook page:

http://www.facebook.com/pages/

Religion-and-Diversity-Project-

Student-Caucus/171764062871786

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