2015-2016 ANNUAL REPORT

Realizing Constitutional Rights through Advocacy, Education and Academic Research

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The David Asper Centre for Constitutional Rights is a centre within the University of Toronto, Faculty of Law devoted to advocacy, research and education in the areas of constitutional rights in Canada. The Centre aims to play a vital role in articulating Canada's constitutional vision to the broader world. The cornerstone of the Centre is a legal clinic that brings together students, faculty and members of the bar to work on significant constitutional cases and advocacy initiatives.

Through the establishment of the Centre the University of Toronto joins a small group of international law schools that play an active role in constitutional debates of the day. It is the only Canadian Centre in existence that attempts to bring constitutional law research, policy, advocacy and teaching together under one roof. The Centre was established through a generous gift from University of Toronto Faculty of Law alumnus David Asper (LLM '07).

**VISION, MISSION AND VALUES**

**VISION** Sophisticated awareness, understanding and acceptance of constitutional rights in Canada.

**MISSION** Realizing constitutional rights through advocacy, education and academic research.

**VALUES** The Centre’s ideals are those of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and will guide the Centre in its work.

- **Excellence:** the Centre is committed to high quality academic research, intellectual engagement, and intellectual rigour as the foundations for all of its work.
- **Independence:** the Centre’s location within an academic institution provides the basis for trust, integrity, and intellectual freedom and diversity.
- **Diversity:** the Centre is committed to diversity in its interaction with community organizations and groups and to intellectual diversity in its work and approach to legal analysis.
- **Innovation:** the Centre seeks to shape the direction of constitutional advocacy, to be flexible in order to respond to emerging constitutional issues, and to use the Charter to transform Canada’s legal and policy landscape.
- **Access to Constitutional Rights:** the Centre seeks to promote access to constitutional justice and human rights for vulnerable individuals & groups.
The start of this fiscal year coincided roughly with the loss of a great Canadian and a pioneer in the field of civil liberties advocacy, Alan Borovoy. When I joined the Faculty of Law as the inaugural executive director of the Asper Centre, one of the first tasks I set about doing was to consult with key stakeholders and leaders in the area of constitutional rights. One of my first meetings was with Alan Borovoy, still general counsel of the Canadian Civil Liberties at that time. He was soon to retire but still maintained a keen interest in what the Faculty was up to in this area. As a distinguished alumnus of the Faculty, he was admired by many people here. On behalf of the Asper Centre, I am pleased to be working with the Faculty to develop an appropriate way to honour him over the coming year.

As we complete the move into the new Jackman Law Building, I want to further acknowledge the support of David Asper, both to that beautiful new building and to the Asper Centre itself. His most recent donation, in addition to the original endowment to establish the Centre, has allowed us to hire a part-time program coordinator for the next couple of years. I am looking forward to reporting next year on the increased capacity this has generated for the Centre.

One significant new project will be the Sesquicentennial Constitutional Roundtable series commencing in January 2017. Hon. Chief Justice George Strathy will kick-off the series with the Morris A. Gross Lecture, to be followed by lunchtime roundtable discussions focusing on seminal constitutional cases in the past 150 years. The aim is to collect these workshop papers into an online volume for access by constitutional law scholars, students and teachers. We have an impressive line-up.

I also continue to be impressed with the work of the students in the Asper Centre. Their hard work in the clinic and through our voluntary working groups is our biggest capacity builder and what makes us very proud of the work that we do. It is wonderful to share their first experiences with advocacy and to see their engagement with law through fresh eyes. You can read some of their comments in the description of the Asper Clinic in this report.

Cheryl Milne, LL.B, MSW
Executive Director
Jessica Ernst v Alberta Energy Regulator

This appeal, heard on January 12, 2016 centered on the claimant’s s.2(b) *Charter* rights in the context of a dispute over hydraulic fracturing with the respondent regulator. The claimant alleged that the hydraulic fracturing process had adverse impacts on an aquifer near her property, and challenged the restrictions which prevented her communicating through public channels about her complaint. The trial judge found that statutory immunity of the respondent regulator barred the claim and the Court of Appeal dismissed the claimant’s appeal.

The Asper Centre, represented by litigator-in-residence Raj Anand, argued that governing bodies whose enabling legislation includes an immunity provision cannot use that immunity to avoid *Charter* liability. Absolute immunity from *Charter* liability is not available at common law, and allowing statutory provisions to bar *Charter* claims would undermine public accountability. Allowing the statutory provision to bar the claim would also displace the courts’ jurisdiction under s.24(1) of the *Charter* to determine whether a damages award is an appropriate and just remedy in the circumstances.

The Supreme Court’s decision has yet to be released.

R v KRJ

The Asper Centre was granted leave to intervene in this case, which dealt with the retroactive applicability of amendments to s.161(1) of the *Criminal Code* in sentencing. The accused was sentenced to nine years’ imprisonment for sexual offences against a minor that occurred between 2008 and 2011. s.161(1) was amended in August 2012 to expand the discretionary power of sentencing judges to impose prohibitions on contact with minors and Internet access against all offenders, whether or not the amendments were in force at the time of the offence.

At the hearing on December 12, 2015 the Asper Centre, represented by John Norris of Simcoe Chambers, proposed a refinement to the framework for analyzing punishment under s.11 of the *Charter*. The proposed framework would have examined the impact of a consequence on the liberty or security of an offender, whether the consequence was imposed in furtherance of sentencing purposes and principles and, if not, whether the impact on the offender was proportionate to the non-sentencing purpose being served.

The Supreme Court released its decision on July 21, 2016. While the exact framework proposed by the Asper Centre was not adopted, the Court cited the Asper
Centre’s argument on the importance of considering the impact of a consequence on an offender’s s.7 liberty and security interests when determining whether a consequence is punishment. The Court accordingly added this consideration as a third factor in the existing framework and applied the revised test to find that both impugned provisions constituted punishment. While the retroactive application of the s.161(1)(d) restriction on Internet access was saved by a s.1 *Oakes* analysis, the retroactive application of expanded restrictions under s.161(1)(c) failed at the proportionality stage and was deemed constitutionally invalid.

**B010 v Minister of Citizenship and Immigration**

The Supreme Court of Canada released its decision in this set of four appeals on November 27, 2015. The appeal focused on the definition of human smuggling adopted by the Refugee Protection Board, the standard of review for that decision, and whether section 7 of the Charter is engaged by the inadmissibility process. The Appellant, called B010 in the case, is a Tamil who fled from the Sri-Lankan government, first to Thailand, and then to Canada. In order to get to Canada, he worked as part of the crew of the ship which was smuggling him in. The Board determined that B010 was ineligible to enter Canada because he fit the definition of "people smuggler" because he aided or abetted the other people on the ship to enter Canada illegally. The Supreme Court held that the Board’s interpretation of the section was unreasonable and that people who merely aided in the illegal entry of other refugees or asylum-seekers in the course of their collective flight to safety can avoid inadmissibility under IRPA. The Court declined to rule on the Charter arguments. The Asper Centre was represented by Audrey Macklin, a professor at U of T's Faculty of Law, and Barbara Jackman of Jackman, Nazami and Associates.
The State of Canada’s Constitutional Democracy

On February 26 and 27, 2016, the Asper Centre co-hosted a two-day symposium with the Centre for Constitutional Studies, University of Alberta, examining the state of Canada’s constitutional democracy. The symposium looked at the dramatic changes that have taken place in recent years at the national level in respect to the day-to-day functioning of Canadian democracy, and how these changes affect the separation of powers, the rule of law, and constitutional supremacy.

The conference opened with remarks from the Asper Centre’s Executive Director Cheryl Milne, the Centre for Constitutional Studies’ Executive Director Patricia Paradis, and Faculty of Law Professor Lorraine Weinrib, who set out the objectives for the symposium and moderated the discussions.

The first day of the conference featured presentations on democratic processes such as elections and government formation, constitutionalism and the administration of justice, and the democratic functions of the Senate, the Prime Minister, the Cabinet and the House of Commons. Notable presenters on the first day of proceedings included Dean Hugo Cyr from the Université de Québec à Montréal, Professor Emeritus Peter Russell from the University of Toronto, Professor Yasmin Dawood from the University of Toronto Faculty of Law and Professor Robert Hazell from the University College London.

Discussions on the second day of the conference covered questions of constitutional governance and government responses to constitutional litigations, as well as the processes, independence, merits and transparency of public appointments. Notable presenters on the second day included the Honourable Irwin Cotler, Professor Errol Mendes from the University of Ottawa, and Professor David Schneiderman from the University of Toronto.

Two student presentations also featured in the conference. Current SJD candidate Jennifer Raso and JD/MPP candidate Benjamin Hanff gave presentations dealing respectively with the application of statistics to the judicial system and the public understanding of Parliamentary processes.

Selected papers to be published online in the Constitutional Forum.
Book Launch—False Security: The Radicalization of Canadian Anti-Terrorism

October 8, 2015 | Authors: Kent Roach (Professor of Law, University of Toronto), Craig Forcese (Associate Professor of Law, University of Ottawa). Panelists: Sukanya Pillay (General Counsel, Canadian Civil Liberties Association), Joe Fogarty (former UK government security liaison to Canada), Ron Atkey P.C., Q.C. (first Chair of the Security Intelligence Review Committee.

False Security examines the ways in which Canada’s new terror laws, in particular Bill C-51, fail to address accountability problems within Canadian security agencies and impair Canada’s ability to defend against terrorism, as well as presenting radical challenges to Canadian rights and liberties.

This panel was jointly hosted with the Aboriginal Law Program as part of its Speaker Series.

IJCLE/ACCLE Conference: The Risks and Rewards of Clinical Legal Education

July 10-12, 2016 | Conference organizers: Cheryl Milne (Executive Director, Asper Centre for Constitutional Rights), Lisa Cirillo (Director, Downtown Legal Services)

The Faculty of Law hosted the joint International Journal of Clinical Legal Education (IJCLE) and Association for Canadian Clinical Legal Education (ACCLE) conference on legal clinical education. It was one of the largest such events ever hosted by the Faculty, including guests and speakers representing 18 countries and over 40 universities worldwide.

Over three days in nearly 40 concurrent sessions the conference covered topics as wide-ranging as community engagement, clinical pedagogy, and specialized clinics such as family law, discrimination law and women’s legal clinics, from both a Canadian and international perspective.

The conference took advantage of the Faculty’s newly-opened Jackman Law Building, with meals being hosted in the Atrium and sessions taking place in classrooms and in the Moot Court.

Papers presented at the conference will become available in the upcoming special issue of the IJCLE.
CONSTITUTIONAL ROUNDTABLES

The Myth of Balancing in Constitutional Rights Cases
September 16, 2015 | Speaker: Richard Moon, University of Windsor Law School

A Theory of Discrimination Law
September 29, 2015 | Author: Tarunabh Khaitan, Associate Professor and Hackney Fellow in Law, College University of Oxford

The Power to Enforce the Law: Presidential Power and American Immigration Policy
October 14, 2015 | Author: Cristina Rodriguez, Leighton Homer Surbeck Professor of Law at Yale Law School

The Absence of Solidarity Amongst Arab Elites: Causes and Consequences of the Failure of Post-2011 Constitutional Reform
October 30, 2015 | Author: Zaid Al-Ali, Law and Public Affairs Fellow at Princeton University

Subsection 15(2) of the Charter and its Disconnection with Substantive Equality
February 3, 2016 | Speaker: Raj Anand, Constitutional Litigator in Residence, Asper Centre

Legal Pluralism, Gender Equality and Parity of Participation: Constitutional Issues Concerning Customary Law in Liberia
February 24, 2016 | Author: Susan Williams, Walter W. Foskett Professor of Law and Director, Center for Constitutional Democracy, Maurer School of Law (Indiana University)

The Conventions of Constitutional Amendment in Canada
March 15, 2016 | Author: Richard Albert, Associate Professor of Law and Dean’s Research Scholar, Boston College Law School
Clinic Students
Elizabeth Kurz, Eva Jadine Lannon, Daniel Mapa, Matthew Milne, David Marshal, Brandon Pasternak, Kristina Panayotopoulos, Alexandra Wong, Bilal Manji, Lara Koerner

Clinic Projects
The students were divided up in groups of two to three to work on the various projects this term. Students worked on the *KRJ* intervention at the Supreme Court of Canada, the Centre’s intervention in *Ernst v Alberta Energy Regulator* and two additional projects exploring the application of Charter values to administrative decision-making and the possibility of a Charter claim in relation to prison conditions.

Clinic Speakers
- Hon. Justice Feldman of the Ontario Court of Appeal
- Prof. Kent Roach
- Douglas Elliott, Cambridge LLP
- Zachary Green, Constitutional Law Branch, AG Ontario
- Cara Zwibel, Canadian Civil Liberties Association

Pro Bono Assistance
- **John Norris** served as pro bono counsel in the Centre’s intervention in *KRJ*
- **Raj Anand** of WeirFoulds LLP served as pro bono counsel in *Ernst v Alberta Energy Regulator*

I think [my partner] and I truly benefited from the high level of engagement during our class presentation. I was struck by how profound and “on point” the other students’ comments were (considering they have not read nearly as much about [the issues]), and I think that this form of learning and debating is what makes the clinic experience more enriching and collaborative.

- Clinic Student

Last year, we attended an information session about the clinical opportunities available at the Faculty. A student from the Asper Centre discussed his work on an intervention at the Supreme Court of Canada. Our first thought: they let students do that?

- Clinic Students
The University of Toronto’s Wilson Moot Team continued its winning streak this year, with support from the David Asper Centre. This year’s team included Sarah Bittman, Winston Gee, Geetha Philipupillai and Giorgio Traini. Competing against 11 other participating schools, the team placed first overall and won first place factum for the fifth year in a row. The team was coached by Cheryl Milne, Lorraine Weinrib and Joseph Cheng, and student coaches Deborah Boswell, Chloe Boubalos, Katherine Long and Bradon Willms. The problem this year focused on the applications of sections 7 and 15 of the Charter to the availability of OHIP for sex reassignment surgery for a transgendered claimant.

STUDENT RESEARCH ASSISTANTS

James Elcombe, Research Assistant Summer 2015—James provided much needed research support for planning this year’s cases. He also led the environmental working group.

Alvin Yau, Work Study Student 2015/16—Alvin provided website support through the work study program.
RAJ ANAND is a partner and an arbitrator and mediator with WeirFoulds LLP. His practice includes the areas of administrative, human rights, constitutional and employment law, civil litigation, professional negligence and regulation.

In his third term as an elected Bencher of the Law Society, he is currently the Vice-Chair of the Law Society Tribunal’s Hearing Division. He was a member of task forces or working groups on admission requirements, articling, good character, Law Society governance and Tribunal reform. He was Vice Chair of the Equity and Aboriginal Issues Committee for five years, and is currently Co-Chair of the Working Group on Challenges faced by Racialized Lawyers and Paralegals in Ontario and Chair of the Three Year Review of the Tribunal reforms.

Raj graduated from the University of Toronto Faculty of Law with the Dean’s Key in 1978. He has served as President of the U of T Law Alumni Council, the Minority Advocacy and Rights Council, the International Commission of Jurists Canada, and Pro Bono Law Ontario; Co-Chair of the U of T Tribunal; and board member of the Advocates’ Society, Legal Aid Ontario, the Law Commission of Ontario, the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, Justice for Children and Youth, and the Income Security Advocacy Centre. Raj was Chief Commissioner of the Human Rights Commission in 1988-89, Board of Inquiry from 1989-94, and founding Chair of the Human Rights Legal Support Centre in 2008-10.

Raj has taught “The New Administrative Law” at the masters level, and “Legal Ethics: Legal Values” and “Diversity and the Legal Profession” at the JD level. He was the first recipient of the Advocates’ Society Award of Justice in 1997, and has since received the Law Society Medal, the Professional Man of the Year award of the Indo-Canada Chamber of Commerce, and the South Asian Bar Association’s Distinguished Career Award. In 2013, he was an inaugural Roy McMurtry Visiting Clinical Fellow at Osgoode Hall Law School.
Clinical Legal Education and Working Groups

As we await a decision in one clinic case from last year *Ernst v Alberta Regulator* students will prepare applications for leave to intervene in new constitutional appeals before the Supreme Court. During the fall term, Janet Minor will be the Asper Centre’s Constitutional-Litigator-In-Residence. She will mentor clinic students with their case files and provide a public lecture for the law school. Working groups will tackle privacy rights under Bill C-41 (Anti-Terror legislation) and will continue the work of the Environmental Rights working group.

Constitutional Roundtables

The Constitutional Roundtables commencing in 2017 will focus on Canada’s Sesquicentennial. We invited scholars to contribute papers to a series taking a fresh look at seminal cases in the last 150 years. Contributors include Prof. Audrey Macklin, Prof. Ben Berger from Osgoode Law School, Prof. Eric Adams from the University of Alberta and Prof. Margot Young of the University of British Columbia among others. The Centre aims to produce an e-book that will be easily accessible by constitutional scholars and academics and a research and teaching tool. The series will be kicked off with the Morris A. Gross Lecture delivered by the Chief Justice of Ontario, Hon. George Strathy.

WEBSITE UPDATES

Our Cross-Canada Appellate Cases and Supreme Court Case Materials sections have continued to be updated over the past year. The Asper Centre website serves the important role of making case summaries, facta and information readily available to the public for research and education. Webcasts of events run by the Asper Centre, and commentary on recent decisions in cases that the Asper Centre intervened in are available on the website.

We have also recently updated our Supreme Court case materials page to include reasons and submissions for more recent Supreme Court cases, as well as adding our own summaries of the cases we add. We have also added links to commentary and other publications discussing those cases onto our website in order to bring added value to our coverage of major SCC decisions.
Papers from Symposium

A number of the papers produced for the February symposium, The State of Canada’s Constitutional Democracy, will be published along with the symposium proceedings in Constitutional Forum, the online journal of our partner the Centre for Constitutional Studies. Authors include Josh Hunter, Charles Feldman, Vincent Kazmierski, Carissima Mathen, Jennifer Raso, Peter Russell, Mark Walters, John Whyte and Cara Zwibel.

Asper Centre in the News

Laura Baziuk, “Supreme Court of Canada gives wrongfully convicted BC man right to sue,” News Talk 980 CKNW (May 1, 2015). Cheryl Milne is asked for comment on the Supreme Court of Canada decision to give Ivan Henry, a wrongfully convicted BC man, the right to sue.

Victor Ferreira, “Ontario proposal aiming to cut costs and free up courts would disregard right to a fair trial: critics,” The National Post (May 12, 2015). Cheryl Milne is asked for comment on the Ontario Government’s proposal to create an administrative monetary penalty system to handle Highway Traffic Act infractions.


Kent Roach and Craig Forcese, “Banishment is a poor tool in fight against terrorism,” The Globe and Mail (September 29, 2015). Professors Kent Roach (University of Toronto) and Craig Forcese (University of Ottawa) analyze the new law the enables Canada to revoke the citizenship of dual citizens convicted of terrorism offences.

Cristin Schmitz, “Government agent immunity issue one of challenges for SCC,” The Lawyers Weekly (January 15, 2016). Cheryl Milne and WeirFoulds LLP’s Raj Anand, the Asper Centre’s constitutional litigator in residence, are featured in this article on the Jessica Ernst v Alberta Energy Regulator case heard by the Supreme Court of Canada.
PRO BONO CONTRIBUTIONS

Faculty Support

- **Prof. Hamish Stewart** represented the Asper Centre in *R v KRJ*.
- **Prof. Kent Roach** maintained his role of Chair of the Advisory Group.
- **Prof. Andrew Green** provided support to the Environmental Rights Working Group.
- **Prof. Lorraine Weinrib** co-hosted the February Symposium and assisted in obtaining SSHRC funding for the project.

Pro Bono Lawyers

- **John Norris** served as pro bono counsel in the Centre’s intervention in *R v KRJ*.
- **Raj Anand** was our Constitutional Litigator in Residence and represented the Asper Centre in *Jessica Ernst v Alberta Energy Regulator*.
- **Sally Gomery** of Norton Rose Fulbright took over the role of our pro bono Ottawa agent.
We wish to acknowledge the 5-year commitment of an additional annual donation by David Asper toward the operating costs of the Centre. In addition to ensuring that we continue to meet those operating expenses, it has allowed us to hire a program coordinator on a temporary basis to support the work of the Centre.
**ADVISORY GROUP**

**Professor Kent Roach** is the chair of the Advisory group. He holds the Prichard-Wilson Chair of Law and Public Policy. His research interests include the comparative study of miscarriages of justice, judicial review, and anti-terrorism law and policy. He is the author of 12 books, the co-editor of several collections of essays and published casebooks, the author of the Criminal Law and Charter volumes in Irwin Law’s essentials of Canadian law series, and has published over 200 articles and chapters. He served as counsel in several important Charter cases, recently appearing at the Supreme Court in the landmark case, *City of Vancouver v Ward*. He represented the Asper Centre in *Downtown Eastside Sex Workers, Kokopenace & Spears* appeals, and *Tanudjaja et al.*

**Professor Malcolm Thorburn** is an Associate Professor at the Faculty of Law. Prior to joining the Faculty of Law in 2013, he was Canada Research Chair in Crime, Security and Constitutionalism at Queen’s University. His writing focuses on theoretical issues in and around criminal justice including criminal law and procedure, sentencing, policing, national security and surveillance. His work has appeared in such publications as the Yale Law Journal, the Boston University Law Review, the University of Toronto Law Journal, Criminal Law and Philosophy and several books at Oxford University Press and Hart Publishing.

**Paul Schabas** is a litigation partner at Blakes in Toronto and an adjunct faculty member at the Faculty of Law. His practice focuses on complex commercial litigation and arbitrations. Mr. Schabas also has expertise in white collar criminal and regulatory matters, constitutional, media and public law. He is listed in *The Best Lawyers in Canada 2011* (where he was media lawyer of the year in 2010) in the areas of corporate and commercial litigation, criminal defence, administrative and public law, and defamation and media law. Landmark constitutional cases argued by Mr. Schabas include *R v Morgentaler, Smoling and Scott, Canada (Human Rights Commission) v Taylor*, and *Canadian Foundation for Children, Youth and the Law v Canada*.

**Anna Su** is an Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Law. Her primary areas of research include the law and history of international human rights law, U.S. constitutional law (First Amendment), and law and religion. Anna holds an SJD from Harvard Law School where her dissertation was awarded the John Laylin Prize for best paper in international law. She received her JD and AB degrees from the Ateneo de Manila University in the Philippines. Prior to coming to Toronto, she held a postdoctoral fellowship at the Baldy Center for Law and Social Policy based in SUNY Buffalo Law School, and a graduate fellowship in ethics with the Edmond J. Safra Center for Ethics at Harvard University. She worked as a law clerk for the Philippine Supreme Court and was a consultant to the Philippine government negotiating panel with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front.
The Centre would like to acknowledge the invaluable contribution of the many faculty members, staff, students, alumni and legal practitioners who have made our activities and events possible. We would like to thank them for their efforts, insight and support.

Faculty Members and Staff
Alexis Archbold
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Lucianna Cicocioppo
Lisa Cirillo
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Yasmin Dawood
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Audrey Macklin
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Kara Norrington
Dylan Reid
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Raeya Jackiw
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Max Rudakov
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Gillian Olsen
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Liam Faught
Scott Dallen
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Alexandria Matic
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