

Reasonable Accommodation*

Friday September 14, 2007 at 3:45 p.m.

McGill University, Diocesan Theological College, 3473 Rue University

Question 1: What do we mean by 'reasonable accommodation'?

Question 2: How do liberal democratic theories accommodate the corporate freedom of religious communities?

Chair, Spencer Boudreau (Ph.D., Concordia University)



Dr. Spencer Boudreau has been involved with religious education in Quebec's public and private schools since 1968. His experience has included teaching religion in high school and CEGEP, teaching moral and religious education courses to pre-service teachers in University, being a consultant and developing curriculum for religious education for the Ministry of Education of Quebec, and being involved in the production of resource material for the programs and the professional development of religion teachers. His graduate studies in religion included field work in India, Nepal and Sri Lanka. He is presently the Associate Dean of Teaching, Learning and Students in the Faculty of Education at McGill University. Among his publications is the text: *Catholic Education: The Quebec Experience*

Panellist, Daniel Cere (Ph.D., Concordia University)



Dr. Daniel Cere is a political scientist, and professor of Religion, Ethics, and Public Policy at McGill University. He serves additionally as the director of the Institute for the Study of Marriage, Law, and Culture and as co-director of the Newman Institute of Catholic Studies. From 1990-2006, Dr. Cere served as director of the Newman Centre of McGill University, which is a centre for Catholic intellectual and spiritual life at McGill University. He was a popular consultant for government officials during the same-sex marriage discussions in

both Canada and the United States. He the author of numerous articles and Op-Eds, and is co-editor of *Divorcing Marriage* (2004). Dr. Cere is the founder of *The Newman Rambler*, a journal which since 1996 has offered, under the inspiration of John Henry Newman, a thoughtful perspective on issues of faith, culture and the academy. In 1998, Dr. Cere launched *Dominus Vobiscum*, a family retreat centre. Dr. Cere remains a valued consultant to the Institute for American Values and other think tanks in Canada and the U.S.

Panellist, Iain Benson (M.A., Cambridge, LL.B. Univ. of Windsor)



Mr. Iain Benson is the Centre for Cultural Renewal's Executive Director and manages the research and publication priorities of the Centre. Iain is a Barrister and Solicitor. He practiced privately then became, for some years, the Senior Solicitor for the B.C. Labour Relations Board. Iain studied at various universities in Canada, Scotland and England, and has degrees from Queens University, the University of Cambridge, and University of Windsor.

In 2007 he was invited to become a Research Fellow, Faculty of Law, Department of Constitutional Law and Philosophy of Law, University of the Free State, Bloemfontein, South Africa.

His interests and studies cross a variety of areas including philosophy, law, theology and medical ethics. He practices constitutional and administrative law and, has appeared before all levels of Court in Canada and as a witness before a wide variety of Commissions, House and Senate committees. He has consulted to the governments of Ireland and Canada and advised on matters in the U.K. and South Africa on a variety of constitutional matters. His writings and publications cover a broad range of issues and he has lectured across North America and Europe, Africa and Saudi Arabia on issues related to health care, constitutional law and human rights. He is frequently quoted in the press, and has appeared on television and radio including leading Canadian Broadcasting Corporation programs "Tapestry," "Ideas," "Cross-country Checkup" and "Commentary." Iain has also appeared on CBC, Listen-Up TV, Radio Free Europe, Reuters, South African Radio and Church and State Television (USA). At the invitation of the Canadian Bar Association he gave a paper to the 2006 National Conference on "Religion and the State."

In addition to the Centre's ongoing analysis of important legal decisions touching on conscience, religion and culture, his writing has appeared in the Law Times, the Toronto Star, the Globe and Mail, the National Post the Calgary Herald and a host of regional papers. He has published on "secularism" and the history of our

understanding of the “secular” and some of his writing has been cited as authority by the Supreme Court of Canada and the Constitutional Court of South Africa. He was the editor of Volume VII of the Collected Works of G.K. Chesterton (Ignatius, 2003).

Panellist, Jacob T. Levy (Ph.D., Princeton University)



Dr. Jacob T. Levy is formerly Assistant Professor of Political Science at the University of Chicago and currently holds the Tomlinson chair in Political Theory, Department of Political Science, McGill University.

He received his AB from Brown University (Phi Beta Kappa, magna cum laude) with honors in Political Science and his MA and PhD in Politics from Princeton University. He has been a National Science Foundation graduate fellow and a Fulbright Scholar at the University College, University of New South Wales, Australia, and has received fellowships from the Social Philosophy and Policy Center, the Earhart Foundation, and the Mellon Foundation's New Directions program. He is the author of *The Multiculturalism of Fear* (Oxford University Press 2000) and is currently writing a book on the historical and contemporary tension between rationalist and pluralist liberalisms.

Professor Levy's work in political theory and public law has three related areas of emphasis. One is multiculturalism, ethnicity, and nationalism. He has written on indigenous law and indigenous land rights, especially in Australia and the United States. He has also written on multilingualism and the rights of language minorities, on theories of nationalism, on state apologies to minorities, and on cultural rights.

A second area of emphasis, and the subject of his current manuscript-in-progress, is the status of intermediate groups and communities in liberal thought since the eighteenth century. His work examines the competing tendencies to view intermediate groups as sites of freedom and as sites of tyranny, and the corresponding difference between liberals who would allow such groups considerable leeway in their internal governance and those who would not. The history of this debate between rationalist and pluralist strands within liberalism can shed light on current impasses within liberal theory regarding, for example, the rights of cultural and religious minorities, and freedom of association.

His third area of study is constitutionalism and jurisprudence, with special attention to the transition from premodern to modern ideas of constitutionalism,

constitutional design in ethnically-divided states, legal pluralism, federalism, and constitutional balances between the central state and other bodies.

He is Secretary-Treasurer of the American Society for Political and Legal Philosophy, a co-director of the University's Political Theory Workshop, a member of the Board of Directors of the Nicholson Center for British Studies, and Treasurer and a member of the Board of Directors of the University's Center for Comparative Constitutionalism.

Professor Levy is a native of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and was born in 1971.

Panellist, Imam Salam Elmenyawī (Chaplain, McGill University)



Imam Salam Elmenyawī is the President of the Muslim Council of Montreal, Muslim Chaplain at McGill, and at Concordia University. He leads Friday prayers at both universities and at a number of mosques in the Montreal area. He also teaches Islamic theology courses at Concordia University.

Imam Elmenyawī obtained his Bachelor of Electrical Engineering from Alexandria University, Egypt in 1971, and completed his degree in Islamic Studies at the High Institute of Islamic Study, under the supervision of Azhar University, Cairo Egypt.

Following his arrival to Canada, and while working, he continued to study for the Master of Engineering at McGill University, Faculty of Electrical Engineering.

Elmenyawī was born in Egypt and has been in Canada for the last 35 years. He is married and has two sons. Over the last 15 years, he has worked actively to bring together people of different faiths, to advance harmony, defend rights, and to fight hatred. He has also served the Muslim community with dedication.

In his capacity as Muslim Chaplain and head of the Muslim Council of Montreal, Imam Elmenyawī has most recently contributed instrumentally to discussions on reasonable accommodation for Muslims in the Montreal community.

Panellist, Rabbi Leigh Lerner (B.A., Duke University)



Rabbi Leigh Lerner graduated from Duke University with a degree in English. He subsequently entered Hebrew Union College, and was ordained in 1972. He was senior Rabbi at Mt. Zion Temple in St. Paul, Minnesota where he renewed Black/Jewish dialogue. In March 1989 he was appointed Senior Rabbi at Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom (Montreal).

Rabbi Lerner has served as President of the Montreal Board of Jewish Ministers, President of the Canadian Region Central Conference of Reform Rabbis, is a board member of Mazon Canada (Jewish Response to Hunger), Vice-President of ARZA (Canadian Association of Reform Zionists), and served on the Board of Directors, League of Human Rights in Montreal.

Rabbi Leigh is Past President of the Montreal Christian Jewish Dialogue and supporter of the Montreal Muslim Jewish Dialogue. He is a member of the Advisory Council of Across Boundaries Multifaith Institute.

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