



## Research Unit for the Study of Society, Law and Religion (RUSSLR)

### PUBLIC LECTURE

Professor Bruce Elman, University of Windsor, Canada

“Using Human Rights Legislation to Control Hate Speech”

When: Monday, 18 May 2009 at 1.00pm

Where: Moot Court Room, Ligertwood Building, Law School

Speaker: Bruce Elman, BSc (McGill), LLB (Dal), LLM (Harvard) is Dean of Law at the University of Windsor (Canada). Previously, Dean Elman was Belzberg Professor of Constitutional Law and Chair of the Centre for Constitutional Studies at the Faculty of Law, University of Alberta. Dean Elman has been Visiting Professor of Law at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (1988-1989 and 1995-1996) and Visiting Professor at Niigata University in Japan (1994). Dean Elman has published numerous works on various topics including criminal law, the law of evidence, constitutional reform, *The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, hate speech, multiculturalism, and human rights.

**Synopsis:** In 1970, Canada criminalized hate speech in amendments to the Criminal Code of Canada. Yet, in the past 39 years, very few prosecutions have been brought under these provisions. The federal government and the provinces of Canada have, alternatively, attempted to deal with hate speech through provisions in the Canadian Human Rights Act and its provincial counterparts. Over the past few years, this strategy has been called into question as a result of a number of high profile cases as well as an Advisory report to the Canadian Human Rights Commission. This lecture traces the history of Canadian attempts to combat hate speech through both the criminal law and the various human rights regimes. He will analyze the results of those attempts and comment on the appropriateness of using human rights legislation to control racist speech.

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