

December 6, 2010

CLF EXPERT WITNESS: POLYGAMY NEGATIVELY AFFECTS WOMEN

ECONOMIST, POLYGAMY EXPERT TO BE EXAMINED IN B.C. HEARING TUESDAY

VANCOUVER, B.C. – The Supreme Court of British Columbia will hear testimony Tuesday from an economist and expert on polygamy who has found that “polygamy is associated with undesirable economic, societal, physical, and emotional factors related to women’s wellbeing.” The Christian Legal Fellowship is presenting Dr. Shoshana Grossbard to the Court as its witness because of her extensive research on the cross-cultural effects polygamy has on women and society.

“Canada should not experiment with a practice that has been clearly demonstrated as harmful to women and societies around the world,” said CLF Executive Director and General Legal Counsel Ruth Ross. “It’s important for the Court to hear scholarly analysis on polygamy’s damaging effects. For this reason, CLF has asked Dr. Grossbard to testify. Her research is multi-faceted and demonstrates not only the economic impact polygamy has on women and children, but also the potential unintended consequences Canada would face if the practice became legal.”

“My initial works on the study of polygamy found that polygamy was a neutral factor with respect to the economic wellbeing of women. Over 35 years of study, my opinion has changed, and I now believe polygamy to have a negative impact on the economic wellbeing of women,” said Grossbard in her sworn affidavit. “Based on my experience, research, and writing regarding the practice of polygamy around the world, my opinion is that Canada has a significant interest in prohibiting the practice of polygamy,”

Grossbard is one of two CLF experts whose findings have been submitted to the Court and only one of many witnesses who will be examined throughout the *Constitutional Reference on Polygamy*. The reference, brought by the attorney general of British Columbia, asks the Court to determine if Parliament may prohibit polygamy and at the same time uphold the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*’ guarantee of religious freedom.

As an intervenor, CLF presented opening statements to the Court on November 24 in support of the institution of marriage. CLF asked the Court to uphold Parliament’s authority to enact criminal laws that protect women and children from the practice of polygamy while carefully preserving religious freedom.

To access CLF’s Opening Statements and the Affidavit of Dr. Grossbard, click [here](#).

To access a number of additional documents associated with the Reference, click [here](#).

- 30 -

For further information or to arrange an interview, please contact:

STEPHANIE M. LUCK, B.A., J.D., ESQ.

Legal Researcher/Director of Operations

CHRISTIAN LEGAL FELLOWSHIP

Alliance des chrétiens en droit

Phone: (519) 641-8850 Fax: (519) 641-8866

www.christianlegalfellowship.org

email: Stephanie.clf@primus.ca

The Christian Legal Fellowship is a national not-for-profit association of legal professionals in Canada. The association, among other functions, explores the complex interrelationships between the practice and theory of law and Christian faith. The Fellowship has some 500 active members from several dozen Christian denominations working together to integrate Christian faith with law.