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Reply:  
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February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2014

Via courier

Nova Scotia Barristers' Society  
Cogswell Tower  
800 - 2000 Barrington Street  
Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 3K1

Attention: Darrell Pink  
Executive Director

Dear Mr. Pink:

**RE: TRINITY WESTERN UNIVERSITY LAW SCHOOL**

The Nova Scotia Barristers' Society has requested opinions from members of the Nova Scotia Barristers' Society and the general public as to whether the Trinity Law School be recognized by the Nova Scotia Barristers' Society as a legitimate accredited Canadian law school and its graduates be eligible to practice law in Nova Scotia.

With respect, the 'right' and 'principled' decision should not be influenced by any perceived majority viewpoint.

Trinity's law curriculum has met the requirements to be an accredited Canadian law school. The issue raised as to whether Trinity should be recognized is not based upon its curriculum standards but rather upon the fact Trinity is a private evangelical Christian institution. The issue is not Trinity's academic standards but whether Trinity's core belief, as an educational institution, should disenfranchise its graduates from practicing law in the Province of Nova Scotia.

Trinity has not attempted to minimize the fact its **community** is based upon Christian beliefs. Trinity has the integrity to state clearly its core values which include that it expects its community to abide by its core religious beliefs which, *inter alia*, include a statement of the expected **sexual ethics**, specifically, no pre-marital or extra-marital sex. Such a position is no different than other main stream religions/sects.

Faith based school systems have been recognized and protected in Canada since confederation, for example Roman Catholic separate schools in Ontario which pre-date confederation (union of Upper and Lower Canada) have the right to include religious instruction in its curriculum.

Are we to assume that graduates of Trinity shall be unable to represent persons who espouse and hold different beliefs (?), I think not.

It is faulty logic to believe that a private belief system prevents a lawyer from defending and/or advocating a client's position, the history of the legal profession and its traditional pragmatic independence clearly indicates otherwise.

Trinity is not attempting to impose its set of core beliefs upon Canadians, but rather, the campaign against Trinity being recognized by the Nova Scotia Barristers' Society as an accredited law school is in fact an attempt to impose upon Canadians a single set of secular values.

The principled decision of the Nova Scotia Barristers' Society must be to recognize Trinity as an accredited law school, to do otherwise is not in the long term public interest.

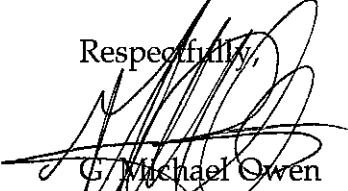
As a graduate of Dalhousie Law School I am disappointed with the law school's position. The logical extension of Dalhousie Law School's position is to decline admission to Dalhousie Law School to those candidates who are graduates of private accredited faith based universities.

Evangelical Christians as well as other Christian sects and religions are also anti-abortion, is that religious belief also to be a basis for the Nova Scotia Barristers' Society not recognizing a graduate of Trinity to be eligible to practice law in Nova Scotia.

Is the Nova Scotia Barristers' Society next to inquire into the religious doctrine which a member or prospective member believes in, for example, is a Roman Catholic not to be eligible for admission to the bar due to that person's adherence and belief in Catholicism which specifically does not recognize nor sanction same sex marriage nor allows women to be ordained priests.

The principled decision is to recognize graduates of Trinity law school given the school's curriculum meets the required standards, to do otherwise undermines the independence of the legal profession. If the Nova Scotia Barristers' Society decides not to recognize Trinity's law school the Nova Scotia Barristers' Society is going down the same road as Quebec in proceeding with its so called '*values charter*'.

Respectfully,



G. Michael Owen  
Barrister & Solicitor  
GMO/da