

Department of Bioethics Hosts Public Launch of Dr. Sharon Batt's New Book about Big Pharma and the Breast Cancer Movement

HALIFAX, NS, January 18, 2018 (for immediate release) – Dalhousie University's Department of Bioethics invites the public to a book launch for Dr. Sharon Batt's new book, *Health Advocacy Inc.: How Pharmaceutical Funding Changed the Breast Cancer Movement* at six o'clock on Tuesday, January 30, 2018. The launch, in room 301 of the Halifax Public Library, will include a reading, discussion, book signing, and light refreshments. It is open to the public and free of charge.

As a breast cancer patient and activist, Batt had a front-row seat on the growing practice of pharmaceutical companies to fund, and sometimes influence, the patient advocacy message. Her extensive academic research addresses the important questions of health care policy that this raises. How did patient groups struggle with the ethical questions raised by funding opportunities? What are the implications for health policy? What concerns does this funding raise for the public? What options do – or should -- patient groups have?

Reviewers have praised the book, calling it “exhaustively researched, formidably detailed, analytically nuanced, [and] riveting” (*Indian Journal of Medical Ethics*), with “revelations about the relationship between patient advocacy groups and the pharmaceutical industry [that] are vital and disturbing” (*Maisonneuve*). *The Lancet Oncology* adds, "(I)n the current climate of polarised discourse, [Batt's] ability to document a debate on such an emotive subject with sensitivity, civility, and the absence of rhetoric and vitriol is refreshing.”

Dr. Batt's work integrates scholarly research, public education, and social change activism. “The close relationship between the pharmaceutical industry and patient groups advocating to access new drugs has huge policy implications that haven't been addressed,” says Batt. *Health Advocacy Inc.* moves these issues out of the shadows, into public discussion.

Media Contacts

Sharon Batt, PhD
Independent Researcher, and Adjunct
Professor
Faculty of Medicine, Dalhousie University
902.329.3072

Tamatha Campbell
Administrative Secretary
Department of Bioethics
Faculty of Medicine, Dalhousie University
902.494.5145