

THE DEPARTMENT OF WOMEN'S AND GENDER STUDIES
FEMINIST RESEARCH SPEAKERS SERIES WINTER 2017 PRESENTS

MAKING CANADIANS: Gender, Race, and Birthright Citizenship

a lecture by Dr. Lois Harder

Friday, March 3, 2017; 3:00 – 4:30

Senate Chamber
(3-26 Arts and Convocation Hall)

Abstract:

Canada, like every other country in the world, relies on birth criteria to establish citizenship. Birth seems like a straightforward basis for determining political membership, but as the 70 year history of Canada's *Citizenship Act* reveals, criteria of birth can change, with important implications for people's citizenship status and sense of identity. Drawing from legal cases, parliamentary records and media reports, this talk examines shifts in birth-based membership criteria and its attendant regulation of sex, race and belonging, to argue that birthright citizenship is less stable than we presume. The paper then develops an alternative model of political membership designed to provoke reflection on what political membership is for, in the first instance.

Biography:

Lois Harder is a Professor of Political Science and currently Department Chair. Focusing primarily on Canada, she researches and teaches in the areas of citizenship law, social policy and the regulation of intimate life. She is the author, co-author or editor of four books: *State of Struggle: Feminism and Politics in Alberta* (2003); *Women, Democracy and Globalization in North America* (2006); *The Chretien Legacy: Politics and Public Policy in Canada* (2006) and *Patriation and its Consequences: Constitution-making in Canada* (2015) (the latter two books edited with Steve Patten) as well as numerous articles and book chapters. She held a Fulbright fellowship at the University of Hawaii in 2007, was the Eccles Centre Visiting Canadian Fellow in North American Studies at the British Library in 2014, and a Visiting Scholar at the University of Kent Centre for Law, Gender and Sexuality in 2015.



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