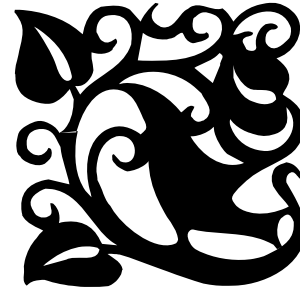


Centre for Women's and Gender Studies, UBC  
Lecture Series

Wednesday, January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2011. 12:00 – 1:00 pm

At the Centre for Women's and Gender Studies  
2080 West Mall (028) lower level, Jack Bell Building  
*Please note new location of Lecture Series*



“Negotiating Surrogacy: the Dilemma of Foster Parents”

from the forthcoming *Fostering Nation? Canada Confronts the History of Childhood Disadvantage* (2011)

Foster parents stand in for the community at large. For many children and youth, they may be the closest to responsible and caring adults they encounter. The work of foster mothers and fathers has unfolded in the context of social relations that make some groups and individuals more likely, acceptable, or able candidates. It has been highly gendered and ideally required expressions of model maternity and paternity. In the last half of the 20th century, such surrogates also increasingly emerged as part of therapeutic teams working toward the physical and psychological salvation of disadvantaged children and young people. Canada's fostering adults have always negotiated an essentially border status. In modeling superior mothering or fathering or in operating alongside experts, they confronted a recurring dilemma of authenticity. On the one hand, most have received money and been subject to state supervision for duties judged preferably voluntary and private. On the other, most have lacked formal credentials in child study and protection agencies and governments have rarely paid professional wages. As surrogates and amateurs, they always struggled to be treated as more than inferior mimics of 'real' parents or 'real' experts. Women stand at the centre and men to the side of both conundrums.

Veronica Strong-Boag is a historian in Women's Studies and Educational Studies. A former president of the Canadian Historical Association, she has received a Senior Killam Fellowship, the John A. Macdonald Prize for the best book in Canadian history in 1988 and, with Carole Gerson, the Raymond Kiliansky Prize for the best book in the Humanities in Canada in 2000, is a Member of the Royal Society of Canada, served on various editorial boards, served as BC's representative to Canada's Historic Sites and Monuments Board, and authored or edited various works including *The Parliament of Women: The National Council of Women of Canada, 1893-1929* (1976), w/ Beth Light, *True Daughters of the North: A Research and Reference Bibliography on Canadian Women's History* (1980), *A Woman with a Purpose: The Diaries of Elizabeth Smith* (1980), *The New Day Recalled: Lives of Girls and Women in English Canada, 1919-1929* (1988), w/ Gillian Creese, *British Columbia Reconsidered: Essays on Women* (1992), w/ Anita Clair Fellman, eds., *Rethinking Canada: the Promise of Women's History* (1986, 1993, 1997), w/ Carole Gerson, *Paddling Her Own Canoe: the Times and Texts of E. Pauline Johnson, Tekahionwake* (2000 and eds., *Poems and Prose of E. Pauline Johnson, Tekahionwake* (2002), w/ Mona Gleason, and Adele Perry, eds., *Rethinking Canada* (2002), *Finding Families, Finding Ourselves: English Canada Confronts Adoption from the 19th Century to the 1990s* (2006), and *Fostering Nation: Canada Confronts its History of Childhood Disadvantage* (Jan. 2011). Most recently, she has received Jules and Gabrielle Leger Research Fellowship (2010-11) from the Social Sciences and Humanities Federation of Canada.