

CALL FOR PAPERS

History of Women's Political and Social Activism in the Canadian West



Women visitors at Legislature Wednesday afternoon to hear debate on equal suffrage bill - March 1st, 1916 - Photo taken by McDermid Engraving Co. Ltd

University of Alberta 28-30 October 2016

2016 marks the centenary of woman suffrage (with the exception of First Nations) in the provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. On the cold first day of March 1916 when the Equal Suffrage Bill was read for the second time, women thronged the legislature. There were prominent activists present including Nellie McClung and Emily Murphy, and there were delegates from over fifteen organizations including the Equal Franchise League, the Women's Christian Temperance Union, Rebekah Lodges, Women's Industrial Society, and the Jewish Women's Society. An unusual sight in the chamber that day for the first time ever, were babies in arms, so eager were their mothers to witness this moment in history. The bill was passed with only one dissenting vote. The women then gathered outside to have this photo taken.

This centenary provides an opportunity to reflect on women's activism and women's history in this region. We invite participants from a wide range of disciplines and career stages to critically reflect on the history and legacy of diverse women's political and social activism at the grassroots, community and formal/political levels. We seek papers that look beyond the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and address the 1960s and beyond to Idle No More. How can an understanding of this complex and diverse history, fraught with tensions and exclusion, and issues of power and privilege, help our complicated present?

Organizers have planned this as a conference with only one afternoon of concurrent sessions (Saturday afternoon) to maximize opportunities to all hear the same papers, and to engage in dynamic discussion.

Topics may include:

- Indigenous women's activism
- Migrant women's activism
- Suffrage and anti-suffrage activism
- Imperial, transnational and cross-border networks and influences
- Labour and trade union activism
- Lesbian organizations and activism
- Peace activism
- Feminisms of the West: maternal, agrarian, eugenic
- Breaking Barriers: Education, Vocations, Professions
- Voices, Words, Thoughts: Diaries, Letters, Memoirs, Oral Histories of Activist Women
- Other topics and themes welcome

Submissions:

Please submit proposals electronically to: activewomen2016@ualberta.ca by Feb. 29, 2016. Individual paper proposals should consist of a title and an abstract of 250 words, and a short bio. Proposals for a panels are welcomed. Panels should be made up of three papers and a facilitator. Panels submissions should include one-page abstracts and a short bio for each participant, as well as a title for the session and a 250 word abstract for the session.

Conference Organisers: Sarah Carter (University of Alberta), Nanci Langford (Athabasca University), Claire Thomson (University of Alberta)

www.activewomen2016.com