



Western

Centre for Research on
Migration and Ethnic Relations

**Fall Colloquium
Series 2014**



Dr. Christopher G. Anderson

is an Associate Professor in the Department of Political Science at Wilfrid Laurier University. He received his PhD from McGill University and his BA from the University of Toronto. His research encompasses both historical and contemporary studies of Canadian citizenship, multiculturalism, immigration and refugee policy. His book, *Canadian Liberalism and the Politics of Border Control, 1867-1967* (UBC Press) was published in 2013, and apart from contributions to edited volumes, his work has appeared in the *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, *Canadian Parliamentary Review*, the *International Journal of Canadian Studies* and the *Journal of Canadian Studies*.

Telling Tales: Canadians and Asylum Seekers, Then and Now

If History, as Thomas King suggests, is not the past but the tales we choose to tell about the past, then the choices we make in the telling of tales matter. For some time now, Canada has been telling two types of tales with respect to asylum seekers, some about a Canadian tradition of generosity, and others about that generosity's abuse. These have provided the back story to a series of policies that have made it more difficult for refugees to seek and to find protection in Canada, and have been woven into the fabric of a larger narrative about what it means to be Canadian. There are, however, other tales that could be told. Some are old, stretching back to the passage of the *1885 Chinese Immigration Act* and the *1910 Immigration Act*. Others are more recent, involving such measures as the *Canada-US Safe Third Country Agreement* and the decision to restrict refugee access to health care. In their telling, these other tales reveal themes of equality and fairness that are obscured when the focus is limited to those of generosity and its abuse. In the process, very different ideas about what it means to be Canadian, and how best this might be realized, become possible.

4:00pm

Thursday, November 27th

SSC 5220

Please join us beforehand for refreshments at 3:30pm

in SSC 5230

All Welcome!

For More Info email: Merassis@uwo.ca