



## Symposium



# Working inside and outside government: Women's strategies for change

The Department of Women's Studies and the Ruth Wynn Woodward Chair of Women's Studies, SFU, is hosting a symposium to bring together women's activists, academics and gender policy practitioners to discuss the potential of using state women's policy agencies to advance women's equality.

- Date and Time:** 18 March 2005 → 10 am to 5 pm
- Venue:** SFU, Harbour Centre, 515 West Hastings Street, Vancouver BC  
• Segal Centre Conference Rooms (1400/1410)
- Registration:** \$10 Registration fee  
• will be collected day of symposium, includes lunch and afternoon tea

Since the 1970s women's policy agencies have been a feature of all levels of government in Canada. While the work of these agencies has often fallen short of the expectations of women's activists, they have nevertheless contributed to broadening government's understanding of women, and their complex interests and needs.

In the past decade, women's policy initiatives have been vulnerable to the shift taken by governments toward a neo-liberal and/or conservative agenda. The shift has led to the demise of some women's policy agencies, a growing disregard for gender inclusive policies and an over-reliance on the rhetoric of 'gender mainstreaming'. These changes have also led to renewed questioning by the women's activist community about the value of working with government to advance women's equality.

### The key questions that the symposium panelists will address are:

- How well have women's policy agencies been able to translate women's activist demands into policy?
- What factors shape the success or failure of women's agencies in terms of crafting women's policy and influencing policy debates more generally?
- Are women's agencies a long term and viable strategy for translating women's interests into policy?
- What effort should feminist activists put in to maintaining these agencies?
- What comparative lessons can be drawn from the experiences of women's activists and policy agencies at different levels of government?

### Panelists:

- Benita Bunjun > Women and Welfare Project Coordinator, Vancouver Status of Women
- Louise Chappell > Ruth Wynn Woodward Chair, SFU; Senior Lecturer Government and International Relations, University of Sydney, Australia
- Lynda Erickson > Professor and Chair, Department of Political Science, SFU
- Joan Grace > Assistant Professor and Director of MPA Programme, Department of Politics University of Winnipeg
- Olena Hankivsky > Associate Professor of Political Science and Women's Studies, SFU
- Sharon McIvor > Department Head, Academic/Indigenous Studies, Nicola Valley Institute of Technology
- Jonathan Malloy > Assistant Professor, Carleton University
- Kathy Teghtsoonian > Associate Professor, Studies on Policy and Practice, University of Victoria
- Jill Vickers > Professor, Department of Political Science, Carleton University
- Ellen Woodsworth > Vancouver City Councillor