

## SPRC 2012 Seminar Series

### Social Investment According to the OECD/DELSA: A Discourse in the Making<sup>1</sup>

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**Date:** 12.30-1.30 Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> February 2012

**Location:** Goodsell room 221/223

**Abstract:** It is important to draw critical attention to the broad policy perspectives that travel across the globe and operate at multiple scales. Social investment is clearly one such set of ideas that has assumed increasing prominence over the last two decades. Like most such rapidly diffusing ideas, however, it admits of quite different interpretations. In this paper I examine the most recent iterations of the OECD's Directorate for Employment Labour and Social Affairs' (DELSA) interpretation of social investment against the backdrop of its earlier work. I argue that its initial formulations could be seen as an example of inclusive liberalism. Since then, however, DELSA has begun to embrace important elements of a social democratic version, including a concern with gender equality.

**Rianne Mahon** holds a CIGI chair in comparative social policy at the Balsillie School of International Affairs and is a Professor in the Department of Political Science, Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo. She has produced numerous articles and chapters on the politics of childcare as part of a broader, gendered, process of redesigning welfare regimes. Her current work focuses on the role of international organizations in disseminating child care/early childhood development policy discourses and the (contested) translation of such travelling ideas in Argentina, Canada and Mexico at the national and subnational scales.

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<sup>1</sup> Research for this paper was made possible by a grant from the Social Science and Humanities Council of Canada. The paper was presented at the workshop, 'Studying International Organisations in Social Policy' organised by the Collaborative Research Centre 597 at the University of Bremen, 21 October 2011. I would particularly like to thank Caroline Andrew, Kate Bedford and Hildegard Theobald for their comments.