



University of
Lethbridge

NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release — Tuesday, November 14, 2023

Examining the fallacy of borders and the lies they tell us, focus of upcoming PUBLIC Professor Series event

Most people today, if they think about borders at all, can be forgiven for believing lines on a map are real things serving useful purposes. Demarcating the edges of nation-states is responsible for everything from shoring up sovereignty, nationalism and colonialism, to drawing the lines between “us” and “them.”

Dr. Sheila McManus, professor in the University of Lethbridge’s Department of History, sums it up by declaring succinctly, “Borders are stupid.” In fact, it’s the title of her upcoming PUBLIC Professor Series talk on Thursday, Nov. 23, 7 p.m., at the Sandman Signature Lodge.



McManus says that by taking a closer look at the long, messy histories of borders, and their even messier contemporary functions, we will discover those invisible lines are, at best, lying to us. This talk explores why we believe the lies borders tell us, and why we shouldn’t.

“Borders are stupid for a few different reasons,” says McManus. “They are not real. They have very real consequences because we think they are real but they’re kind of lying to you and I want people to think differently about what they are and how they function in the world.”

McManus is a member of the Lethbridge Border Studies research group whose research focuses primarily on the history of the borderlands of the North American West. McManus is the author of [The Line Which Separates: Race, Gender, and the Making of the Alberta-Montana Borderlands](#) (University of Nebraska Press and University of Alberta Press, 2005); [Choices and Chances: A History of Women in the U.S. West](#), (Wiley, 2010); and [Both Sides Now: Writing the Edges of the North American West](#) (Texas A&M Press, 2022).

This is the third of the six-part PUBLIC Professor Series of talks. Initiated in 2014, the monthly lecture series is designed to spark thought-provoking discussions and bring a diverse group of experts and researchers from the ULeithbridge campus right into the community.

Check out the [PUBLIC Professor Series web page](#) for the 2023/24 talk schedule, to register for priority seating or to join the series mailing list.

To view online: <https://www.ulethbridge.ca/unews/article/examining-fallacy-borders-and-lies-they-tell-us-focus-upcoming-public-professor-series-event>

-- 30 --

Contact:

Trevor Kenney, News & Information Manager

403-329-2710

403-360-7639 (cell)

trevor.kenney@uleth.ca

@ULeithbridge

Our University's Blackfoot name is Iniskim, meaning Sacred Buffalo Stone. The University is located in traditional Blackfoot Confederacy territory. We honour the Blackfoot people and their traditional ways of knowing in caring for this land, as well as all Indigenous Peoples who have helped shape and continue to strengthen our University community.