

NEWS RELEASE

Wilfrid Laurier
University



Former law commission head to deliver Canadian studies lecture *Nathalie Des Rosiers to outline legal approach to democracy that is uniquely Canadian*

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WATERLOO – A former president of the Law Commission of Canada and current dean of civil law at the University of Ottawa will outline, during lecture at Laurier, an intrinsically Canadian legal approach to democracy that could empower people in the 21st century.

Nathalie Des Rosiers will deliver the third annual Laurier Lecture in Canadian Studies at 4:30 p.m. on Monday, November 21, in Laurier's Paul Martin Centre. Entitled The 21st Century Belongs to...Everyone: Canadian Leadership through Democratic Ideals, the lecture will show that Canada's greatest export may be its democratic ideals.

Des Rosiers argues that Sir Wilfrid Laurier meant it when he said the 20th century belonged to Canada. He was, in fact, proposing a sense of purpose, a belief in the prosperity of the Canadian nation. Many commentators have since attempted to capture the essence of Canada's personality, of its leadership and of its sense of itself.

"From 'I am Canadian' to the CBC Morningside motto that the equivalent to 'as American as apple pie' is 'as Canadian as possible in the circumstance', Canadians have struggled with a proverbial modesty to admit to have done great things," said Des Rosiers. "This lecture celebrates a different kind of leadership – a leadership through ideas."

In it, she reviews some of the new concepts that have emerged in Canadian public-policy thinking, reaffirming and refreshing Canada's sense of democracy. These include participatory justice; engagement of citizens; dialogue between courts, politics and the public; the rule of law as a Canadian export; and consultation ethics.

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Des Rosiers served as second president of the Law Commission of Canada from 2000 to 2004. She was appointed dean of civil law at the University of Ottawa in 2004 and was a member of the faculty of law at the University of Western for a decade before that. She served as law clerk to Justice Julien Chouinard at the Supreme Court of Canada in 1982 and 1983.

Des Rosiers is a past-president of the Association des juristes d'expression française de l'Ontario (AJEFO) and of the Canadian Law Teachers Association. She was a member of the Environmental Appeal Board from 1988 to 2000 and a member of the Ontario Law Reform Commission from 1993 to 1996. She received the medal of the Law Society of Upper Canada in 1999 and the Order of Merit from the AJEFO in 2000.

Des Rosiers obtained a bachelor of laws degree from the Université de Montréal in 1981 and a master of law from Harvard University in 1984. She became a member of the Barreau du Québec in 1982 and of the Law Society of Upper Canada in 1987.

The Laurier Lecture in Canadian Studies is held annually around November 20, designated as Sir Wilfrid Laurier Day, to raise awareness of Canadian issues.