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## **GLOBAL MENTAL HEALTH SPEAKER SERIES**

Thursday, November 23rd, 2017, 3:00 – 4:30 PM

Department of Psychiatry, Irving Ludmer Building, Room #1  
1033 Ave Pine Ave West, Montreal, QC, H3A 1A1

**Dr. Ingrid Waldron**

*Dalhousie University*



### **From the Enlightenment to Black Lives Matter: Racial and Gendered Transformation of Schizophrenia in Psychiatry**

Psychiatry has been resistant to examine its role in affirming ideological representations of racialized individuals and in perpetuating racism. Psychiatry provided the “scientific” rationale for colonization because it developed during colonialism and slavery when myths about racism were being integrated into European culture. Therefore, the over-representation and mistreatment of Black people in secure psychiatric facilities in North America can be attributed to racist ideology that is inherent to the “heritage of psychiatry. This presentation examines psychiatry as an imperial and colonizing force by exploring how “scientific” and normative medical knowledge and discourse are constituted within historically specific regimes of power. Using the racial and gendered transformation of schizophrenia as a “Black disease” that is disproportionately applied to Black men as its starting point, the paper will explore psychiatry’s “scientific” and “objective” process for attributing diagnoses, its role in the social construction of race, gender, class, and madness, the “racialization of psychiatric diagnoses”, the misdiagnosis of Black people and, the non-delivery of appropriate treatments and delays in help-seeking among Black people. The paper concludes with an examination of how structural competency approaches can address the mental health impacts of structural violence in racialized communities.