



**Women and Constitutional Futures: gender equality matters in a new Scotland.
Seminar 3**

February 14/15, 2013

Royal Society of Edinburgh, 22-26 George Street, Edinburgh

PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME

This seminar questions why constitutions matter, and examines why it is crucial that women's perspectives, and values and ideas about gender equality and social justice, are taken into account from the beginning in any debates about constitutional change. What might an inclusive process and equality "friendly" constitution look like? What might be achieved through constitutional engineering? And what are the limits? Does a focus on constitutional remedies deflect attention from pressing issues? How can we use existing constitutional and legal frameworks more effectively and creatively to promote women's empowerment and gender equality, including equal political representation and women's human rights? We draw upon international experience and lessons learned to date in Scotland and the rest of the UK to address these important issues.

Registration opens at 8.30am

DAY ONE: THURSDAY FEBRUARY 14

CHAIR: LESLEY RIDDOCH

09.15 Welcome and Introduction: What are constitutions for? and [why] should women care about constitutions/ constitution making?

Christine Bell (School of Law, University of Edinburgh) and **Fiona Mackay** (School of Social and Political Science, University of Edinburgh)

SESSION 1: CONSTITUTING GENDER EQUALITY: INTERNATIONAL LESSONS

What would a women-friendly, equality-affirming constitution include? What are the opportunities and limits of "constitutional engineering"?

09.45 PRESENTATION: Georgina Waylen (Professor of Politics, University of Manchester) – Constitutional "engineering" and gender equality: international lessons and cautionary tales

10.15 Response/ Reflection

- **Catherine O'Rourke** (Institute for Transitional Justice, University of Ulster)
- **Joyce Macmillan** *tbc*

followed by open discussion, facilitated by Lesley Riddoch

11.00 Coffee/ Tea

SESSION II: CONSTITUTIONS, QUOTAS AND WOMEN'S POLITICAL REPRESENTATION

What leverage do debates about constitutional change provide for progressing gender balance in political representation? What lessons can we learn internationally and from devolution? Has the time come for constitutional/ legislative quotas?

11.20 Roundtable: Chaired by Lesley Riddoch

- **Tania Verge** – (Universitat Pompeu Fabre, Barcelona) Lessons from Catalonia and Spain
- **Fiona Buckley** – (50/50 campaign co founder; University of Cork) The 50/50 Campaign and the case of Quotas in the Republic of Ireland
- **Meryl Kenny** – (University NSW; *genderpol* blog team) Trends in Women’s representation in Scotland

followed by open discussion, facilitated by Lesley Riddoch

LUNCH 12.50 -1.50

SESSION III: THE PROCESS OF CONSTITUTION-MAKING: INTERNATIONAL LESSONS AND REFLECTIONS

What would an inclusive, women- friendly process look like?

1.50 PRESENTATION: Thor Gylfason (Chair of Icelandic Constitutional Project): The Icelandic Experience – “crowd sourcing” the constitution.

2.20 PRESENTATION: Yvonne Galligan, (Queen’s University Belfast): Emulating Iceland? The Irish experience and its limitations

2.40 Response/ Reflection:

- **Juliet Swann** (ERS Scotland)
- **Carmel Roulston**, (University of Ulster, founder member NIWC)

followed by open discussion, facilitated by Lesley Riddoch

3.30 – 3.45 Tea /coffee break

SESSION IV: LESSONS FROM DEVOLUTION

Remembering the lessons we learned from devolution: women’s/feminist interventions in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales

3.45 Roundtable: Chaired by Lesley Riddoch

- **Alice Brown** (Member of CSG, founder member Scottish Women’s Coalition/ 50-50 campaign)
- **Monica McWilliams** (founding member of NI Women’s Coalition, former Dir. NI Human Rights Council)
- **Helen Mary Jones** (now Chair Plaid Cymru, member of Wales Advisory Group on Nat Assembly of Wales)
- **Ann Henderson** (STUC, 50-50 campaign)

followed by open discussion, facilitated by Lesley Riddoch

DAY TWO

CHAIR: LESLEY RIDDOCH

09. 15 Welcome

SESSION V: THINKING SMARTER (WHATEVER THE CONSTITUTIONAL OPTIONS)

Are we asking right questions? How can we think creatively about pushing forward whatever the constitutional position? How can we use constitutional and legal frameworks (broadly conceived) and international instruments more effectively to promote women’s empowerment and gender equality, including equal political representation.

09.30 Roundtable: Chaired by Lesley Riddoch

- **Niki Kandirikira** (Engender)
- **Muriel Robison** (Employment Judge, formerly Head of Commission Enforcement at the Equality and Human Rights Commission)
- **Alan Miller** (Chair Scottish Human Rights Commission) - re using human rights instruments and the Scottish national action plan on human rights
- **Bob Black** (former Chair Audit Commission) *tbc*
- **Ailsa McKay** (WISE)

- **Yvonne Strachan** (Scottish Government) *tbc*
- **Ruth Fox** (Hansard) *tbc*
- **Adele Baumgarten** (former WNC Commissioner for Wales)

followed by open discussion, facilitated by Lesley Riddoch

11.15 Tea/ Coffee

SESSION 6: CLOSING REFLECTIONS

11.30 Roundtable: Chaired by Lesley Riddoch

- Dave Moxham (Dep Sec General STUC)
- Carolyn Leckie (People's Gathering) *tbc*
- Stephen Tierney (Professor of Constitutional Theory and ESRC Senior Fellow)
- Kate Higgins (blogger)
- Alice Brown (Royal Society Edinburgh)
- Karen Lindsay (blogger) *tbc*

followed by open discussion, facilitated by Lesley Riddoch

1.00 CLOSING WORDS AND NEXT STEPS

Christine Bell (School of Law, University of Edinburgh) and **Fiona Mackay** (School of Social and Political Science, University of Edinburgh)

1.10 ENDS

A joint seminar organised under the auspices of the Scottish Universities Insight Institute and the Scottish Constitutional Futures Forum

