

BENCH POWER:

INTRODUCING OUR **NEW RECRUITS** by Abby Blinch & Jeremy Schmidt

Talk to any faculty member here about the recent round of academic hiring, and there's visible excitement. With seven new scholars from around the world adding to the law school's established research and teaching strength, the energy and sense of possibility is palpable.

"This is a very exciting time for the law school as no one can remember the last time this many new colleagues joined us in the same year," Dean Catherine Dauvergne says, echoing the enthusiasm felt in the building. "Hiring six young scholars and a proven research leader will help ensure we continue to contribute to the law and policy reform agenda for Canada and the world."

Read on to learn more about our seven new researchers, as well as two faculty members hired into the law school's new tenure-track Instructor positions focused specifically on educational leadership in experiential learning.



Régine Tremblay

Assistant Professor

There is a popular television show in French-speaking Quebec called *Ruptures* (loosely translated as *Divorce or Separation*), and although the premise is based on family law issues, Assistant Professor Régine Tremblay's area of study, she struggles to understand its appeal.

"It's such a tiny part of family law," she laments. "When many people think of family law they just think of divorce; and yet the field is really about interdependency, which is a much more interesting and complex way of looking at families."

Tremblay's research to this point has explored how the family has been regulated in Quebec, where blood ties and formalities are of great cultural importance—creating, perhaps, a narrow understanding of the range of meaningful relationships constituting the family.

"My research is about expanding what is considered as a family in private law to shift the normative content of this concept. What matters are the relationships, and specifically relationships of emotional and economical interdependency. These relationships may take many forms," she says. One area of research around complex relationships has to do with surrogacy. Due to Quebec's limited definition of the family, the province does not have a framework for families who conceive through surrogacy to have recognized legal bounds without taking expensive and unsure legal steps.

Coming to the Allard School of Law and to British Columbia offers a real opportunity to expand her research agenda. The province's recent reforms in family law represent a step in the right direction, Tremblay thinks. There's also more value placed on alternative dispute resolution. And, finally: "In my opinion, the Allard School of Law is, simply put, the best place to be in Canada if you want to do family law," she says.

Following her LLM at the University of Toronto and a year articling with Fasken Martineau, and interested in an academic path, Tremblay jumped at the chance to gain some research experience as Assistant Director of the Paul-André Crépeau Centre for Private and Comparative Law at McGill University. There she also had the chance to lecture in Canadian Family Law, which she wanted to experience before embarking on her SJD at the University of Toronto. She knew she loved research, but wanted to know that she was equally devoted to the other main part of the vocation. Teaching family law at McGill, she quickly discovered that she had a passion for it.

She recently co-authored a book entitled *Les Familles (Families)* hoping the pluralization of the word family would convey the many forms a family and relationship can take, something she tries to pass on in the classroom.

"Family law is extremely contextual. I try my best to have students realize how specific it is, how intimate family law issues can be and how human it is."