**The Body Toxic: Gender and the Politics of Environmental Health**

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From the moment of conception, the human body begins accumulating environmental chemicals found in food and consumer products. Over the past four decades, efforts to remove these contaminants from production have stalled in Canada and the United States. While regulatory measures fizzle, the market for non-toxic commodities and certified organic food is expanding rapidly. In this talk, I address how this move toward “precautionary consumption” is a key strategy for avoiding contaminants. Using a feminist analytical lens and drawing on data collected in Canada and the United States, I argue that precautionary consumption is gendered, as it implicates women’s reproductive bodies and their domestic labor. I challenge the considerable optimism and support for food labeling and market transparency initiatives that enable precautionary consumption. Precautionary consumption is a partial and individualized response to a toxic consumer landscape, and it is most accessible to middle- and upper-middle class shoppers. In the last part of the talk, I consider other approaches that can provide more equitable, just and universal protections for environmental health.