

# Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology

## SPEAKER SERIES

### The Soul's Awakening: Realizing Health Justice through Radically Engaged Legal Research and Education

Professor Sheila Wildeman  
Dalhousie University, Schulich School of Law

Wildeman will begin by describing two recent ruptures to and rapid reorganizations of longstanding carceral practices in Nova Scotia: 1) the province's transitory experiment with radical jail decarceration at the inception of COVID-19, and 2) ongoing staged progress toward disability deinstitutionalization via the Disability Rights Coalition human rights remedy (scheduled for completion by March 2028). Against this backdrop, Wildeman will inquire into the role of university-based legal research and education in advancing sustainable intersectional health justice. How might legal research and pedagogy, and wider law school/university institutional structures, help achieve health justice? What does achievement mean in this context and how is it measured? In exploring these questions, Wildeman will take stock of two decades of her own and others' scholarship gradually recognizing disability deinstitutionalization and prison abolition to converge on equitable access to the social determinants of health. Further, she will reflect on the value and (power-saturated) challenges of slow, narrative methods of community-engaged knowledge co-production, consciousness-raising and justice-seeking. Wildeman will close by outlining the emergent model of Community Health Justice Partnerships at Dalhousie's Health Justice Institute.

*Bio:*

Recently appointed Director of Dalhousie's Health Justice Institute (an interdisciplinary collaboration among faculties of Law, Health, Medicine and Dentistry), Sheila Wildeman is a Professor at Dalhousie's Schulich School of Law, where she teaches Administrative Law, Poverty Law, Public Health Law and Imprisonment Law. She is also Co-Chair of East Coast Prison Justice Society, which hosts a community-based provincial jail oversight and prisoner support line. Wildeman's recent research has focused on disability-based isolation, exploring possibilities and limits of [legal remedies](#) for isolation [in prison](#) and [health spaces](#) (eg, Ch. 46 in Anita Szigeti et al, *Canadian Anthology on Mental Health and the Law* (2024)). Since 2020 Sheila has supported arts-based action research collective My Home My Rights to produce [videos](#) and [an art show](#) celebrating the intersectional justice insights of individuals who learn and communicate in ways described as intellectual disability.

**Friday, March 13<sup>th</sup>, 2026**  
**2:30 p.m. in McCain, #1116**  
**All Welcome!**