

Tuesday

May 10th, 2016

4:30PM-6:00PM

(reception to follow)

Moot Court (room 1005),

Osgoode Hall Law School, York University

WITH GENEROUS SUPPORT FROM:

Division of the Vice President Research & Innovation

Faculty of Liberal Arts & Professional Studies

Department of Social Science

Department of Humanities & the Children's Studies Program

School of Public Policy and Administration

York Institute for Health Research

Centre for Refugee Studies

PRESENTS ITS

2016 Annual Howard Adelman Lecture

Jacqueline Bhabha

'Unaccompanied Minors, Separated Children, Children on the Move, What Next? The Need for a New Paradigm for Distress Child Migration'

Migration experts have noted for more than a decade that the vast majority of migrant journeys are best classified as "mixed migration". The motives propelling people to leave their homes are typically varied and multi-dimensional, a combination of immediate triggers and less proximate desires and aspirations. This observation applies to the migration of children, whether accompanied or traveling alone, as much as it does to the migration of adults. Most children leaving home are departing from stressful or intolerable circumstances but are also intent on exploring new opportunities or taking advantage of apparently enticing chances. And yet, the



international, regional and domestic migration regimes governing these movements are dominated by dichotomous concepts drawn from a legal regime crafted 75 years ago – refugee/economic migrant, legal/illegal, trafficked/smuggled, genuinely related or not. Child migrants with complex, multifaceted and perhaps changing motives are thus forced into legal straightjackets that correspond to official administrative silos processing their applications but that ill serve

their protection needs. The "surge" of Central American child migration to the US over the Summer of 2014 and the exodus of Syrian and other middle eastern refugees into Europe including unprecedented numbers of children over Spring/Summer/Fall 2015 have highlighted the breakdown of the established migration paradigm and the urgent need for a new one. What should the central elements of a new child migration paradigm be? What elements of the current system could be reformed? What new structures and policies are essential for progress on these issues?

Jacqueline Bhabha is FXB Director of Research, Professor of the Practice of Health and Human Rights at the Harvard School of Public Health, the Jeremiah Smith Jr. Lecturer in Law at Harvard Law School, and an Adjunct Lecturer in Public Policy at the Harvard Kennedy School. She is the author of *Child Migration and Human Rights in a Global Age* (2014).