

# SEMINAR NOTICE

*Department of Physics and Engineering Physics  
University of Saskatchewan*

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**SPEAKER:** Victoria Fisher, PhD Candidate  
University of Toronto

**TOPIC:** *Making and Mending: Uncovering the Material in the Rise of Physics Research in Canada*

**DATE:** Thursday June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2019

**TIME:** 3:30-4:30 p.m.

**PLACE:** Physics 175

## **ABSTRACT:**

At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, early Canadian physics laboratories defined themselves by prestigious demonstration instruments; In the 1890s, as developing departments began to look towards research, the ability to repair damaged equipment and construct new and unique apparatus became a priority. Skilled ‘mechanicians’ like the University of Toronto’s J. S. Plaskett and Queen’s University’s clock-making Professor Nathan F. Dupuis formed part of a first generation of laboratory-affiliated artisans who made and mended instruments for emerging research. Although the importance of these technicians and this apparatus is often obscured in documentary records, their roles are often visible in the equipment that survives in collections at Canadian universities. I examine some of these collections to uncover how instruments and technical expertise transformed teaching-focused institutions into mature physics departments capable of conducting brand-new research.