

# OSTROM WORKSHOP RESEARCH SERIES

## Cathryn Johnson

*Department of Political Science, IU Bloomington*

“French Colonial Legacies and Contemporary Associational Life: Women’s Participation in Community Life and Local Government in Mali and Burkina Faso”



**Wednesday, March 30, 2016**

12:00 – 1:00 p.m.

Ostrom Workshop, 513 N. Park

I seek to understand why Burkinabe women participate more in local government than Malian women. I analyze how women’s participation in associations, prominent organizational forms in both countries, can be a site for the development of the agency and efficacy needed to participate in local government. I trace differentiation in women’s local government participation in the two countries to the late colonial period when a strong divide between political elites and average citizens emerged in Mali. During this period in Burkina Faso, the country’s union movement and independent agricultural producers associations emerged as independent from politics. These different socio-political divides endure in these countries and continue to shape contemporary women’s political participation. My project will generate data through interviews, focus groups, and ethnographic observation in village research sites along the countries’ shared border. I will also conduct archival research in national archives and the colonial archives of French West Africa.



**Cathryn Johnson** is a PhD student in the Department of Political Science at Indiana University where she studies comparative politics and public policy with a focus on West Africa. She hopes to conduct field research for her dissertation project in Mali and Burkina Faso in 2016–2017. Prior to her studies at IU, Cathryn worked on West Africa programs at the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs in Washington, DC.

Presentations are open to the public (see our website for papers). You are welcome to bring your lunch. For questions, contact Allison Sturgeon (sturgeon@iu.edu; 812/855–3151).