

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

**Master of Art**  
**Andrea Nemer-Soto**

Will defend her thesis

**The Post-Consumer Waste Problem and EPR Regulations: The  
Case of Electronic Toys in British Columbia**

**Abstract**

Imagine a world where the massive waste generated by a city no longer reaches the landfill, but is instead captured after consumers' use to be reincorporated into the production system for proper recycling. Currently, consumers throw away products every day, turning those materials into waste. Electronic waste poses special problems when is not recycled because it may contain toxic components that can leach into landfill surroundings. Its plastic, metal, and electronic materials do not biodegrade but, can be reused and recycled. This study analyzes a system that attempts to solve the electronic postconsumer-waste problem by reducing its environmental burden while promoting economic development. The system was created in British Columbia, Canada after the province enacted a recycling regulation based on Producer Extended Responsibility, a policy strategy that is fast growing globally; the United States enacted 110 related laws from 1991 to 2011. For this study, I focus on electronic toy recycling. The BC recycling regulation requires all e-toy brand owners, manufacturers, sellers, distributors, and importers to comply with a government-approved product-stewardship program to recover and dispose of e-toys after they have been discarded by consumers. In response to the regulation, toy corporations joined a Canadian non-profit entity that recycles regulated waste, the Electronic Products Recycling Association of British Columbia. I conducted a case study using in-depth interviews with the relevant stakeholders to identify the outcomes of this program and its potential for replication in other industries. I also derived lessons that can be applied to improve corporate adaptation for sustainable postconsumer waste management in other places.

Monday, July 21, 2014  
9:00 am  
WGHL, Room 481

Faculty, students, and the general public are invited.

Supervisory Committee:

Kevin Dooley, Chair  
Philip White, Member  
George Basile, Member