

Department of  
Politics

*Engaging  
Democracy*  
Seminar Series



**The Department of Politics  
invites you to**

**Democracy's End ... Or Beginning?  
The Constant Struggle  
Over Actually Existing Democracy**

A talk by

**Dennis Pilon  
Associate Professor  
York University**

**Monday 27 November 2017  
2:30 - 4:30 pm**

**The Underground, York Lanes, York University**

Have we become a 'post-democracy'? Has neoliberalism been successful in 'undoing the demos'? Or is the electoral representative form of democracy common in contemporary capitalist societies 'not what democracy looks like,' as left critics complain? One narrative suggests we are seeing the end of the democratic era. But the other argues that we never were democratic in the first place. Neither is wholly satisfactory. Indeed, both over-focus on processes, institutions or scales in defining just what democracy is. By contrast, Dennis Pilon argues that democracy is best understood relationally, as a struggle to equalize power in any given society. Drawing insights from Marx, Bourdieu and Foucault, he shows how throughout history, democracy has been invoked in an attempt not merely to introduce processes or institutions but to alter social relations more generally. And for such reasons, it has always encountered powerful opposition from those who would prefer privilege or wealth define how we are governed.

**Join us for Refreshments, Cash Bar and Socializing  
following the talk**

**Please RSVP by November 21**