

Department of
Politics

*Engaging
Democracy*
Seminar Series



The Department of Politics
invites you to

Dilemmas of Democracy

A plenary talk by

Professor Mel Cappe
University of Toronto

Tuesday 27 February 2018
South 674 Ross Building, York University

Plenary Talk 2:30 - 4:30 pm

Workshop 10:00 - 11:30 am

Registration is required for the Workshop only

<https://laps.apps01.yorku.ca/machform/view.php?id=384082>

The talk: Democracy is nothing to be afraid of and yet, with the emergence of the referenda we have seen some dilemmas emerge for the thought and practice of democracy. From Brexit to Catalunya, we have seen referenda become the vehicles that are supposed to give voice to people through a direct democratic vote. At times, though this has not been the case. Mel Cappe engages both the question of Brexit and the rise of Donald Trump, and the practicalities of the referendum results and their implication for democracy. What are some practical truths of leaving the EU, for instance? Do referenda provide the democratic platform for engaging with practical questions? Do referenda allow for access to democratic rule? What happens when human and civil rights issues are put to a popular vote?

The workshop: Like seldom before, we see populism driving election results. We are seeing political “leaders” following their constituents. We are putting our faith in elections when money may distort results. Fake news undermines the credibility of legitimate news. The media are no longer mediators of democratic processes, but rather actors in those processes. The institutions of democratic governance are under stress if not attack. How do we ensure modern democracy yields democratic results?

Mel Cappe, a former High Commissioner for Canada in the United Kingdom, is Professor in the School of Public Policy and Governance at University of Toronto. From 2006-2011, he was President of the Institute for Research on Public Policy. Earlier in his career, he held senior economic and policy positions in the Departments of Finance and Industry and was Deputy Minister of various portfolios.

**Monday 12 March ... *Engaging Democracy*
Roundtable** with Politics Professors
Agathangelou, Latham, Pilon and Singh.

What has our series taught us? What questions
has it raised? Where do we go from here?

