



Nonaligned: The future of independence in Canadian politics

Honourable Jody Wilson-Raybould

Former Attorney General of Canada

Honourable Jane Philpott

Former Treasury Board President

November 29, 2019

9:00am – 4:30pm

Summary

On November 29th, prominent politicians Honourable Jane Philpott and Honourable Jody Wilson-Raybould join us to reflect on their experience in federal politics, particularly around the ministerial roles that they both held – they will explore the important things they accomplished, some of the challenges they faced, and the significant work that is still to be done. With a passion for true reconciliation in Canada, Ms. Wilson-Raybould and Ms. Philpott have both worked extensively on policy areas related to Indigenous reconciliation. In their workshop, they will explore this important policy file, discuss the progress that was made, and explore some of the many ways that we might move forward in the future.

In the 2019 federal election, Ms. Philpott and Ms. Wilson-Raybould decided to shed traditional party constraints. They used unique campaigning methods, reached new audiences of voters and learned a lot about how the system works on the ground without central party support. Some of this approach was inspired by *Teardown*, a provocative and thoughtful challenging of the Canadian political system by Dave Meslin, a longtime community organizer and fair voting advocate. In the afternoon, workshop participants will be joined by Dave Meslin himself to explore some advantages and disadvantages of our current democratic setup, how we might improve democratic performance and public engagement, and how we might start to fix Canadian democracy from the ground up.

If you are interested in a different approach to politics, you will want to take part in this thought-provoking and inspiring workshop.

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Outline

9:00am-10:30am - Is our current democracy working and getting things done?

1. Our Ministerial Roles
2. Accomplishments and Progress

10:45am-12:00pm - Work still in progress: Indigenous reconciliation

1. Evolution of the file
2. Ways to move forward

12:00pm-1:30pm - Lunch Break

1:30pm-3:00pm – Teardown: Rebuilding Democracy from the Ground Up (w/ Dave Meslin)

1. The democratic deficit
2. Advantages and disadvantages of our current democratic setup

3:15pm-4:30pm - The Process Revisited (w/ Dave Meslin and Ian Capstick)

1. Improving performance and public engagement
2. Challenges for the future

Required Readings*

Flavelle, Lucinda and Philip Kaye. 1986. "Party Discipline and Legislative Voting". *Canadian Parliamentary Review*. 9 (2): 6-9. <http://www.revparl.ca/english/issue.asp?param=117&art=665>

Geisler, Paul. 2015. "Will the Reform Act, 2014, Alter the Canadian Phenomenon of Party Discipline?" *Manitoba Law Journal*. 38(1):17-43. [Course reserves](#)

Heard, Andrew David. 2013. "Chapter 4: The Legislatures" in *Canadian Constitutional Conventions: The Marriage of Law and Politics*. Oxford University Press. [Course reserves](#)

Focus on sections:

- "Party Government and Party Discipline"
- "The Party Caucus: Discipline and Defection"

Syed, Fatima. 2019. "Why is it so hard for Independent candidates to get elected to Canada's House of Commons?" *Canada's National Observer*, May 29. <https://www.nationalobserver.com/2019/05/29/news/why-it-so-hard-independent-candidates-get-elected-canadas-house-commons>

Additional Resources

Meslin, Dave. 2019. *Teardown: Rebuilding Democracy from the Ground Up*. Toronto: Penguin Random House.

*If you are registered for non-credit and are unable to access the required readings for this workshop, please send us an email at wssr@concordia.ca and we will do our best to assist you.

Workshops on Social Science Research (WSSR)
1455 de Maisonneuve W. – H1 2Z5 3O
Montreal, Qc H3G 1M8
Telephone: 514-848-2424 x5473

