

WSSR WORKSHOPS ON SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH

The Media's Role in Canadian Politics

Carole MacNeil

Journalist and Host of CBC News Prime Time

October 6th, 2017

9:00am – 4:30pm

Workshop Outline

Join CBC News Senior Anchor Carole MacNeil to talk the role of media in Canadian politics.

Journalism should be one of the chief contributors to a healthy democracy. It is for the most part left in the hands of the private sector...and in every case, needs an audience to survive.

Is there enough freedom in the press to keep our politicians accountable? Is there strong enough will to cover the policy that will impact our governed life in Canada, or is it "too boring"?

Session 1: What is the ideal role of Canadian media in politics? From an idealistic point of view, a strong media could save the world. God help us if this is left in the hands of journalists!

Session 2: Media under attack: As an institution at the forefront of free speech, are we doing all we can to protect speech, even the speech we don't like? Or are we conspiring, wittingly or not, to undermine one of the great tenets of democracy, free expression?

Session 3: It all comes down to this: Who's asking the questions? As an experienced interviewer, most recently focused on Canadian and American politics. Ms. MacNeil will talk about how it works at the micro level. What guides our choices in terms of story, including the choice of topics, and the framing of questions. What is the goal of an interviewer? We do fact checks. Do we do enough bias checks? Are we "tough" enough? Too "soft"...or too worried about our own image?

Required readings/viewing:

News and Democracy "The Shattered Mirror, News, Democracy and Trust in the Digital Age." *Public Policy Forum*, January 2017. pp.38-45. <https://shatteredmirror.ca/wp-content/uploads/theShatteredMirror.pdf>

"Andrew Scheer shuns Rebel Media" Carole MacNeil interview on *CBC News*, uploaded by CBC News, August 19 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jCSfe5OKbIU&feature=youtu.be>

Recommended reading:

Sen. Keith Davey, "The Uncertain Mirror." *Report of the Special Senate Committee on Mass Media*, Vol I, ONLY pp. 1-13 & 252-255 <http://www.albertasenator.ca/flashblocks/data/BT%20Media/Davey%20Report%20Vol%20I.pdf>