

Melbourne School of Government Conference: Democracy in Transition

Conference Program

6-8 December 2015

The Langham Hotel, Melbourne



MELBOURNE SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT

PRE-CONFERENCE: SUNDAY 6TH DECEMBER 2015

1pm-4.30pm PhD Panel at *The Yasuko Hiraoka Myer Room, Sidney Myer Asia Centre, University of Melbourne, Swanston Street, Carlton.*

5.30pm-7.30pm Welcome Reception from 5.30pm-7pm at *Left Bank, Southgate*

DAY 1: MONDAY, 7 DECEMBER 2015

8.30am Registration

9.00am Keynote Address: **Democracy in Transition**

Mark Considine, Dean of Arts, University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia.

9.30am Plenary Session 1: **21st century challenges for democracy**

Day One of the conference looks at the breadth of “democracy” globally, the challenges it faces and how they might be addressed. Current research points to a significant retreat of Western liberal democracy in terms of citizen engagement, and the upholding of basic liberal democratic rights and freedoms. Challenges are also being faced by newly-minted liberal democracies where progress on instituting democratic rights has stalled. We are also witnessing an evolution of democratic ideals and models that have the potential to transform democratic societies.

Chair: Mark Considine, Dean of Arts, University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia.

Panelists:

- Mukulika Banerjee, London School of Economics, London, United Kingdom.
- John Brumby, Former State Premier of Victoria, Professorial Fellow, University of Melbourne and Monash, Melbourne, Australia.
- Larissa Behrendt, Jumbunna Indigenous House of Learning, University of Technology, Sydney, Australia.

10.45am Morning tea

11.15am Theme Sessions: Problems with 21st century democracy

Parallel Session 1

Democratic 'disconnect': are citizens really over democracy?

Many democracies are experiencing growing citizen distrust of and disinterest in political leaders, parties and the democratic system more generally. Is this just another of democracy's periodic crises? Or is there something different now going on that's driving the divide in new and more profound ways? What is causing the disconnect, how does it manifest itself across different democracies and can it be bridged?

Chair: Jenny Lewis, University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia.

Panelists:

- Valarie Sands and Ken Coghill, 'Deliberative Democracy in the City of Melbourne: Lessons from Local Government', Monash University and Electoral Regulation Research Network, Melbourne, Australia (Sands), and Monash Business School, Monash University, Melbourne, Australia (Coghill); co-authors Yee-Fui Ng (RMIT University), and Paul Thornton-Smith (Victorian Electoral Commission), Melbourne, Australia.
- Akil N Awan, 'Understanding Youth Democratic 'Disconnect': From Apathy to Political Radicalism and Extremism', University of London, London, United Kingdom.
- Craig Jeffrey, Director Australia India Institute, University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia.

Parallel Session 2

What's wrong with political leadership?

Many people blame democracy's malaise on declining standards of political leadership. Is it simply a case of electing better leaders? Are political leaders actually able to 'lead' in today's political environment, or do perceptions of poor leadership mask deeper issues with our political system?

Chair: Carol Schwartz AM, Founding Chair of the Women's Leadership Institute of Australia (WLIA), Director Trawalla Foundation, University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia.

Panelists:

- Melanie Sully, 'Reconnecting citizens with politics through governance', Director Institute of Go-Governance, Vienna, Austria.
- Jim Middleton, Centre for Advanced Journalism (CAJ) University of Melbourne, Special Correspondent for Sky news, Former senior ABC journalist, Melbourne, Australia.
- Roberta Ryan, Director of the Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government (ACELG) and UTS Centre for Local Government, Sydney, Australia.

Parallel Session 3

Organisational Democracy: Is it dead and buried?

In the 1960s and 70s, worker participation and industrial democracy were central to the programs of unions and activists. Since that time, the prospects for democracy within organisations have declined steadily and been replaced by a managerially-driven agenda aimed at improving business performance. As a result, many argue that the fight for organisational democracy has now been lost. What is the current state of organisational democracy and its future prospects?

Chair: Leisa Sargent, Centre for Workplace Leadership, University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia.

Panelists:

- Jimmy Donaghey, Warwick Business School, London, United Kingdom.
- Bill Harley, Centre for Workplace Leadership, University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia

Parallel Session 4

Do central governments have too much power? Recharging local and regional communities

Did the Australian federation die while we were watching different codes of football? Australian Prime Ministers often talk about duplication, waste and inefficiency, while slowly centralising in "the national interest". Yet in many other countries, such as Belgium, the United Kingdom, and many new and emerging democracies, the emphasis is on devolving power and decentralising services. This panel will offer new perspectives to show that democratic malaise be remedied through more empowered sub-national governments.

Chair: Scott Brenton, University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia

Panelists:

- Miranda Stewart, 'New fiscal approaches for federal democracy in Australia', Director Tax and Transfer Policy Institute, CSPP, Australian National University, Canberra, Australia.
- Anne Tiernan, Griffith Business School, Griffith University, NSW, Australia
- Michael Crommelin AO, 'The Constitutional foundations of Australian federal democracy', Zelman Cowen Professor of Law, University of Melbourne, Australia.
- Glenn Savage, 'Who's steering the ship? National schooling reform and Australian federalism', Graduate School of Education, University of Melbourne, Australia.

Parallel Session 5

Whose system is it? The role of special interests and 'money' politics in Western democracy

There are serious concerns that access to politicians and policy is skewed overwhelmingly in favour of a narrow band of vested interests. This means little opportunity for citizens to exert major influence over the political and policy process. What is the extent of this influence and how is it manifested? Is greater transparency around political and policy decision-making the answer?

Chair: Fiona Haines, Chair of Criminology, University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia.

Panelists:

- Mark Triffitt, 'Why Special Interests are No Longer 'Special': The Functional Case for Limiting the Influence of Lobby Groups in Democratic Systems', University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia.
- Zim Nwokora, 'The Consequences of Campaign Finance Regulations', University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia.
- Denis Muller, Centre for Advanced Journalism (CAJ) University of Melbourne, Former Senior Journalist, Melbourne, Australia.

12.30pm Lunch

Lunchtime conversational Plenary session @ 1pm–1.45pm **Political Outsiders: Are we at the tea party with the mad hatter?**

Donald Trump, Jeremy Corbyn, Clive Palmer, Marine Le Pen, Alexis Tsipras, Arvind Kejriwal, ... Love them or hate them, leaders from outside the mainstream are getting a lot of attention in advanced democracies. Are they a breath of fresh air or dangerously off-track? Are they an entertaining diversion or wielding serious power? Are they a product of deep-seated disillusionment with the two-party political mainstream or a shallow obsession with personality? Are these leaders part of a similar phenomenon? Most importantly, are they a symptom of the failings of democracy or evidence of its strength?

Chair: Maxine McKew, Former Federal Parliamentary Secretary and Senior ABC Journalist, Hon. Fellow Melbourne Graduate School of Education, University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia.

Panelists:

- Simon Hughes, Former Minister of State for Justice and Civil Liberties, United Kingdom;
- Amanda Vanstone, Former Federal Minister, Former Liberal Senator, Former Ambassador to Italy, Adelaide, Australia.

2pm **Theme Sessions: Potential ways to renew democracy**

Parallel Session 6

How does indigenous political organisation influence 21st century conceptions of Western democratic ideals?

Indigenous nations and their claims pose difficult challenges for western settler democracies. Some of these challenges have to do with the nature of Indigenous-state relations and with tensions between state presumptions of equality and Indigenous claims to difference; other, related challenges have to do with the possibilities of Indigenous self-government and with conflicting notions of appropriate form. Are there solutions to such challenges, and what are their implications for these democracies?

Chair: Mark McMillan, Co-Director of Melbourne Law School's Indigenous Peoples in International and Comparative Law Research Program, University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia.

Panelists:

- Steve Cornell, 'Imposed and Organic Democracies: Indigenous Government, Policy, and Welfare in the CANZUS States', Director of the Udall Center for Studies in Public Policy, University of Arizona, Arizona, USA.
- Kirsty Gover, 'Honour of the Crown', Co-Director of Melbourne Law School's Indigenous Peoples in International and Comparative Law Research Program, University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia.

Parallel Session 7

Transitions in Deliberative Democracy

Deliberative democracy is an expansive and fast growing field pursued by governments, elected officials, NGOs and even some businesses to improve the legitimacy of decisions through meaningful communication between citizens and policy-makers. This panel explores the opportunities and challenges that recent theoretical and empirical developments in deliberative democracy present to contemporary democratic practice.

Chair: Mark Triffitt, University of Melbourne, Melbourne.

Panelists:

- Carolyn Hendriks, 'Connecting Citizens and Elites in Public Deliberation: the role of institutional coupling', Australian National University, Australia.
- Nicole Curato, 'Deliberating after Disasters', University of Canberra, Canberra, Australia.
- Annie Bolitho, 'Deliberative processes in policy contexts: a practitioner perspective', University of Technology, Sydney, Australia.

Parallel Session 8

The Proximity Paradox: The Democratic Promise and Practical Pitfalls of Governing at the Local Level

The close proximity of politics to the people means governing at the local level presents great promise for the development of democratic practice, but this proximity also creates a range of pitfalls in seeking to fulfil that democratic promise. In this session our panellists will discuss the great democratic promise that local government presents but also explore the challenges faced. In reflecting on what has worked and what hasn't, our panellists will look to the future and how we can develop more democratic practices at the local level.

Chair: Roberta Ryan, Director of the Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government (ACELG) and UTS Centre for Local Government, Sydney, Australia

Panelists:

- Andrew Hollows, Chief Executive Officer of the Victorian Local Governance Association (VLGA), Melbourne, Australia.
- Rob Spence, Chief Executive Office of the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV), Melbourne, Australia.
- Graeme Emonson, Chief Executive Officer of the City of Knox, Melbourne, Australia.

Parallel Session 9

The role of social media in renewing democracy

There is potential for social media to connect citizens directly to politicians and policy-making and create a more responsive polity, as well as better policy and political outcomes. But to what extent, and how, can social media be constructively used to increase responsiveness and citizen representation?

Chair: Tim Dunlop, Centre for Advancing Journalism (CAJ), University of Melbourne, Australia.

Panelists:

- Sara Bice, 'Community use of Twitter in the national coal seam gas debate', University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia.
- Tim Norton, Digital Campaigns Manager at Save the Children, Founder of FWD Australia's premier conference run by and for digital campaigners, Melbourne, Australia
- Nkwachukwu Orji, 'Expanding Citizens' Engagement: Social Media and Elections in Nigeria', Institute of African Affairs / German Institute of Global and Area Studies, Hamburg, Germany.

Parallel Session 10

Reforming the policy process: how do we get better outcomes?

Many Western democracies are facing policy gridlock and a growing inability to address the long-term policy issues of the day. Fractious electorates are seen as one reason why policy outcomes are harder to achieve, while others blame a paucity of political vision and leadership. Are Western democracies becoming more prone to gridlock and if so, why? Are there better ways to construct public policy? If so, can they balance effective input from citizens while maximising policy certainty and effectiveness?

Chair: Simon Hughes, Former Minister of State for Justice and Civil Liberties, UK.

Panelists:

- Lykke Ricard & Jenny Lewis, 'Building innovation capacity in the public sector: views from the inside and the outside', Roskilde University, Roskilde, Denmark, & University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia.
- Tim Smith, 'Principles to guide policy reform – Can Plato show the way?', Former judge and current representative of the Accountability Round table, Melbourne, Australia.
- Nicholas Reece, Former political advisor, University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia.

3.15pm **Afternoon tea**

3.45pm **Plenary session 2: Performance of democracy**

This session will discuss and evaluate specific proposals that can potentially improve the performance of Western-style liberal democracies. Specifically, it asks which alternate models or processes to liberal democracy have worked in other jurisdictions? It also discusses potential obstacles to renewing democracy's performance. The session provides a segue into Day 2 which will focus on alternative approaches to political renewal emerging in a number of non-Western jurisdictions, as well as current debates around illiberal and radical democracy.

Chair: Maxine McKew, Former Federal Parliamentary Secretary and Senior ABC Journalist, Hon. Fellow Melbourne Graduate School of Education, University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia.

Panelists:

- John Keane, University of Sydney, Sydney Democracy Network, Sydney, Australia.
 - Ross Garnaut, University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia.
 - Shamsul Haque, National University of Singapore, Singapore
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5pm **Day 1: Summary**

Mark Considine, University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia; and Helen Sullivan, Founding Director of the Melbourne School of Government, University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia.

5.15pm **Conference close**

5.30pm **The University of Melbourne's conferral of degree ceremony: Doctor of Letters (Honoris Causa), to be conferred on H.E. Xanana Gusmao, followed by refreshments**

7pm-11pm **Conference drinks and dinner at Sake, Hamer Hall**

DAY 2: TUESDAY, 8 DECEMBER 2015

Breakfast **Trans Pacific Partnership: Issues & Challenges**

Plenary
7.15am -
8.30am

The Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) is a proposed trade agreement between 12 Pacific Rim countries representing a quarter of world trade and a third of world GDP. In a time of lower global economic growth, it has the potential to create new trade and investment opportunities for Australia in the Asia-Pacific region. However, concerns have been raised about the secrecy of its negotiation and its content (such as investor-state dispute settlement). In this session, a panel of experts will explore some of the implications of the TPP for democracy and public policy in Australia.

Chair: Andrew Mitchell, Melbourne Law School, University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia.

Panelists:

- Elizabeth Thurbon, International Relations/International Political Economy, University of New South Wales, Australia.
 - Kimberlee Weatherall, Sydney Law School, University of Sydney, Australia.
 - Bryan Clarke, Director, Trade and International Affairs, Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI), Canberra, Australia.
 - Elizabeth Ward, First Assistant Secretary, Office of Trade Negotiations, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), Canberra, Australia.
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8.30am **Coffee**

9.00am **Plenary session 3: Beyond the western frame: Asian innovations in legitimate governance**

We have seen a diversification of political forms over the past two decades. We have seen an array of experiments in neoliberal autocracy (e.g. in the Middle East) and a surge of political strongmen who have great electoral legitimacy, but are far from liberal (Russia, South Africa, Turkey). We have seen deeply flawed attempts at planting democracy in transitional contexts (Afghanistan, Iraq, Western Africa) as well as surprisingly resilient democratic experiments (parts of Eastern Europe, Indonesia). And we have seen highly variegated developments in the world's most populous democracy (India) and a model of privileging effective governance over liberalism (China). How do we come to grips with these paradoxical trends? What can we learn from contemporary experiences in navigating the conundrums of freedom, order and economic development? And does the world stand to gain (or lose) from these diverse experiments with political legitimacy?

Chair: Andrew Walter, International Relations, University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia.

Panelists:

- Xanana Gusmao, Minister of Planning and Strategic Investment East Timor, Former President and Prime Minister of East Timor, East Timor.
 - Keping Yu, Chair, Professor and Dean, School of Government, Peking University, Beijing, China.
 - Lisa Wedeen, 'Neoliberal Autocracy and Its Unmaking: Reflections on Syria', University of Chicago, Chicago, USA.
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10.30am Morning tea

11.00am Theme Sessions: Democracy in transition or in stagnation?

Parallel Session 11

Politics at war's end: working out order and legitimacy in the ruins of conflict

The end of war is often understood as the point at which bullets start yielding to ballots. But positions of power and authority are not simply erased by a peace deal or fresh elections. Many war-time leaders manage to reinvent themselves by obtaining amnesty, securing tenure in public office, capitalizing on their military triumphs as a base for legitimacy and by crafting their mastery of the democratic narrative. Rushing into elections or duplicating Euro-centric models are obviously not the way to go, but what models have worked and is there scope for international and foreign actors to bolster these?

Chair: Rachael Diprose, University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia.

Panelists:

- Astri Suhrke, 'Democratization through Elections: When it Doesn't Work', Christian Michelsen Institute, Bergen, Norway.
- Charmaine Rodrigues, 'Rebuilding democracy in fragile and post-conflict countries: The importance of engaging directly with political, rather than just institutional, governance issues', Former UNDP Global Governance & Peace building specialist, New York.

Parallel Session 12

Popular resentment in the midst of democracy

Conflict and democracy are not antonyms. Many established democracies, are confronted with discrimination and violence against women; ethnic or religious antagonism may simmer under the surface of apparent order; communities living in protracted displacement often face equally protracted mechanisms of exclusion. The crisis management mode prevails when such resentment flares up, but the real questions revolve around redressing the illiberal underpinnings of supposedly liberal democracies.

Chair: John Langmore, Assistant Director Research, Former Federal Minister, Former UN Divisional Director, University of Melbourne, Australia.

Panelists:

- Thitinan Pongsudhirak, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand.
- Ranjana Kumari, Director of Centre for Social Research, Delhi, India.
- Erika Feller, 'Global people movement: an ultimate challenge to democracy', Former Assistant High Commissioner at the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia.

Parallel Session 13

Redress in divided societies: space to reconcile or space to argue?

Countries undergoing transition struggle with a whole range of paradoxes. The pursuit of justice may undermine stability and attempts to build harmony may close democratic space. The two papers of this panel look at a range of divided societies that struggle with enduring legacies of conflict. What forms may justice take when the issues underlying a conflict have not really shifted? And do such societies need closure and consensus, or a space to argue?

Panelists:

- Thomas Obel Hansen, 'Transitional Justice in Diverse Contexts', United States International University – Africa (USIU), Nairobi, Kenya.
- Sarah Maddison, 'Conflict and politics in divided societies', University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia.

Parallel Session 14

Aiding democrats? The challenges of international assistance in transition contexts

Democracy assistance to militarized regimes is obviously quite a different endeavour from providing relief to a disaster-stricken fragile State. But the underlying questions around navigating hybrid order and convoluted landscapes of legitimacy are often not that dissimilar.

Chair: Bina Fernandez, University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia.

Panelists:

- Wesley Morgan, 'Governance, leadership and accountability issues in Vanuatu', Oxfam Pacific Policy advisor, Melbourne, Australia.
- Jesse Dillon Savage, 'Military size and the effectiveness of democracy assistance', University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia.

12.15pm Lunch

**Lunchtime
Plenary
Session @
12.45pm–
1.30pm**

Rethinking the corporation in democratic transition: The responsible company

This session explores the first-hand experiences of corporations leading the environment, social and governance (ESG) charge. These firms are expanding traditional notions of the role of the corporation in society, meeting demands of a broader range of stakeholders than ever. But are these roles appropriate? Where do corporate responsibilities end and government responsibilities begin? And how can corporations and government work together to ‘create shared value’?

Chair: Ian Williamson, Director Asia Pacific Social Impact Leadership Centre (APSIC), Melbourne Business School, University of Melbourne, Australia.

Panellists:

- Jane Nash, Head of Corporate Sustainability, ANZ, Melbourne, Australia.
- James Ensor, Group Social Policy Lead, BHP Billiton, Melbourne, Australia.
- Michael Parks, General Manager of Governance, Integration and Reporting, Telstra, Melbourne, Australia.
- Dr. Sara Bice, Corporate-community-government engagement, Melbourne School of Government, University of Melbourne, Australia.

1.45pm

Theme Sessions: Illiberal democracy

Parallel Session 15

Rethinking Chinese politics: identity and deliberation

Western commentators routinely reject China’s politics as undemocratic and there is no lack of evidence to sustain such claims. But this panel explores the pluralistic elements of Chinese politics and provides insights into the different forms of contestation, deliberation and consultation in China. are often not that dissimilar.

Chair: Sow Keat Tok, Asia Institute, University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia.

Panelists:

- Baogang He, ‘Authoritarian Deliberation Reexamined: The Current Trends of Public Deliberation in China’, Head of Public Policy and Global Affairs Programme, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore.
- Jian Zhang, ‘Chinese politics and identity politics’, School of Government, University of Beijing, Beijing, China.

Parallel Session 16

Beyond the liberal crisis: humble democracy or radical democracy

Now that the celebrations over democracy’s supposed triumph at the end of history seem to have become a distant memory, what remains are some of the uncomfortable questions around the fundamental limits of democracy. Can we revive the democratic gusto without falling prey to the same hubris? The two papers in this session seem to look in opposite directions – one uses the notion of humility as a vantage point, the other seeks a middle ground between radical democracy and rational deliberation.

Chair: Sarah Maddison, University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia.

Panellists:

- Jakub Nalichowski, ‘Deliberative democracy as a response to comprehensive crisis of contemporary society’, University of Wroclaw, Poland.
- Christopher Hobson, ‘Humble Democracy’, Waseda University, Tokyo, Japan.

Parallel Session 17

Questioning “we the people” democratically

Democratic rule derives its ultimate legitimacy from the people. Yet, the demarcation of such a demos seems to have become less rather than more self-evident in globalized modernity. Unprecedented flows, a surge of dual citizenship, supra-national arrangements and renewed forms of nationalism question the nation-state both from “above” and “below”. If anything, questions of inclusion and exclusion become more pressing.

Chair: Timothy Lynch, Graduate School of Humanities & Social Sciences, University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia. .

Panelists:

- John Rundell, ‘Citizens and Strangers: Cosmopolitanism as an Empty Universal’, University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia.
- Thomas Lundberg and Peter Lynch, ‘Scotland and the Democratic ‘Disconnect’: The Yes Campaign and the Independence Referendum’, University of Glasgow, Glasgow, United Kingdom.

3pm **Afternoon tea**

3.30pm **Plenary session 4: The secular trap: Democracy as cultural practice**

The separation of Church and State is commonly taken as a pre-requisite for liberal democracy, but democracy has religious overtones: reifying one's citizenship on election day, the theatrical performance around political victories and defeat, and fairly senseless forms of antagonism have little to do with the lofty principles of democracy. Why do so many people who have no illusion about the electoral outcome still bother to vote at all? And isn't there something profoundly faithful about democracy's self-referential claim to supremacy and the missionary zeal with which it is propagated around the globe? In this penultimate session, we engage with two speakers who have explored these questions in thoughtful, stimulating and provocative ways.

Chair: Adrian Little, Head School of Social and Political Sciences (SSPS), University of Melbourne, Australia

Panelists:

- Patrick Deneen, University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame (IN), USA.
 - Mukulika Banerjee, London School of Economics, London, United Kingdom.
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4.30pm **Closing Plenary: Public forum: Democratic futures**

Leave your expertise at the door and have a laugh. This not to be missed, light-hearted session will be hosted by comedian Ms. George McEnroe in conversation with dynamic panelists who will save democracy (in half an hour!) discussing big ideas, small scale changes, outrageous suggestions, and proven models. All welcome.

5.15pm **Closing remarks**

Mark Considine, University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia; and Helen Sullivan, Founding Director of the Melbourne School of Government, University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia.

5.30pm **Conference close**
