

POL199Y: The Challenge of Direct Democracy

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Referendums are becoming more frequently employed as instruments of direct democracy even in many countries where they are not part of the established political tradition. In Canada, the referendums held in Quebec on sovereignty (1980, 1995) and nationally on the Charlottetown constitutional proposals (1992) were major political events. Yet, referendums remain little studied by Canadian Political Scientists. In some European countries, notably Ireland, Italy, and Switzerland, and in some American states, the use of the referendum has stronger historical roots, thus providing us with a wider range of empirical evidence regarding the functioning of these particular types of democratic institutions. This seminar developed out of a research project entitled the *Comparative Referendums Project*, in which we have been examining the characteristics of referendums and similar devices in thirty-six democracies. In this course, we will consider both the theoretical and practical arguments for and against direct democracy. Why do some countries use referendums while others with equally strong democratic traditions do not? Why are so many nations and provinces creating or reviving these institutions now? What are the theoretical assumptions that lie behind the willingness of governments to employ these types of procedures? How do such institutions function in practice? What actually happens when a government decides to put a contentious political issue to a referendum, or when a group of citizen-activists proposes a legislative initiative through petition? This course will combine a wide ranging discussion of the conceptual and theoretical issues pertaining to direct democracy with a detailed examination of a number of comparative case studies. Included among the latter will be a selection of North American, European, and Australian cases which are capable of enhancing our understanding of the possible implications of these institutions for Canadian democracy.

TEXTS:

Patrick Boyer, *The People's Mandate: Referendums and a More Democratic Canada*

Ian Budge, *The New Challenge of Direct Democracy*

David Butler & Austin Ranney (eds.), *Referendums Around the World: The Growing Use of Direct Democracy*

Readings packet [PKT] — a selection of articles which will be made available for purchase at cost.

The following books are recommended as additional reference sources. Most of these will be available on short term loan in the central library system.

Benjamin Barber, *Strong Democracy: Participatory Politics for a New Age*
Shaun Bowler & Todd Donovan, *Demanding Choices: Opinion, Voting, and Direct Democracy*
Shaun Bowler, Todd Donovan & Caroline J. Tolbert (eds.), *Citizens as Legislators: Direct Democracy in the United States*
Thomas Cronin, *Direct Democracy: the Politics of Initiative, Referendum and Recall*
Russell Dalton, *Citizen Politics* (2nd edition)
Michael Gallagher & Pier Vincenzo Uleri, *The Referendum Experience in Europe*
Francis Hamon, *Le référendum: Étude comparative*
Jack Hayward (ed.), *The Crisis of Representation in Europe*
David Held (ed.), *Prospects for Democracy: North, South, East, West*
Kris Kobach, *The Referendum: Direct Democracy in Switzerland*
Hanspeter Kriesi (ed.), *Citoyenneté et démocratie directe*
Anders Jøssen et al, *To Join or Not to Join: Three Nordic Referendums*
Richard Johnston, André Blais, Elisabeth Gidengil & Neil Nevitte, *The Challenge of Direct Democracy: the 1992 Canadian Referendum*
Lawrence LeDuc, Richard G. Niemi & Pippa Norris (eds.) *Comparing Democracies Voting and Elections in Global Perspective*
David Magleby, *Direct Legislation: Voting on Ballot Propositions in the United States*
Iain McLean, *Democracy and New Technology*
John T. Rourke et al, *Direct Democracy and International Politics*
Giovanni Sartori, *The Theory of Democracy Revisited*
Maija Setälä, *Referendums and Democratic Government*
Alan Simpson (ed.), *Referendums: Constitutional and Political Perspectives*
Markku Suksi, *Bringing in the People: a Comparison of Constitutional Forms and Practices of the Referendum*

There are a number of internet sites which are useful for conducting research on referendums. Included among these are:

<http://csd.queensu.ca/conferences/referendum/news.html#usballots>
(Queen's University Center for the Study of Democracy)

<http://c2d.unige.ch/start.en.msql> (University of Geneva)

<http://www.npsnet.com/cdd/index.html> (Canadians for Direct Democracy)

<http://www.iandrinstitute.org/> (Initiative and Referendum Institute — USA)

Prof. LeDuc maintains a web site for *Comparing Democracies* which contains additional links. It can be accessed at: **<http://chass.utoronto.ca/~leduc/>**

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Each student will be responsible for **four** short essays (approximately five pages each) drawn from a list of **five** sets of theoretical and empirical topics relating to the study of referendums. Each completed essay will also be linked to a short class presentation and discussion. Due dates for essays are: **October 27th**, **December 1st**, **January 26th**, **February 23rd**, and **March 22nd**. Students are requested to submit **two** copies of each completed essay to the instructor or TA. Because the essays are linked to class discussions in the week following the due dates, **no late essays will be accepted**. Students who miss an essay deadline **for any reason** may make a selection of another topic from the next available set. All students will also have the alternative of substituting the optional take home final exam for one of the essays. Each of the four graded items (including the exam, if taken) will count for 20% of the total mark for the course. The remaining 20% is allocated to class participation.

COURSE SYLLABUS (* denotes required reading for all students)

September 15th: Introduction

- * “The People’s Voice”, *The Economist*, August 14-21, 1999 [PKT]
- * ”Aussies To Vote On Going It Alone”, *National Post*, August 6, 1999 [PKT]

September 22nd: What kind of democracy do we want?

- *Boyer, *The People’s Mandate*, ch. 1
- *Budge, *The New Challenge of Direct Democracy*, ch. 1
- *Butler & Ranney, *Referendums Around the World*, ch. 2

Russell Dalton, *Citizen Politics* (2nd edition), ch. 12

André Blais & Elisabeth Gidengil, *Making Representative Democracy Work: the Views of Canadians*

Paul Harris, “”Democracy and Referendums” in Alan Simpson (ed.), *Referendums: Constitutional and Political Perspectives*

Michael Atkinson, “What Kind of Democracy Do Canadians Want?”, *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 28 (1994)

September 29th: Representative vs. direct democracy

- *Boyer, *The People’s Mandate*, ch. 2-3
- *Budge, *The New Challenge of Direct Democracy*, ch. 2-3

Giovanni Sartori, *The Theory of Democracy Revisited*, ch. 5

Iain McLean, *Democracy and New Technology*, ch. 4

Maija Setälä, *Referendums and Democratic Government*, ch. 3, 4

Kris Kobach, *The Referendum: Direct Democracy in Switzerland*, ch. 2-4

Benjamin Barber, *Strong Democracy: Participatory Politics for a New Age*, ch. 6-8

Patrick Seyd, “In Praise of Party”, *Parliamentary Affairs* 51 (1998)

October 6th: Alternative forms and practices of direct democracy

*Boyer, *The People's Mandate*, ch. 4, 6

*Budge, *The New Challenge of Direct Democracy*, ch. 4

*Butler & Ranney, *Referendums Around the World*, ch. 1 & appendices

*Shaun Bowler & Todd Donovan, "Two Cheers for Direct Democracy or Who's Afraid of the Initiative Process?", *Representation* 35 (1998) [PKT]

*Susan Scarrow, "The Expansion of Direct Democracy: A Comparative Investigation of Institutional Design" [PKT]

Shaun Bowler et al, *Citizens as Legislators: Direct Democracy in the United States*, ch. 1, 2

Tor Bjørklund, "The Demand for Referendum: When Does It Arise and When Does It Succeed?", *Scandinavian Political Studies* 5 (1982)

Markku Suksi, *Bringing in the People: a Comparison of Constitutional Forms and Practices of the Referendum*

October 13th: The Canadian experience I — Where are we going? Where have we been?

*Boyer, *The People's Mandate*, ch. 5, 7, 8 & [PKT]

*L. LeDuc, "Consulting the People: The Canadian Experience with Referendums" [PKT]

Patrick Boyer, *Direct Democracy in Canada: the History and Future of Referendums*

Curtis Cook (ed.), *Constitutional Predicament: Canada After the Referendum of 1992*

Kenneth McRoberts, *Misconceiving Canada: the Struggle for National Unity*

Harold D. Clarke et al, *Absent Mandate: Canadian Electoral Politics in an Era of Restructuring Government of Ontario*, *Your Ontario, Your Choice* (discussion paper, 1996)

October 20th: The Canadian experience II — Quebec

*André Turcotte, "A la prochaine... again: the Quebec Referendum of 1995", *Electoral Studies* 15 (1996) [PKT]

*L. LeDuc, "The Sovereignty Generation: a Cohort Analysis of the Quebec Electorate" [PKT]

Jon H Pammett et al, "Political Support and Voting Behaviour in the Quebec Referendum",

in Allan Kornberg and Harold D. Clarke, *Political Support in Canada: the Crisis Years*

Maurice Pinard & Richard Hamilton, "The Parti Québécois Comes to Power: an Analysis of the 1976 Quebec Election", *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 11 (1978)

Jean Crête (ed.), *Le comportement électoral au Québec*

Edouard Cloutier et al, *Le Virage: l'évolution de l'opinion publique au Québec depuis 1960*

Pierre F. Côté et al, *Démocratie et référendum: la procédure référendaire*

Maurice Saint-Germain & Gilles Grenier, "Le parti québécois, le 'NON' à Charlottetown et le bloc québécois: est-ce le même électorat?", *Revue québécoise de science politique* 26 (1994)

Harold D. Clarke & Allan Kornberg, "Choosing Canada?: The 1995 Quebec Sovereignty Referendum", *PS*, December 1996.

October 27th: The Canadian experience — Charlottetown
[FIRST ESSAY DUE]

*Harold D. Clarke et al, *Absent Mandate* (3rd edition), ch. 7 [PKT]

*Richard Johnston et al, "The People and the Charlottetown Accord", in Ronald Watts & Douglas Brown (eds.), *Canada: the State of the Federation: 1993* [PKT]

Leslie Pal & F. Leslie Seidle, "Constitutional Politics: 1990-92: the Paradox of Participation", in Susan Phillips, *How Ottawa Spends, 1993-94: a More Democratic Canada?*

Peter Russell, *Constitutional Odyssey* (2nd edition)

Richard Johnston et al, *The Challenge of Direct Democracy: the 1992 Canadian Referendum*

Lawrence LeDuc & Jon H. Pammett, "Referendum Voting: Attitudes and Behaviour in the 1992 Constitutional Referendum", *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 28 (1995)

Kenneth McRoberts & Patrick J. Monahan (eds.), *The Charlottetown Accord, the Referendum, and the Future of Canada*

November 3rd: Class discussion — the Canadian referendum experience

November 10th: Institutional forms of the referendum in Europe

*V. Bogdanor, "Western Europe", in Butler & Ranney, *Referendums Around the World*, ch. 3

*Michael Gallagher, *The Referendum Experience in Europe*, ch. 14 [PKT]

*Laurence Morel, "Party Attitudes Towards Referendums in Western Europe", *West European Politics* 16 (1993) [PKT]

Michael Gallagher & Pier Vincenzo Uleri (eds.), *The Referendum Experience in Europe*

Michael Gallagher et al, *Representative Government in Modern Europe*

Francis Hamon, *Le référendum: Étude comparative*

November 17th: Direct democracy and the European Union

*William Wallace & Julie Smith, "Democracy or Technocracy?: European Integration and the Problem of Popular Consent", *West European Politics* 18 (1995) [PKT]

*Detlef Jahn & Ann-Sofie Storsved, "Legitimacy Through Referendum: the Nearly Successful Domino Strategy of the EU Referendums in Austria, Finland, Sweden and Norway", *West European Politics* 18 (1995) [PKT]

Jack Hayward (ed.), *The Crisis of Representation in Europe*

Anthony King, *Britain Says YES*

David Arter, "The EU Referendum in Finland on 16 October 1994: a Vote for the West, not for Maastricht", *Journal of Common Market Studies* 33 (1995)

John Fitzmaurice, "The 1994 Referenda on EU Membership in Austria and Scandinavia", *Electoral Studies* 14 (1995)

Ingrid Sogner & Clive Archer, "Norway and Europe: 1972 and Now", *Journal of Common Market Studies* 33 (1995)

November 24th: The European referendums on the Maastricht Treaty

*Karen Siune et al, "The European Union: Why the Danes said NO in 1992 but YES in 1993", *Electoral Studies* 13 (1993) [PKT]

*Byron Criddle, "The French Referendum on the Maastricht Treaty", *Parliamentary Affairs* 46 (1993) [PKT]

*Mark Franklin et al, "Referendum Outcomes and Trust in Government: Public Support for Europe in the Wake of Maastricht", *West European Politics* 18 (1995) [PKT]

Andrew Appleton, "Maastricht and the French Party System: Domestic Implications of the Treaty Referendum", *French Politics and Society* 10 (1992)

Finn Larsen & Sophie Vanhoonacker (eds.), *The Ratification of the Maastricht Treaty: Issues, Debates and Future Implications*

Michael Holmes, "The Maastricht Treaty Referendum of June 1992", *Irish Political Studies* 8 (1993)

Mark Franklin et al, "Uncorking the Bottle: Popular Opposition to Europe in the Wake of Maastricht", *Journal of Common Market Studies* 32 (1994)

December 1st: Britain — Devolution by referendum [SECOND ESSAY DUE]

*David Broughton, "The Welsh Devolution Referendum of 1997", *Representation* 35 (1998) [PKT]

*David Denver et al, "The Devolution Referendums in Scotland", *Representation* 35 (1998) [PKT]

*Denis Balsom, "The United Kingdom: Constitutional Pragmatism and the Adoption of the Referendum", in Gallagher & Uleri, *The Referendum Experience in Europe* [PKT]

Vernon Bogdanor, *Politics and the Constitution*

James Mitchell, "The Evolution of Devolution: Labour's Home Rule Strategy in Opposition", *Government and Opposition* 33 (1998)

Laura McAllister, "The Welsh Devolution Referendum: Definitely Maybe", *Parliamentary Affairs* 51 (1998)

John Bochel et al. *The Referendum Experience: Scotland, 1979*

James G. Kellas, *The Scottish Political System* (4th edition)

William L. Miller, "The Periphery and Its Paradoxes", *West European Politics* 21 (1998)

December 8th: Class discussion — the European referendum experience

January 5th: Australia: becoming a republic by referendum?

*Colin Hughes, "Australia and New Zealand", in Butler & Ranney, *Referendums Around the World*, ch. 5

*Brian Galligan, "Referendums and Representative Democracy: the Australian Experience" [PKT]

Richard Miles, "Australia's Constitutional Referendum: a Shield Not a Sword", *Representation* 35 (1998)

Brian Galligan, "The 1988 Referendums and Australia's Record on Constitutional Change," *Parliamentary Affairs* 43 (1990)

Brian Galligan, *A Federal Republic: Australia's Constitutional System of Government*

January 12th: The initiative and referendum tradition in the United States

*Everett C. Ladd et al, *America at the Polls: 1996*, ch. 5 [PKT]

*David Magleby, "Direct Legislation in the American States", in Butler & Ranney, *Referendums Around the World*, ch. 7

*Barbara Gamble, "Putting Civil Rights to a Popular Vote", *American Journal of Political Science* 91 (1997) [PKT]

Shaun Bowler et al, *Citizens as Legislators: Direct Democracy in the United States*

Thomas Cronin, *Direct Democracy: the Politics of Initiative, Referendum and Recall*

Shaun Bowler & Todd Donovan, *Demanding Choices: Opinion, Voting, and Direct Democracy*

David Magleby, *Direct Legislation: Voting on Ballot Propositions in the United States*

January 19th: The California model: should we embrace it?

*Peter Schrag, "California, Here We Come", *Atlantic Monthly*, March, 1998 [PKT]

*David McCuan et al, "California's Political Warriors", in Bowler et al, *Citizens as Legislators*, ch. 3 [PKT]

*Todd Donovan & Shaun Bowler, "Responsive or Responsible Government?", in Bowler et al, *Citizens as Legislators*, ch. 12 + appendix [PKT]

David Sears & Jack Citrin, *Tax Revolt: Something for Nothing in California*

Barry Gustafson, "Referendums in California", in Alan Simpson, *Referendums: Constitutional and Political Perspectives*

Caroline J. Tolbert & Rodney Hero, "Race, Ethnicity and Direct Democracy: An Analysis of California's Illegal Immigration Initiative", *Journal of Politics* 58 (1996)

January 26th: Switzerland: government by referendum?

[THIRD ESSAY DUE]

*Kris Kobach, "Switzerland", in Butler & Ranney, *Referendums Around the World*, ch. 4

*Alexander Treschel & Hanspeter Kriesi, "Switzerland: the Referendum and Initiative as a Centerpiece of the Political System", in Gallagher & Uleri, *The Referendum Experience in Europe*, ch. 12 [PKT]

Kris Kobach, *The Referendum: Direct Democracy in Switzerland*, ch. 1, 5, 6

Kris Kobach, "Recent Developments in Swiss Direct Democracy", *Electoral Studies* 12 (1993)

Hanspeter Kriesi (ed.), *Citoyenneté et démocratie directe*

February 2nd: Class discussion — American and Swiss style ballot initiatives

February 9th: Understanding and explaining referendums I — campaigns

*Ben Seyd, "Regulating the Referendum", *Representation* 35 (1998) [PKT]

*Anders Jenssen et al, *To Join or Not to Join: Three Nordic Referendums on Membership in the European Union*, ch. 3-4

Arthur Lupia, "Shortcuts vs. Encyclopedias: Information and Voting Behavior in California's Insurance Reform Elections", *American Political Science Review* 88 (1994)

Richard Johnston et al, *The Challenge of Direct Democracy: the 1992 Canadian Referendum*, ch. 5-7

Shaun Bowler & Todd Donovan, *Demanding Choices: Opinion, Voting, and Direct Democracy*, ch. 7-8

February 16th: Reading week — no class

**February 23rd: Understanding and explaining referendums II — voting behaviour
[FOURTH ESSAY DUE]**

*Budge, *The New Challenge of Direct Democracy*, ch. 5-6

*Mads Qvortrup, "Voter Knowledge and Participation: a Comparative Study of Referendums in Denmark and Switzerland", *Representation* 35 (1998) [PKT]

*Shaun Bowler & Todd Donovan, *Demanding Choices: Opinion, Voting, and Direct Democracy*, ch. 2 [PKT]

Roy Pierce et al, "Referendum Voting Behavior: the Norwegian and British Referenda on Membership in the European Community", *American Journal of Political Science* 27 (1983)

Anders Jenssen et al, *To Join or Not to Join: Three Nordic Referendums on Membership in the European Union*, ch. 6, 10, 11

March 1st: Class discussion — Understanding and explaining referendums

March 8th: Direct democracy and public policy (Ireland & Sweden)

*Richard D'Arcy & Michael Laver, "Referendum Dynamics and the Irish Divorce Amendment", *Public Opinion Quarterly* 54 (1990) [PKT]

*Brian Girvin, "The Referendums on Abortion", *Irish Political Studies*, 1993 [PKT]

*Donald Gramberg & Sören Holmberg, "Preferences, Expectations and Voting in Sweden's Referendum on Nuclear Power", *Social Science Quarterly* 67 (1988) [PKT]

Olof Ruin, "Sweden: the Referendum as an Instrument for Defusing Political Issues", in Gallagher & Uleri, *The Referendum Experience in Europe*, ch. 11

Michael Gallagher, "Ireland: the Referendum as a Conservative Device", in Gallagher & Uleri, *The Referendum Experience in Europe*, ch. 6

Maija Setälä, *Referendums and Democratic Government*, ch. 5

Jane O'Mahony, "The Irish Referendum Experience", *Representation* 35 (1998)

Karin Gilland, "Referenda in the Republic of Ireland", *Electoral Studies* 18 (1999)
Richard Sinnott, *Irish Voters Decide: Voting Behaviour in Elections and Referendums Since 1918*, ch. 9

March 15th: Direct democracy and political reform (Russia & New Zealand)

*Henry Brady & Cynthia S. Kaplan, "Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union", in Butler & Ranney, *Referendums Around the World*, ch. 6

*Stephen Levine & Nigel Roberts, "The New Zealand Electoral Referendum and General Election of 1993", *Electoral Studies* 13 (1994) [PKT]

Jack Vowles & Peter Aimer (eds.), *Double Decision: the 1993 Election and Referendum in New Zealand*

Alan McRobie (ed.), *Taking It to the People: The New Zealand Electoral Referendum Debate*

Stephen White et al, *How Russia Votes*, ch. 4, 5

Stephen White & Ronald Hill, "Russia, the former Soviet Union, and Eastern Europe: the Referendum as a Flexible Political Instrument", in Gallagher & Uleri, *The Referendum Experience in Europe*, ch. 10

March 22nd: Revisiting the theoretical issues
[FIFTH ESSAY DUE]

*Boyer, *The People's Mandate*, ch. 9

*Budge, *The New Challenge of Direct Democracy*, ch. 7

*Butler & Ranney, *Referendums Around the World*, ch. 8

*Kris Kobach, *The Referendum: Direct Democracy in Switzerland*, ch. 2 [PKT]

Anders Jenssen et al, *To Join or Not to Join: Three Nordic Referendums on Membership in the European Union*, ch. 13

Maija Setälä, *Referendums and Democratic Government*, ch. 4-6

Giovanni Sartori, *The Theory of Democracy Revisited*

Benjamin Barber, *Strong Democracy: Participatory Politics for a New Age*

Iain McLean, *Democracy and New Technology*

March 29th: Class discussion — revisiting the theoretical issues

April 5th: Take-home final exam