



David Asper Centre for Constitutional Rights  
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO



CENTRE for CONSTITUTIONAL STUDIES  
*Centre d'études constitutionnelles*

## SYMPOSIUM

February 26 - 27, 2016

Victoria College (Rooms 115 & 323)

University of Toronto

The David Asper Centre for Constitutional Rights, University of Toronto and the Centre for Constitutional Studies, University of Alberta, are co-organizing this symposium examining the state of Canada's constitutional democracy. Dramatic changes have taken place in recent years at the national level in respect to the day to day functioning of our constitutional democracy. These changes impinge on the separation of powers, the rule of law and the supremacy of the constitution.

Examples of topics to be covered include:

- the operation of the House of Commons and the Senate and the functioning of committees in both Houses in respect to the quality of deliberation, reflection on questions of constitutionality generally, and in respect to specific policy areas,
- the increased powers of the PMO
- the appointment process to the Senate and the Supreme Court
- the stance taken by the government to some aspects of the Constitution and the judiciary,
- the government's approach to information creation, retention and dissemination as well as sources of expertise and scientific knowledge, as it impacts on public policy areas such as health, climate change, resource development, Aboriginal education, women's equality
- the Court's role to strike down legislation and critique government action and the government's response to this such as the aftermath of the PHS case, Bedford and Carter, and the SCC's declaration in Khadr.
- the professional ethics applicable to the work of government lawyers in a more politicized environment

This symposium is part of a broader analysis by the Asper Centre of the state of the rule of law and Canada's constitutional democracy comprising background papers and additional workshops that will result in a final report.

Go to the [Asper Centre](#) website for more information and registration or contact Cheryl Milne [cheryl.milne@utoronto.ca](mailto:cheryl.milne@utoronto.ca)