

New and Notable Titles

A selection of recent publications relating to parliamentary studies prepared with the assistance of the Library of Parliament (May 2018-July 2018)

Berthier, A. and H.M. Bochel. "Changing Times?: The Shifting Gender Balance of Scottish Parliament Committee Witnesses." PSA Parliaments Group blog, 5p, March 1, 2018.

- The authors discuss their research into the diversity of witnesses to committees in the Scottish Parliament.

Bergman, G. and E. Macfarlane. "The Impact and Role of Officers of Parliament: Canada's Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner." *Canadian Public Administration* 61.1 (2018): 5-25.

- Officers of Parliament play a vital role in providing parliamentarians with access to critical information and resources that allow them to hold the government of the day to account. Critics have argued officers have exceeded their mandates and even threaten to supplant the opposition.

White, H. "MPs should not be their own judge and jury when accused of harassment." Institute for Government blog, 2 p, March 12, 2018.

- The UK House of Commons must hand over the investigation and sanction of bullying and harassment to an independent body, argues the author.

Anderson, M., & Gillies, J. "There for the moment: Extra-legislative windows of opportunity for women's social movements in politics, a comparison of Canada and Northern Ireland." *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics*, 56(2), 157-176, April 2018.

- This article considers the role and influence of women's groups and larger national women's social movements during two different constitutional moments: the lead-up to the finalisation of the 1982 patriation of the Canadian Constitution and the lead-up to the 1998 Good Friday agreement in Northern Ireland.

Tugendhat, T. (Chair). "Global Britain and the 2018 Commonwealth Summit". House of Commons. Foreign Affairs Committee, 24p, April 5, 2018.

- The Commonwealth Summit takes place in London from April 16-20. It will be the first time in more than 20 years that the UK has hosted this biennial gathering of the Commonwealth Heads of Government. This is a once-in-a-generation event.

Ireton, E. "How public is a public inquiry?" *Public Law* 2: 277-298, April 2018.

- 'Public inquiry' is a term often used to refer to a wide range of types of inquiry held by public or private bodies or persons. Such investigations range from planning and highways inquiries, investigations into industrial accidents, to inquiries dealing more broadly with issues of public policy reform. This article is concerned specifically with those public inquiries that are convened by a minister into matters of public concern.

Greenberg, D. "Editorial: standards of drafting of primary legislation in the United Kingdom." *Statute Law Review* 39(1): v-vii, 2018.

- An egregiously poor piece of statutory drafting would doubtless have attracted considerable concern and caused considerable confusion had it not mercifully escaped from the statute book as a result of the last General Election. The Prisons and Courts Bill introduced into the House of Commons in the 2016-17 Session of Parliament was dropped as a result of the sudden call of a General Election and has not been reintroduced in the current Session. It was a Government Bill and there is no reason to believe that it was not drafted in the normal way by the UK Government's Parliamentary Counsel.

Taflaga, M. "Does it really matter if we call Australian politics 'semi-parliamentary'?" *Democratic Audit UK* 2018, 4p, April 26, 2018.

- Would choosing the second chamber by sortition be an effective way to achieve a 50:50 balance between men and women? The author argues that the upper chamber – in Australia as in the UK, a deliberative forum – would be a good place to start, and looks at ways to ensure women sitting in deliberative assemblies get an equal voice and hearing.

Busfield-Birch, D. "The politics of polling: The report of the Committee on Polling and Digital Media". *The Constitution Unit Blog*, 5p, April 26, 2018.

- On April 17, the House of Lords' ad hoc Committee on Political Polling and Digital Media published a report, following its inquiry into the effects of political polling and digital media on politics. At an event organised by The Constitution Unit, Lord Lipsey, who chaired the Committee, discussed the report.

Craig, R. "Restoring confidence: replacing the Fixed-term Parliaments Act 2011." *Modern Law Review* 81(3): 480-508, May 2018.

- This article considers both the Fixed-term Parliaments Act 2011 (FTPA) and the political constitution, to place the former in its political and constitutional context. It begins by setting out the background to the FTPA – which was a part of a Coalition agreement [...] The second part of the article considers the impact and potential practical legal consequences if the FTPA is repealed without any replacement [...] The final part of the article addresses the question of whether the prerogative should be revived.

----- "Independent and accountable: Modernizing the role of agents of parliament and legislatures." *Public Policy Forum*, 34p, April 2018.

- This report analyzes the current and evolving role of agents at the federal and provincial levels to provide recommendations on how oversight and guidance in the administration of policies can be improved while maintaining their autonomy within Canada's Westminster system.

Maer, L., Priddy, S. "The Parliamentary Ombudsman: Role and proposals for reform." *UK House of Commons Library*, 24p, June 21, 2018.

- "The Parliamentary Ombudsman investigates complaints from members of the public who believe that they have suffered injustice because a government department or certain public bodies have not acted properly or fairly, or have given a poor service and not put things right..."

Smith, G. "Why we need a Committee for Future Generations in the House of Lords." *The Constitution Unit Blog*, 3p, June 15, 2018.

- The Foundation for Democracy and Sustainable Development has proposed that the House of Lords establish a Committee for Future Generations to review legislation. It is hoped that such a body would reduce the short-termism that can creep into legislative and executive decision-making. The author explains why this Committee is needed and how it could work in practice.

