

PUBLIC SEMINAR

THE NATIONAL EUROPE CENTRE AT THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY IS PLEASED TO INVITE YOU TO:

Promoting Democracy Elsewhere: the EU experience

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at the National Europe Centre
The Australian National University, 1 Liversidge Street,
(Parking available in Balmain Lane, opposite University House)

The promotion of democracy in one state by another is an increasingly important part of the contemporary foreign policy agenda but it is not new: it may be traced back at least to US President Woodrow Wilson's speech to Congress in April 1917 in which he sought a declaration of war against Germany to make the world 'safe for democracy'. The outcomes of such forays have not always been successful (and though Wilson got his declaration of war, the period after the Great War saw the consolidation of communism and fascism, and a punitive peace settlement that arguably prepared the way for the Second World War), and they are dogged by disputes over whether they are motivated by self-interest or beneficence, and over whose understanding of 'democracy' will prevail. Since the collapse of communism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe (1989–91), the high ground of 'democracy' has effectively been ceded to liberal democracy. And the United States and the European Union, to mention only the largest players, have developed extensive and expensive programs for promoting democracy abroad. The most prominent activities in these programs in the immediate past can be seen in the monitoring of the presidential elections in Ukraine in November–December 2004, and in conducting the election for a constituent assembly in Iraq in January 2005, but their geographical reach has been vast. In the context of foreign policy, it may be thought that such activities offend against the notion of 'sovereignty', which many states invoke to avoid what they consider outside interference. To promote democracy by military means, as the United States has done in Iraq (and, in rather different circumstances, as the Allies did in Germany and Japan after 1945), may indeed count as an abrogation of sovereignty, but the EU has not endorsed such means for its own efforts, and for the purposes of the present project I do not propose to discuss it further. But sovereignty remains an issue even where the methods are peaceful, overt and welcomed. The links with very practical rewards such as FDI and aid (and even, in select cases, the prize of integrating with the European Union itself), are such that recipients' qualms about sovereignty are generally suspended. However, it might be useful to disaggregate the recipients into elites and citizens when asking the classic political science question: *cui bono?*

David W. Lovell is an Associate Professor of Politics in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of New South Wales at ADFA. During 2004 he was Acting Rector of UNSW@ADFA, and from 2001–2003 was Head of the School of Politics. His major interest is in democracy and democratisation, which is informed by interests in the history of political thought, applied ethics, anthropology, political sociology, Australian politics, postcommunism, political corruption and regional security.

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