

The Federal Election as a Block Party?

by **Stephen Elliott-Buckley - Thursday, March 24, 2011**

<https://politicsrespun.org/2011/03/the-federal-election-as-a-block-party/>

Fresh off my thrilling love for [flexing the democracy muscle yesterday](#), I stumbled across a couple bits of internet wit that support my cause.

So, my plan is to OVER enjoy this election. Let's have block parties. Go crazy. Make it our royal wedding. Just to make a point.

via [Twitter / @Tabatha Southey](#)

Tabatha Southey, a national treasure for insight, gets it. She gets democracy. She gets society. She embodies that Canadian kind of sense of je ne sais quoi humour. She knows crap when she sees it and she calls it crap. Then she makes you want to invite her to your Antigonish kitchen party because you just know that no one would ever leave.

She also reminds me of a 21st century version of Babe Bennet. It's not unprincipled sass or snark, but wit.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2yd0mkjbcCQ>

Southey's tweet above and Bennet's rant about gender equality in politics reflect a key nexus in what will happen for the next 7 weeks or so: a new kind of democratic participation in Canada.

We already have 2011 as a year with domestic, continental and global democracy movements. Despite some evidence of rising political apathy in Canada in recent elections, we have recently seen a successful anti-HST initiative pass in BC and anti-prorogation movements throughout the country.

We have an opportunity over the next 7 weeks to make a bold statement that democracy matters, right in the face of Stephen Harper coming within a few House procedural motions of becoming the first prime minister in Canadian history to be found in contempt of parliament. Instead, he'll suffer a non-confidence vote on Friday to crash parliament, unless he dissolves it himself today. Out of spite, of course.

And this is Southey's point: that we own democracy and the elected stewards of it had better remember that "public servant" means we are the boss. And the majority of MPs in the House are less than 2 days away from firing this prime minister.

I want this to be an election campaign that would make the people on the streets in Cairo, Benghazi and Madison wake up in the morning and nod with the knowledge that we are no longer taking our democracy for granted.

And we need to listen to Babe Bennet as well. Let this be the federal election campaign with the highest

ever number of female candidates and generally, non-white male candidates. The face of Canada is changing. Let's make sure our political representation reflects that.