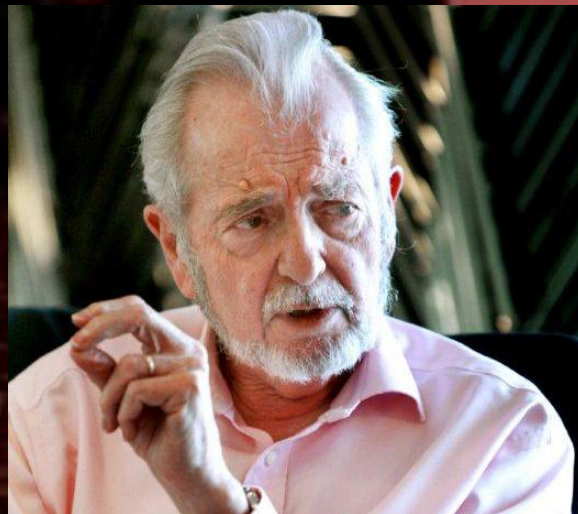


The Department of Philosophy &
the Provost Office at CEU
cordially invites you to a public lecture by

ALAN RYAN

Princeton University

on



MISTAKES IN POLITICS

at 17:30 on Thursday, October 25, 2012

CEU-Auditorium, 1051 Bp., Nádor u. 9.

There is a large, and to many people alarming, body of literature on the erroneous views of the ordinary voter; not only do most voters hold many views that are strikingly at odds with the facts, they resist information that tends to overturn these views, and where they do not, they re-adopt their false views more or less quickly. This poses an obvious problem for democratic politics: if politicians are responsive to the (erroneous) views of the electorate, will they not be forced to pursue irrational and counter-productive policies, both domestically or internationally; they are not responsive to the views of the electorate, do they not lack democratic credibility? Many writers believe that there are structural features of – modern rather than ‘Athenian’ – democracy that dissolve this problem, and the democracy functions ‘in spite of itself.’ The lecture will argue that this is unduly optimistic, and that there is too much room for the interested manufacture of erroneous opinions by elites, whether benign, malign, or simply trying to maintain their economic advantages, to give us many grounds for cheerfulness about contemporary democratic politics.

Alan Ryan was educated at Balliol College, Oxford, and taught politics at New College, and as a visiting professor at Hunter College, CUNY, The University of the Witwatersrand, the University of Texas at Austin and UC Santa Cruz. From 1988 to 1996 he was Professor of Politics at Princeton, and one of the founding faculty of the UCHV. After completing thirteen years as head of New College, Oxford, he returned to Princeton in 2009 and now serves as the Director of the undergraduate program on Values in Public Life.

