

# “Zero Dollar Linda”

## A Meditation on Malcolm Gladwell’s “Million Dollar Murray,” the Linda Chamberlain Rule, and the Auditor General of Ontario

**Where:** St. Christopher House – Community Hall  
248 Ossington Avenue (Dundas at Ossington)

**When:** Thursday, December 2, 2010 from 1:30 to 3:30 pm

This new report explores the weaknesses in the design of North American social welfare institutions through the stories of two individuals. It shows what can happen to people when they receive the Ontario Disability Support Program, live in subsidized housing, and try to be as self-reliant as possible. In the end, government policy-making uses tough, counterproductive rules that make it almost impossible to gain greater independence, and gives little discretion to those who administer the system. The paper explores how the Auditor General has done little to address this unbending system and chooses instead to fan the flames of a public perception that Ontario’s social assistance system is riddled with fraud.

### Speakers

**John Stapleton:** John worked for the Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services for 28 years. He now works as a social policy consultant with governments, think tanks and community groups. He has been a Metcalf Innovation Fellow since 2006.

**Linda Chamberlain:** Linda is a social policy activist and a member of the Dream Team. Her story is the subject of this report.

**Catherine Porter:** Catherine is a columnist with The Toronto Star. Her most recent feature work concerns the Haitian relief effort. She has written two columns concerning Linda Chamberlain.

**Pat Capponi:** Pat Capponi is an author, public speaker and group facilitator. She has also been a vocal force in bringing to light the disempowering effects of dependence on social agencies and the ways in which those effects can be reduced.

Low-income community members may qualify for assistance to attend this event. Please call Rick Eagan at St. Christopher House at (416) 532-4828 ext. 238 for details.

**Registration is free**, but space is limited. Attendees must pre-register with Heather Dunford at the Metcalf Foundation (416.926.0366 ext. 33 or [hdunford@metcalffoundation.com](mailto:hdunford@metcalffoundation.com)) before **November 30, 2010**.

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