DGC 2001H

Citizenship, Political Participation and Social Change in the Global South

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Office Hours:
Mondays and Wednesdays 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm
New College, room 224

Course description

This course explores theories and practices of citizen participation in the global South. We will be looking at work by scholars and scholar-activists who are exploring ways to deepen democracy by advocating greater citizen participation and new participatory institutions designed to supplement representative democracy.

The first session of the course explores new theories of citizen participation and social change emerging from theorists and commentators located in the global North and South. This session gives an overview of recent debates on the challenges of ‘deepening democracy’ through more substantive forms of citizen participation than is found in representative democracy alone. We will explore the implications of concepts of deepening democracy for the concept of citizenship, as well as the strategies of citizen engagement and mobilization.

The next four sessions are structured around selected case studies of citizen engagement from Angola, Brazil, Bangladesh and South Africa. Through these case studies we will explore the politics of democratic participation in the global South, focusing on the complexities of assessing micro social changes associated with new forms of citizen engagement. We will focus on the conditions under which new participatory institutions and citizen engagement help improve access to social goods and democratic outcomes for poor communities. In particular, we will look at the role that civil society actors can play in enabling poor people to claim active citizenship through forms of collective action, solidarity networks and popular education.
We will take up these and other themes through theoretical reading, writing and discussion, and also by bringing theory into dialogue with practice. We will focus, in particular, on case studies contained in a large archive of research on citizen participation assembled by the Development Research Center on Citizenship, Participation, and Accountability (DRC), based at the Institute for Development Studies at the University of Sussex, UK: some of this research is on our reading list, and one of your assignments will involve going into this virtual archive and identifying piece of writing that you find particularly relevant to the course.

Students who participate and contribute fully to the course will finish the course with a deeper understanding of the range of theoretical and activist perspectives on citizen participation in the global South, as well as the complex challenges associated with the actual everyday practices of democratic participation.

**Course readings**
Most of the core readings are available electronically and links or pdfs have been indicated in the syllabus.

**Course requirements**
(i) Attendance at the five research seminars. These will be held on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 10 am – 1 pm in room SS 2114
(ii) Presentation of one short “archive assignment and leading discussion at one seminar (30%)
(iii) Facilitating one seminar
(iv) One substantial summative writing assignment, no more than 15-20 pages, double-spaced (70%)

**Summative writing assignment**
You’ll write a final 15-20 page major paper for the course, due on June 30. We will talk much more about this paper during the first session of the course.

**Seminars**

**Monday, June 1, 2009: Deepening Democracy in the Global South**

Core Readings


N. Kabeer (ed), *Inclusive Citizenship: Meanings and Expressions*, London: Zed Books, Chapters one and nine (Dagnino ‘We all have rights, but…’ Contesting concepts of citizenship in Brazil’, Chapter Nine.

Further Readings:


M. Estrella and N. Iszatt (eds.), *Beyond Good Governance: Participatory Democracy in the Philippines*, Quezon City: Institute for Popular Democracy


Film: [www.beyondelections.com](http://www.beyondelections.com)
Wednesday, June 3: Brazil: Participatory Budgeting and Democratic Participation


Friday, June 5: Angola: Fragile States and New Associational Movements


Monday, June 8: Bangladesh: Civil Society and Democratic Citizenship


Video of authors talking about their work

Wednesday, June 10: South Africa: Social Movements and Democratic Participation


Christopher J. Colvin, Gauri Raval, Steven Robins and Phumzile Nywagi 2008. ‘The Khululeka Men’s Support Group, a Case Study in Political Improvisation by a Community-Based Organisation.’

Videos of authors talking about their work
Further Reading

Papers

• Michale Haus and David Sweeting. 2006. ‘Local Democracy and Political Leadership: Drawing a Map’, *Political Studies*, 54(2), pp. 267-288. LP
• John Parkinson. 2003. ‘Legitimacy Problems in Deliberative Democracy’, *Political Studies* 51, 180-196. LP
• Luigi Pellizzoni. 2001. ‘The myth of the best argument: power, deliberation and reason’, *British Journal of Sociology* 52(1), 59-86. LP
• Tiina Rattila. 2000. ‘Citizenship and the new politics: radical, deliberative, or both?’, paper presented at *18th World Congress of IPSA*, Quebec City, July. LP
• Amartya Sen. 1999. ‘Democracy as a Universal Value’, *Journal of Democracy*, 10(3), 3-17. LP (*Argues that 20th century saw emergence of democracy as a universal value*).
• Denise Vitale. 2006. ‘Between Deliberative and Participatory Democracy’, *Philosophy and Social Criticism*, 32(6), pp. 739-766. LP

**Websites**
• Citizenship, Participation and Accountability, Development Research Centre, IDS. [http://www.drc-citizenship.org/](http://www.drc-citizenship.org/)