

Deliberative Democracy in an Era of Rising Authoritarianism

Frontiers of Democracy Conference 2017

Preconference Symposium Agenda and Advanced Readings

Framing: The rise to power by undemocratic political leaders worldwide raises questions about the efficacy of deliberative -- and arguably overly inclusive - approaches to governance. Activism on behalf of democratic systems and outcomes might trump the desire for an inclusive process when some views are simply so undemocratic that they have no place in a process of public reasoning.

In this year's Frontiers of Democracy, participants will examine the rise of authoritarianism driven by xenophobic and illiberal influences globally and in the U.S. This day-long pre-conference symposium will consider a narrower question, is there a role for deliberative democracy in an age of rising authoritarianism? This challenge is exacerbated in a highly pluralistic and relatively wealthy society like the U.S., where the context includes culture wars, fake news, distrust of government, disregard for science, facts, and evidence, and extreme racial and wealth disparities.

Where: Tufts University's - Boston Campus, Sackler Building
145 Harrison Ave., Boston, MA 02111

When: June 22, 2017, 8:30 am to 4:00 p.m.

Resources: Recommended readings for each session embedded in the agenda; for optional additional readings see below.

Breakfast 8:30 to 9:00

Session I: 9:00 – 9:45 a.m. Introductions

Session II: 9:45 – 11:30 a.m. (with a 15 minute break when appropriate)

What is the nature of the problem?

Discussion Leaders: Nancy Thomas, Kyle Upchurch, and Kira Ganga Kieffer

- What is the evidence behind a claim of that undemocratic forces globally and in the U.S. are on the rise?
- How do we interpret the rise of nationalism and separatist political discourse globally and nationally?
- What are the multiple perspectives on the problem?

Readings:

Carothers, T. and Youngs, R. (2017) "Democracy is Not Dying." *Carnegie Endowment for International Piece*. <http://carnegieendowment.org/2017/04/11/democracy-is-not-dying-pub-68651>

Dyson, M.E. (2016) "What Donald Trump Doesn't Know about Black People," *The New York Times*. https://www.nytimes.com/2016/12/17/opinion/sunday/what-donald-trump-doesnt-know-about-black-people.html?_r=0

Kendall-Taylor, A. and Frantz, E. (2016). How democracies fall apart, why populism is a pathway to autocracy. *Foreign Affairs*. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2016-12-05/how-democracies-fall-apart>.

Norris, P. "It's not just Trump. Authoritarian populism is rising across the West. Here's why." *The Washington Post*. https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2016/03/11/its-not-just-trump-authoritarian-populism-is-rising-across-the-west-heres-why/?utm_term=.5a2a5339794f.

Peterson, Paul Silas. "Religion and the New Populism." *The Immanent Frame*. 12/27/16. <http://blogs.ssrc.org/tif/2016/12/20/religion-and-the-new-populism/>

Lunch 11:30 a.m. – 12: 30 p.m. What would you envision as the ideal, a world without the problem?

Session III: 12:30 to 2:00 p.m.

Is deliberative democracy a solution to these problems?

Discussion Leaders: Laura Black, Wendy Willis, and Ceasar McDowell

- What is the role of deliberative democracy in times of extreme divisiveness and polarized politics? Is this role limited in any way?
- When is deliberation *not* the appropriate form of political action?
- Much of the rhetoric among undemocratic regimes is racialized, exclusionary, and antithetical to democratic principles of equality, justice, and inclusion. Should people with undemocratic views be given "a seat at the table?"
 - If yes, how do we do that?

Readings:

Clodfelter, K. (2016, Jul. 8). How to be a white ally: Fighting racism is your responsibility- start now. *Salon*. http://www.salon.com/2016/07/08/how_to_be_a_white_ally_fighting_racism_is_your_responsibility_start_now/

Fung, A. (2005) Deliberation before the Revolution: Toward an Ethics of Deliberative Democracy in an Unjust World. *Political Theory*. <http://archonfung.net/papers/FungDeliberationBefore.pdf>.

Piven, F. F. (2017) Throw sand in the gears of everything: When it comes to stopping Trump, petitions aren't going to do it. *The Nation*. Available at: <https://www.thenation.com/article/throw-sand-in-the-gears-of-everything/>

Rollo, T. (2016) "Everyday Deeds: Enactive Protest, Exit, and Silence in Deliberative Systems." *Political Theory*. <https://philpapers.org/rec/ROLEDE>.

Rusch, L. and Swarts, H. (2015) Practices of Engagement: Comparing and Integrating Deliberation and Organizing, *Journal of Community Practice*
<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/10705422.2014.985411?needAccess=true>.

Young, I. M. (2001) Activist Challenges to Deliberation, *Political Theory*
<http://www.ucalgary.ca/peacestudies/files/peacestudies/young-day-2.pdf>.

2:00 – 2:15 p.m. Break

Session IV: 2:15 – 3:45

Personal Actions and Commitments

Discussion Leaders: Tim Shaffer and Ande Diaz

- What needs to happen?
- What can we as a group do?
- What can I as an individual do?

Adjourn 4:00 p.m.

More Recommended Readings

The nature of the problem

Frum, David (2017) "How to Build an Autocracy," *The Atlantic*.

<https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2017/03/how-to-build-an-autocracy/513872/>

Inglehart, R. and Norris, P (2017) Trump and the Xenophobic Populist Parties: *The Silent Revolution in Reverse. Perspectives on Politics (forthcoming)*

<https://lsa.umich.edu/content/dam/polisci-assets/Docs/Inglehart%20Articles/Trump%2C%20Xenophobic%20populists.pdf>

Posner, S. (2017) "Amazing Disgrace." *New Republic*.

<https://newrepublic.com/article/140961/amazing-disgrace-donald-trump-hijacked-religious-right>

Schildkraut, D. (2017) "What is American "white identity" and why does it matter?" *Scholars Strategy Network*. <http://www.scholarsstrategynetwork.org/brief/what-american-white-identity-%E2%80%93-and-why-does-it-matter>.

Vendantam, S. (2017, Jan. 24). Strangers in their own land: The 'deep story' of Trump supporters. *National Public Radio*. <http://www.npr.org/2017/01/24/510567860/strangers-in-their-own-land-the-deep-story-of-trump-supporters>

Zelizer, J.E. and Keller, M. (2017) "How Novel are American's Challenges?" *The Atlantic*

<https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2017/05/are-the-forces-reshaping-the-nation-today-any-different-than-they-were-before/525003/>.

Solutions

Brooks, M. and Mayville, L. (2017) "Why progressives can't have a tea party" *Democracy, A Journal of Ideas*.

<http://democracyjournal.org/arguments/why-progressives-cant-have-a-tea-party/>

Heaney, M. (2017) "Transcending Partisanship in the Age of Trump, and why activists may find it essential," *Democracy: A Journal of Ideas*.

<http://democracyjournal.org/arguments/transcending-partisanship-in-the-age-of-trump/>.

King, C. (2017) "We're teaching our students not to care about democracy," *The Washington Post*, https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/were-teaching-our-students-not-to-care-about-democracy/2017/04/21/db21f9ea-2614-11e7-b503-9d616bd5a305_story.html?utm_term=.8b545ee3bcb9.

Taylor, K-Y. (2017, Jan. 24). Think the Women's March wasn't radical enough? Do something about it. *The Guardian*. <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/jan/24/women-march-diversity-minorities-working-class>

