



## Unequal and Unrepresented

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May 21, 2019

9:00am – 4:30pm

### Summary

Citizens of the United States have many ways to make their voices heard in politics. They can express political voice directly by communicating with public officials about their preferences and needs for government action and indirectly by influencing the choice of public officials. They can act on their own or with others. They can spend time or money. But political voice is not universal, and political activists -- and, hence, the messages they send -- are not representative of the broader public.

This workshop embeds a consideration of the skewing of political voice in the context of growing economic inequality in the United States. We shall ask such questions as: Why are the well-educated and affluent so much more active than their less advantaged counterparts? What do such SES-based inequalities of political voice imply for inequalities of political voice among groups defined by such politically relevant characteristics as gender, race or ethnicity, or need for governmental assistance? What have been the consequences for unequal political voice of changing digital technologies? To what extent do the operations of markets explain growing economic inequality in the United States? Does public policy play a role as well? What are the implications of a variety of recent procedural changes in politics for unequal political voice in the United States?

As students prepare for and participate in the workshop, they are encouraged to ask comparative questions. There will be a group activity at the end of the day wherein students will be asked to answer the following: What can the United States learn from Canada about the origins, dimensions, and consequences of inequalities of political voice? Does the United States have anything to teach Canada about these matters?

### Outline

9:00am – 10:00am

10:10am – 11:25am

11:25am – 12:55pm

12:55pm – 2:10pm

2:20pm – 3:35pm

3:45pm – 4:30pm

Session 1

Session 2

Lunch and group planning sessions

Session 3

Session 4

Group presentations



# WSSR WORKSHOPS ON SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH

●●● DELIBERATING A PUBLIC AGENDA ●●●  
●●● FOR FEDERAL ELECTION 2019 ●●●



## **Required Readings – see Course Reserves website for sources**

- Keyssar, Alexander. 2009. *The Right to Vote*, Rev. ed. New York: Basic Books:  
Chap. 9 “The Story Unfinished”, pp. 258-294.
- Piketty, Thomas, Emmanuel Saez, and Gabriel Zucman. 2018. “Distributional National Accounts: Methods and Estimates for the United States,” *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 133 (May): 553-555, 573-589, 598-609.
- Schlozman, Kay L., Henry Brady, and Sidney Verba. 2018. *Unequal and Unrepresented: Political Inequality and the People’s Voice in the New Gilded Age*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press:  
Chap. 4 “Who Exercises Political Voice?”, pp. 83-94  
Chap. 5 “The Noisy and the Silent: Divergent Preferences and Needs”, pp. 94-111  
Chap. 13 “Unequal Voice in an Unequal Age”, pp. 255-284.
- Stiglitz, Joseph. 2013. *The Price of Inequality*. New York: W.W. Norton:  
Review some of the following: pp. 65-66, 72-73, 80-85, 89-96, 242-253, 336-355.

## **Newspaper Articles and Internet Sources**

- Greenstone, Michael, Adam Looney, Jeremy Patashnik, and Muxin Yu. 2013. “Thirteen Economic Facts about Social Mobility and the Role of Education,” *The Hamilton Project*, Brookings Institution, June, at <http://www.brookings.edu/research/reports/2013/06/13-facts-higher-education>.
- Haberman, Clyde. 2014. “The Cost of Campaigns,” *New York Times*, October 18 (including video) at [http://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/20/us/the-cost-of-campaigns.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/20/us/the-cost-of-campaigns.html?_r=0).
- Reeves, Richard. “Is America Dreaming?: Understanding Social Mobility”: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t2XFh\\_tD2RA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t2XFh_tD2RA)
- Van Dam, Andrew. 2017. “Is the GOP tax plan an unprecedented windfall for the wealthy? We look at 50 years of data to find out,” *Washington Post*, December 4 at [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2017/12/04/is-the-gop-tax-plan-an-unprecedented-windfall-for-the-wealthy-we-look-at-50-years-of-data-to-find-out/?utm\\_term=.2bbbefab18b2](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2017/12/04/is-the-gop-tax-plan-an-unprecedented-windfall-for-the-wealthy-we-look-at-50-years-of-data-to-find-out/?utm_term=.2bbbefab18b2)

## **Additional Resources**

- Bartels, Larry. 2016. *Unequal Democracy: The Political Economy of the New Gilded Age* 2nd ed. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press/Russell Sage, chaps. 1-3, 7, 8, 11.
- Bonica, Adam, Nolan McCarty, Keith T. Poole, and Howard Rosenthal. 2013. “Why Hasn’t Democracy Slowed Rising Inequality?” *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 27 (Summer): 103-124.
- Corak, Miles. 2016. “Income Inequality from Generation to Generation: The United States in Comparison,” IZA Discussion Paper No. 9929, May. <http://ftp.iza.org/dp9929.pdf>

\*If you are registered for non-credit and are unable to locate the required readings, please email us at [wssr@concordia.ca](mailto:wssr@concordia.ca)

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