WSSR WORKSHOPS ON SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH

The Political Theory of Trust and Distrust in Diverse Democracies

Dr. Patti Tamara Lenard

Associate Professor, University of Ottawa

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9:00am – 4:30pm

Outline

In public discourse, it is common to hear both that trust is an essential feature of democratic politics and that it is on the decline across democratic states. This suggests that democracy itself is at risk. One reason for trust's alleged decline is the apparent challenges posed by diversity – ethnic, racial, cultural – in forming and sustaining the trust relations that democracies require to function well.

Using the tools provided by political theory, we will subject these common claims to critical analysis. What is trust, actually? Is trust (or its supposed opposite, distrust) essential to democratic politics, and in what way? If so, how can it be protected and nurtured? Do we have good reason to believe that diversity poses challenges to trust relations in democratic states? If so, what sort of challenges and can the right sort of public policy mitigate them?

We will cover four broad questions in this workshop:
1. What is trust and distrust?
2. What are the roles of trust and distrust in democratic states?
3. (Why) is there a trust problem in diverse states?
4. What are ways out of the trust problem?

Tentative schedule:
9:00-9:15:   Introduction
9:15-10:15: Trust and distrust: Concepts
10:30-12:00:   Trust and distrust in democratic principle and practice
12:00-1:30: Lunch
1:00-2:45:   Trust and the (alleged) problem of diversity in democratic states
3:00-4:15:   Protecting and promoting trust in diverse democratic states
4:15-4:30:   Wrap up

Required Readings*

Warren, Mark (2004*) Democratic Theory and Trust*, Democracy and Trust, Cambridge University Press, pp. 310-344.
  Webster Course Reserve Room (3 hour loan) -- POLI 489 --AVAILABLE

Krishnamurthy, Meena, (2015*), (White) Tyranny and the Democratic Value of Distrust*, The Monist, Vol. 98/4, pp. 391-407 http://0-dx.doi.org.mercury.concordia.ca/10.1093/monist/onv020

Goodhart, David (2004) *Too Diverse?,* Prospect Magazine.
  http://www.prospectmagazine.co.uk/magazine/too-diverse-david-goodhart-multiculturalism-britain-immigration-globalisation

Stolle, Dietlind. Soroka, Stuart. Johnston, Richard. (2008) *When does Diversity Erode Trust? Neighborhood Diversity, Interpersonal Trust, and the Mediating Effects of Social Interactions*, Political Studies, Vol. 56/1, pp. 57-75. http://0-dx.doi.org.mercury.concordia.ca/10.1111/j.1467-9248.2007.00717.x

Patti Tamara Lenard and David Miller, "Trust and National Identity", forthcoming in E. Uslaner (ed.), Oxford Handbook on Trust, Oxford University Press http://reserves.concordia.ca/ares/ares.dll/plink?14EEF058

*If you are registered for non-credit and are unable to locate the readings, please contact us at wssr@concordia.ca