

INDIANA DEMOCRACY CONSORTIUM

The IDC seeks to connect IU's many talented researchers and students working on questions of contemporary democratic change, and to foster new conversations and research projects linking academic scholarship and the broader world of practitioners and policy-makers. The IDC is focused on the basic preconditions of successful democratic transformation - from the enterprises of vibrant civil society networks, to the structure of formal electoral rules and constitutional design, and to the importance of professionalism in managing the affairs of the formal government and the transactions between governmental and non-governmental organizations. The fundamental question that defines the mission of the IDC is quite straightforward: why is it that some democracies succeed and others fail?

Recent Events

Rethinking the Manifesto: On Feb. 1, IU hosted a conference on the contemporary relevance of the *Communist Manifesto*. Guests included Saskia Sassen (Columbia University), Steven Lukes (NYU), and Vladimir Tismaneanu (University of Maryland). A number of IDC-affiliated faculty and students participated, including Jeff Isaac (Political Science), Maria Bucur-Deckard (REEI), Bob Ivie (Communication and Culture), Christiana Ochoa (Law), Jeff Gould (CLACS), Ho-Fung Hung (Sociology), Tim Waters (Law), Shane Greene (Anthropology), Bill Scheuerman (Political Science), Jeff Motter (Communication and Culture), and Melanie Loehwing (Communication and Culture).

Colloquia: On Thursday Feb. 7 Archana Sridhar and Brian Shoup presented on interdisciplinary grant programs associated with the dilemmas of contemporary democracy studies. A brief document that outlines some of the available opportunities will be placed on the website within the next few days.

Upcoming Events

IU ArtsWeek: On Feb. 29, IDC will co-sponsor a panel for IU Arts Week from 6 to 8 in the SOFA Gallery. As many of you know, the theme of this year's ArtsWeek looks at democracy, participation, and the visual arts. Presently, the SOFA gallery is hosting an exhibit on the Writing on the Wall project, a project that allows IU students and staff to express their views on participatory government. You may have seen these walls put up at various places on campus over the course of the past semester. As part of our event, we are hosting a panel that asks "What does Democracy look like?" with a specific focus on art's role in the formation of ideologies such as state-building, nationalism, and participation and citizenship. With the Writing on the Wall project as a backdrop, we expect the program to be very informative and very interesting.

Christopher Moore-Producer / Co-Director, "¿Puedo Hablar? May I Speak?" (Sol Productions in Venezuela, Inc.): On March 19, the IDC will co-sponsor a film screening of Christopher Moore's "¿Puedo Hablar? May I Speak?" in Ballantine Hall 003 from 4 to 6:30. Mr. Moore will be kind enough to visit Bloomington to discuss his film and we hope to generate a lively discussion on current issues related to democracy and nationalism in Latin America. Below is a brief description of the film.

"¿Puedo Hablar? May I Speak?" is a new documentary film by Sol Productions which chronicles the 2006 presidential elections in Venezuela. Sol Productions spent nearly three months in Venezuela, filming interviews and events with people from across the political spectrum. The documentary offers its audience a portrait of a Venezuelan society at a crossroads; a re-elected President Chavez, challenged by a mounting opposition; a divided state, but one from which the Sol team manages to extract glimmers of hope for renewed dialogue and a bridging of the political gap. The team of four Americans traveled to six different regions of Venezuela, filming everywhere from the notorious barrios of Caracas to the oil-rich Lake Maracaibo, from a city of five million to an Amazonian pueblo of twenty-three, traveling in everything from Chavista motocicletas to dug-out canoes to a private jet. This documentary offers a snapshot of a society beginning its ninth year under Chavez; a valuable launching point from which its audience will more aptly understand the current state of Venezuela and its president, Hugo Chavez. A trailer for the film is available at www.sol-productions.org

"A compelling, 'must-see' documentary for everyone who wants to know what is happening in Venezuela right now."

Jose Torrealba, Director, Providence Latin American Film Festival

"¿Puedo Hablar? is by far the best film I have seen on the Chavez era in Venezuela... Far too often documentary filmmakers and the mainstream media portray the extremes in contemporary Venezuela and such work becomes slanted towards hard core Chavistas or hard core opposition. Moore's film demonstrates that Venezuelan reality is not so black and white, but much more complex... As far as I know, no other documentary film tackles these issues as well as Moore's film."

Kim Morse, Washburn University

"This movie will generate lively discussions in the classroom... It's a rare insight into Venezuela's political polarization."

Javier Corrales, Amherst College

"The film presented a very balanced account of what occurred during the electoral year of 2006... I would use it in one of my classes!"

Leonardo Vivas, Author, "Chavez: The Last Revolution of the 20th Century"

"What is missing in Venezuela is the open exchange of ideas and opinions and discussions of compromise. Your film is the first step towards that goal."

Jose, student, Harvard University

"Me gustó muchísimo ... Parece que Moore es el apellido preciso para los excelentes documentalistas políticos de EEUU."

Gioconda Espina, Profesora, Universidad Central de Venezuela

"The film gave an insight of Venezuela generally not available in the mainstream media"

Peter Barton, student, London School of Economics

Academic Opportunities

Harvard Project for Asian and International Relations (HPAIR) is Proud to present
1st Harvard University On-Campus Conference, April 3-6, 2008 Cosmopolitan Asia: Diversity and Disparity

5th HPAIR Business Conference in Kuala Lumpur, August 14-17, 2008 Emerging into Focus: Asia Incorporated

17th HPAIR Academic Conference in Hanoi, Vietnam, August 22-25, 2008 Beyond Borders: Asia on the World Stage

You are cordially invited to find out more about HPAIR and apply to all our programs at www.hpair.org. Note that the Harvard On-Campus Conference is still accepting applications. There are limited spots left. Acceptance is offered on a rolling basis. Apply now before the application closes.

About HPAIR

HPAIR's primary mission is to provide a rigorous academic program and continuous forum of exchange to facilitate discussion about the most important issues relevant to the Asia-Pacific region. For more than 15 years, HPAIR has organized a number of highly successful, high-profile conferences in the Asia-Pacific region, bringing together students from the world's foremost universities as well as leaders in the fields of government, business, culture, and academia. The students and faculty involved with HPAIR have demonstrated a strong commitment to promoting the international understanding of important social, political, and economic trends in Asia, complementing Harvard's own long-standing relations with Asia. Since its founding in 1991, HPAIR has become Harvard's largest annual event in Asia and also the largest annual student-run conference in the Asia-Pacific region. For more information, please visit us at www.hpair.org.

Call for Abstracts: Annual BJS Conference on "Violence": Attention graduate students and untenured faculty. The Berkeley Journal of Sociology is requesting abstracts for our 2008 conference:

Violence
Friday, March 14, 2008
University of California, Berkeley

The Berkeley Journal of Sociology invites submissions of empirically grounded, theoretically interesting presentations for our 2008 conference on "Violence." This year's conference will feature a variety of panels including graduate students, faculty, and community activists.

We invite abstracts of presentations for our conference relating to violence by graduate students and untenured faculty in sociology or other disciplines. Students and faculty from departments outside the discipline of sociology (such as political science, anthropology, criminal justice, law, etc.) are encouraged to submit abstracts that have a sociological orientation and pertain to such issues as those listed below. Presentations at the conference will run 15-20 minutes each. Submissions of short abstracts (200 words) are due by 4pm, Friday, February 15th, 2008 and should be sent to: bjs@berkeley.edu. Paper copies will not be accepted.

Submissions might address, for example, the following topics:

- * Justifiable Violence
- * Racial Violence
- * Sexual Orientation Violence
- * Domestic Violence
- * Criminal Justice
- * State Violence
- * Political Violence
- * Sociology of Terrorism
- * Gang Violence
- * Prison Violence
- * Violence in Social Life
- * Violence and the Life Course
- * Crime
- * Non-violence
- * Symbolic Violence