

# PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH, EMPOWERMENT, AND TRANSFORMATION

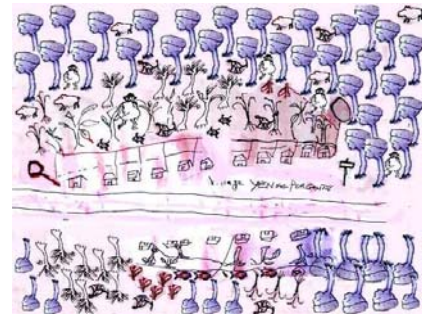
## GEOG 597B

Human Geography Graduate Seminar  
Fall Semester 2007

319 Walker, Wednesday, 5:30-8:30pm

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Office Hours: Tuesday 4-6pm or by appointment



### Required Text

Hickey & Mohan, 2004. *Participation: From tyranny to transformation?* Zed Books (\$30.35 on Amazon)

### Course Description

This seminar addresses the contested concepts of power, empowerment, and reflexivity in participatory research. Among critical geographers, participatory research has been proclaimed one of the most exciting new areas for methodological development; some even call it the most promising chapter in the 35-year history of radical geography. Yet, participatory research has not been very visible within the discipline. Collectively, we will review recent calls for more engaged, active/activist, and passionate geographies. These calls have emerged largely from frustration with identifying and theorizing social problems of exclusion, oppression, and inequalities without sufficiently engaging solutions. We will explore possibilities to bridge the gap between the pristine 'ivory tower' of academia and the messy world of the 'streets' or the 'field' and produce knowledge that opens up new, creative spaces for 'doing' geography for and with marginalized populations. By drawing upon a diversity of social and geographical contexts, we will examine participatory frameworks, their intellectual linkages to feminist theory and political ecology, and the most recent tyranny debate. Finally, we will seek to identify the transformative potential of participatory approaches within and beyond critical spaces for engagement.

This seminar offers theoretical, conceptual, and practical tools to enhance the science-practice interface through more empowering research processes and connections to policy formulation and governance. It provides an overview of the origin of participatory methods from rapid rural appraisals to participatory action research and introduces students to a variety of methodological tools and techniques - including participatory video, theatre, mapping, and scenario building - that can be used in different cultural settings in the North and the South.

### Format

GEOG 597B is structured around critical readings, student-led discussions, and hands-on experimental activities. We will share class responsibilities and activities and allow ourselves sufficient room to explore, experiment, improvise, share, and invent. Your active participation, reflection, and self-critique are all essential to making this class succeed. For this seminar, active participation means: a) reading all suggested articles prior to our weekly meeting; b) leading one class discussion on one topic area; c) introducing the rest of the course members to one participatory tool/technique; d) writing 2 short reflexive papers; and e) as part of a small group, conducting a participatory research project here in State College during the second half of the semester (incl. IRB approval, class presentation, and written reflections).

## Requirements

**Readings:** Readings are listed on the schedule for class topics and tools/techniques and are available on ANGEL. Since the class is largely based on discussions, I expect you to do all assigned readings prior to each class.

**Class presentation and discussion on one topic area:** You are asked to indicate your preference for ONE class session (one topic area) from the reading list. Based on the final number of students in the class, we will see if it's better to work individually or in 2-person teams. Your task is to read the articles carefully, present the major arguments to the rest of the class (roughly 15-20 minutes), and lead a stimulating class discussion (roughly 40 minutes). The presentation can take any form you wish as long as it is creative and engaging. Prepare a 1-2 page summary with the main points of the article to be distributed to everybody in class (20% of final grade).

**Introduction to one participatory tool/technique:** This is your chance to explore some of the multiple tools and share them with the rest of the class. You are asked to draw upon suggested readings for each tool/technique and other material you consider helpful. You should also come and see me (at least 1 week prior to your presentation date) for additional material. Provide a short (5-15 minute) overview of the technique/tool, opportunities for application, pitfalls, and potential criticism. For the rest of the time (45-55 minutes), use the tool with your colleagues by introducing one hands-on learning activity around a topic of your choice (10% of final grade).

**Reflexive papers:** Your task is to write two reflexive papers, reflecting on the issues and/or questions provoked during class discussions and individual readings, potential confusions or uncertainties, criticisms and compliments, or any other reactions to the material and/or your own experiences. You can take various approaches to the papers. The only restriction is that you should not merely summarize the readings. The first paper should focus on the role of space in participatory research, covering all material up to Week 5 (feminist theory and praxis). In your second paper, I expect you to discuss gaps and opportunities for participatory research in the field of political ecology. This second paper will also serve as a guide in our class discussion during Week 11. These papers should not be longer than 10 pages (double-spaced) (30% of final grade).

**Participatory research project:** Use some of the participatory approaches and tools explored in class for a research project to be conducted here in State College during the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the semester. This is a group project and I expect you to carry it out in a careful and critically reflexive manner. You decide what the social/environmental problem is on which you want to focus, with the obvious intention of contributing to its solution. Your task is to: 1) outline your research project by following IRB requirements (see <http://www.research.psu.edu/orp/education/modules/irb/index.asp>); 2) conduct the research with 3 colleagues from class; 3) keep track of your experiences and lessons learned; 4) present the research, outcomes, and lessons to the class (as a group); and 4) reflect on your experience in a final paper (no longer than 10 pages, double-spaced) (40% of final grade: 10% for IRB approval, 15% for project + presentation; 15% for paper).

**Attendance and participation:** Your attendance and participation in class activities are essential to the overall learning experience. After all, we are talking participatory research!

## Schedule for class requirements

Week	Date	What's needed
1	Aug 29	Sign up for dates and reading topics + techniques/tools
6	Oct 3	Submit 1 <sup>st</sup> reflexive paper
7	Oct 8	Submit research proposal to IRB
11	Nov 7	Submit 2 <sup>nd</sup> reflexive paper
16	Dec 12	Present your group research project
17	Dec 17	Submit individual reflexive paper on your group research project

## **Grading Philosophy**

**A:** Excellent work, original thinking, creative, insightful, based on skillful integration of and reflection on class readings and discussions. Papers are well argued, connections between themes, theories, and applications are clearly articulated, and the writing is polished with proper bibliographic references. Presentations are well structured, skillfully delivered, and trigger stimulating discussions. Class participation is active and constructive.

**A-:** Solid work with several creative and innovative elements. Papers are well thought out, but rather descriptive, with only superficial analysis. The connections between themes, theories, and application are not always evident. Readings and discussions are reflected in the writing, but language could need some more polishing. References are there, but not too abundant. There are also some inconsistencies in the reference style. Presentations are satisfactory, but don't sufficiently engage class colleagues. Class participation is rather timid and/or destructive.

**B:** This is a pass for the class but all elements could need more work. The papers are not well articulated, connections are poorly presented, and the analysis is insufficient; the writings offer few fresh insights and have limited bibliographical references that are not particularly well used. The writing style needs improvement. The presentations are poorly structured and the main arguments are not well presented, resulting in ineffective discussions and applications. There is little active and/or constructive participation in class.

A lower-than-B performance is simply unacceptable for a graduate seminar!

## **Disabilities**

If you have a documented disability, or any other problem you think may affect your ability to perform well in this class, please see me early in the semester so that arrangements may be made to accommodate you.

## **Academic Misconduct**

Plagiarism and cheating are both academic crimes. Do NOT turn in an assignment that you did not write yourself or turn in an assignment for this class that you previously turned in for another class. If you do so, it may result in a failing grade for the class, and possibly even suspension from the college. Please see me if you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism. Any violations of academic integrity will be dealt with following the University's procedures, which are described in detail at <http://www.psu.edu/dept/oue/aqppm/G-9.html>

## **Schedule for Class Topics and Readings**

Readings form the conceptual and intellectual basis of the class and are mandatory!!

Please note that this schedule might be subject to change. It is your responsibility to keep up with any changes.

See schedule on the following pages...

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**Welcome to the course!**

## GEOG 597B: Participatory Research, Empowerment, and Transformation: Class Schedule (Tschakert, Fall 2007)

Week	Date	Topics + Readings	Techniques + Tools
1	Aug 29	<b>Introduction to the class and its members:</b> 1) <b>Passionate geographies where dreaming is allowed + encouraged!</b> 2) <b>Overview of origin of participatory development and research</b> Chambers, 1994. The origins and practice of PRA. <i>World Development</i> 22 (7): 953-969 Kapoor, 2002. The devil's in the theory: A critical assessment of Robert Chambers' work on participatory development. <i>Third World Quarterly</i> 23 (1): 101-117.	<b>Warm-up exercises/energizers</b> with ideas from: Chambers (2002) Participatory workshops: A sourcebook of 21 sets of ideas & activities Pretty et al. (1995) A trainer's guide for for participatory learning and action McCarthy (2004) Enacting participatory development.
2	Sept 5	<b>Participatory research and social geography: The role of SPACE!</b> Pain, 2003. Social geography: on action-oriented research. <i>Progress in Human Geography</i> 25 (5): 649-657. Pain, 2004. Social geography: participatory research. <i>Progress in Human Geography</i> 28 (5): 652-663. Pain, 2006. Social geography: seven deadly myths in policy research. <i>Progress in Human Geography</i> 30 (2): 250-259. Kindon, 2005. Participatory action research. In (Hay Ed.) <i>Qualitative research methods in Human Geography</i> , pp 207-220.	<b>Semi-structured interviews</b> Valentine, 1997. Tell me about ....: using interviews as a research methodology. In (Flowerdew & Martin, Eds.) <i>Methods in Human Geography</i> ; pp. 110-126. Dunn, 2005. Interviewing. In (Hay Ed.) <i>Qualitative research methods in Human Geography</i> , pp 79-105. Bernard, 1994. Unstructured and semi-structured interviewing. In Bernard. <i>Research Methods in Anthropology</i> . pp208-224.
3	Sept 12	<b>Connecting with the trenches: Academic/activist identity, relevance, reflexivity, and responsibility</b> Kitchin & Hubbard, 1999. Research, action and 'critical' geographies. <i>Area</i> 31.3: 195-198. Maxey, 1999. Beyond boundaries? Activism, academia, reflexivity and research. <i>Area</i> 31.3: 199-208. Fuller & Kitchin, 2004. Radical theory/critical praxis: Academic geography beyond the academy? <i>Praxis (e)Press: Critical Work in Theory and Practice</i> . .... and 1 additional reading to be selected from the 1999 or 2004 series.	<b>Focus groups</b> Cameron, 2005. Focusing on the focus group. In (Hay Ed.) <i>Qualitative research methods in Human Geography</i> , pp 116-132. <a href="http://www.chronicpoverty.org/CPToolbox/Focusgroupsinterviews.htm">www.chronicpoverty.org/CPToolbox/Focusgroupsinterviews.htm</a> <a href="http://www.scu.edu.au/schools/gcm/ar/arp/focus.html">http://www.scu.edu.au/schools/gcm/ar/arp/focus.html</a> Bernard, 1994. Unstructured and semi-structured interviewing. In Bernard. <i>Research Methods in Anthropology</i> . pp224-229.
4	Sept 19	<b>Participatory arenas, power and empowerment</b> Jones and SPEECH, 2001. 'Of other spaces': Situating participatory practices: a case study from South India, pp. iii-13, 21-36. Ferguson, 2000. Resisting the veil of privilege: building bridge identities as an ethic-politics of global feminism. In (Narayan&Harding, Eds.) <i>Decentering the center: philosophy for a multicultural, postcolonial, and feminist world</i> . pp. 189-207. Kapoor, 2005. Participatory development, complicity and desire. <i>Third World Quarterly</i> 26 (8): 1203-1220.	<b>Participatory mapping/modelling (natural resources/visions)</b> Rambaldi et al., 2007. Through the eyes of hunter-gatherers: participatory 3D modelling among Ogiek indigenous peoples in Kenya. <i>Information Development</i> 23 (2-3): 113-128. Elwood, 2006. Negotiating knowledge production: the everyday inclusions, exclusions, and contradictions of participatory GIS research. <i>The Professional Geographer</i> 58 (2): 197-208. ICRA maps and transects and [ <a href="http://www.iapad.org/toolbox.htm">www.iapad.org/toolbox.htm</a> ]

<b>5</b>	<b>Sept 26</b>	<b>Drawing upon feminist theory and praxis</b>	<b>Participatory video and photo essays</b>
		Rose, 1997. Situated knowleges: Positionality, reflexivities and other tactis. <i>Progress in Human Geography</i> 21 (3): 305-320.	Kindon, 2002. Participatory video in geographic research: a feminist practice of looking? <i>Area</i> 35.2: 142-153.
		Gatenby & Humphries, 2000. Feminist PAR: Methodological and ethical issues. <i>Women's Studies International Forum</i> 23 (1): 89-105.	<a href="http://www.photovoice.org/">http://www.photovoice.org/</a> <a href="http://www.insightshare.org/training_book.html">http://www.insightshare.org/training_book.html</a>
		Cahill, 2007. The personal is political: Developing new subjectivities through participatory action research. <i>Gender, Place &amp; Culture</i> 14 (3): 267-292.	McIntyre, 2003: Through the eyes of women: photovoice and participatory research as tools for reimagining place. <i>Gender, Place &amp; Culture</i> 10 (1): 47-66.
		Nagar, 2000. Mujhe Jawab Do! (Answer me!): women's grass-roots activism and social spaces in Chitrakoot (India). <i>Gender, Place &amp; Culture</i> 7 (4): 341-362.	
<b>6</b>	<b>Oct 3</b>	<b>Partnerships, ethics, and IRB</b>	<b>Participatory mapping II (social/health/body)</b>
		Austin, 2004. Partnerships, not projects! Improving the environment through collaborative research and action, <i>Human Organization</i> 63 (4): 419-430.	Lynn et al., 2000. Putting breast cancer on the map. <i>PLA Notes</i> 37: 106-112. [http://www.wen.org.uk/health/PBCOM/breast.htm]
		Quigley, 2006. A review of improved ethical practices in environmental and public health research: Case examples from native communities. <i>Health Education &amp; Behavior</i> 33 (2): 130-147.	Keith & Brophy, 2004. Part. mapping of occupational hazards and disease among asbestos-exposed workers from a foundry and insulation complex in Canada. <i>IntJ OccEnv Health</i> 10(2):144-153.
		Khanlou & Peter, 2005. Participatory action research: considerations for ethical review. <i>Social Science &amp; Medicine</i> 60: 2333-2340.	Hazards magazin [http://www.hazards.org/diyresearch/]
		DeTardo-Bora, 2004. Action research in a world of positivist-oriented review boards. <i>Action Research</i> 2 (3): 237-253.	
<b>7</b>	<b>Oct 10</b>	<b>The tyranny critique</b>	<b>Listing, ranking, piling, scoring</b>
		Cooke & Kothari, 2001. The case for participation as tyranny. In (Cooke & Kothari, Eds.) <i>Participation: The New Tyranny?</i> Zed Books, pp. 1-15.	ICRA ranking and scoring RRA and PLA Notes
		Kothari, 2001. Power, knowledge and social control in participatory development. In (Cooke & Kothari, Eds.) <i>Participation: The New Tyranny?</i> Zed Books, pp. 139-152.	Cramb et al., 2004. Participatory assessments of rural livelihoods in the central Highlands of Vietnam, <i>Agricultural Systems</i> , 81: 255-272.
		Mohan, 2001. Beyond participation: Strategies for deeper empowerment. In (Cooke & Kothari, Eds.) <i>Participation: The New Tyranny?</i> Zed Books, pp. 153-167.	Risk ranking, wealth ranking, etc.
<b>8</b>	<b>Oct 17</b>	<b>From tyranny to transformation</b>	<b>Diagrams</b>
		Hickey & Mohan, 2004. Towards participation as transformation: critical themes and challenges. In (Hickey & Mohan, Eds.) <i>Participation: from tyranny to transformation?</i> Zed Books. pp. 3-24.	Kesby, 2000. Participatory diagramming: deploying qualitative methods through an action research epistemology. <i>Area</i> 32.4: 423-435.
		Gaventa, 2004. Towards participatory governance: assessing the transformative possibilities. In (Hickey & Mohan, Eds.) <i>Participation: from tyranny to transformation?</i> Zed Books. pp. 25-41.	ICRA diagramming RRA and PLA Notes
		Cameron & Gibson. 2005. Participatory action research in a poststructural vein. <i>Geoforum</i> , 36: 315-331.	Venn diagrams

<b>9</b>	<b>Oct 24</b>	<b>Spaces for empowerment and transformation</b>	<b>Participatory theatre</b>
		Kesby, 2005: Rethorizing empowerment-through-participation as a performance in space: beyond tyranny to transformation. <i>Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society</i> 30 (4): 2037-65	Pratt & Kirby, 2003. Performing nursing: BC Nurses' Union Theatre Project. <i>ACME - An International E-Journal for Critical Geographies</i> 2 (1): 14-32.
		Cornwall, 2004. Spaces for transformation? Reflections on issues of power and difference in participatory development. In (Hickey & Mohan, Eds.) <i>Participation: from tyranny to transformation?</i> Zed Books. pp.75-91.	Bagamaoyo College of Arts et al., 2002. PAR on HIV/AIDS through a popular theatre approach in Tanzania. <i>Evaluation and program Planning</i> , 25: 333-339.
		Williams, 2004. Towards a repoliticization of participatory development: political capabilities and spaces of empowerment. In (Hickey & Mohan, Eds.) <i>Participation: from tyranny to transformation?</i> Zed Books. pp92-108	Cornwall, 1997. Performance and participation. <i>PLA Notes</i> 29: 23-28.
<b>10</b>	<b>Oct 31</b>	<b>Participation and environmental justice</b>	<b>Mental models/conceptual mapping</b>
		Schlosberg, 2004. Reconciving environmental justice: Global movements and political theories. <i>Environmental Politics</i> 13 (3): 517-540.	Zaksek & Arvai, 2004. Toward improved communication about wildland fire: Mental models research ... <i>Risk Analysis</i> , 24(6):1503-14
		Tschakert & Singha, 2007. Contaminated identities: Mercury and marginalization in Ghana's artisanal mining sector. <i>Geoforum</i> (in press).	Examples from mercury contamination and climatic changes....
		González et al., 2007. PAR for environmental health: Encountering Freire in the urban barrio. <i>Journal of Urban Affairs</i> 29 (1): 77-100.	Young & Barrett, 2001. Adapting visual methods: action research with Kampala street children. <i>Area</i> 33.2: 141-152.
<b>11</b>	<b>Nov 7</b>	<b>Bridging over to political ecology: Can we?</b>	<b>Scenario building</b>
		Time to be critical, engaged, and passionate! Suggest readings as input for your paper and the class discussion!	Wollenberg et al., 2000: Anticipating change: scenerios. A tool for adaptive forest management. <i>CIFOR, Indonesia</i> .
			Peterson et al., 2003. Assessing furture ecosystem services: A case study of the Northern Highland Lake District WI. <i>Conservation Ecology</i> 7 (3) 1.
			Bezold, 1999. Alternative futures for communities. <i>Futures</i> 31: 465-473.
<b>12</b>	<b>Nov 14</b>	<b>PR/PAR fieldwork and theses: Mixed methods</b>	<b>None</b>
		Herr & Anderson, 2005. <i>The action research dissertation: A guide for students and faculty</i> . Sage Publications.	
		Scheyvens & Leslie, 2000. <i>Gender, ethics and empowerment: Dilemmas of development fieldwork</i> . <i>Women's Studies International Forum</i> , 23 (1): 119-130.	
		Marsland et al., 2001. Methodological framework for combining quantitative and quantitative survey methods. <i>Univ of Greenwich + Univ of Reading</i> .	
<b>13</b>	<b>Nov 21</b>	<b>No class (Thanksgiving)</b>	-
<b>14</b>	<b>Nov 28</b>	<b>Eutopias and alternative geographical imaginations</b>	<b>None</b>
		Stevenson, 2006. From vision to action. <i>Futures</i> 38: 667-672.	
		Cumbers & Routledge, 2004: <i>Alternative geographical imaginations: An introduction</i> . <i>Antipode</i> 36 (5): 818-828.	
		Fenton, 2004. "A world where action is the sister of dream": Surrealism and anticapitalism in contemporary Paris. <i>Antipode</i> 36 (5): 942-962.	
<b>15</b>	<b>Dec 5</b>	<b>No class (Petra in Bali)</b>	-
<b>16</b>	<b>Dec 12</b>	<b>Presentation group projects</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>17</b>	<b>Dec 19</b>	<b>Project write-ups (reflections)</b>	<b>None</b>