

Abstracts

Porto Alegre: A Model of Participatory Budget

Armando Rendón Corona

The paper exposes the evolution of participatory budget as a new kind of polity based upon direct participation and a pyramid of social representation which share governance along with municipal authorities. Both actors decide about public policies and municipal budget under a criteria of distributive justice. The experience of participatory budget in Porto Alegre opens up the debate about the construction of a model that retrieves diverse Brazilian and Latin American experiences, which main axis are direct democracy, democratic planning, institutional innovation through decentralization and mixed enterprises in public management, and associative practices in citizenship.
Keywords: Participatory budget, participatory democracy, direct democracy, citizenship participation, decentralization, institutional innovation.

Some Sociopolitical Causes of the Crisis of Representation within Party Systems. The Case of South American States

Arturo Aquilino Fernández

Over the past 20 years, all South American countries have passed from military authoritarianism to political pluralism. This evolution is currently suffering of a increasing lack of representation in elected governments, which varies in accordance to each national context. The article's purpose is to determine socio-historical causes prior to the 90's decade capable to explain the growing crisis of representation in most of the South American party systems. In the first section of the paper a discussion about the idea of political representation is addressed, then moving through the analysis of underdeveloped states, and finally, some considerations about the specific nature of South American party systems are herein presented.

Keywords: political parties, party systems, South America, political regimes.

PRI, PAN and PRD Proposals on Social Development during the 58th Mexican Legislature. A Comparative Analysis

Karla Valverde Viesca

Despite the outstanding electoral and political advancement in Mexico, the role played by political parties to promote a normative framework capable to design and to implement social and economic policies is still precarious. In this paper, a comparative analysis on the several projects concerning the approval of the Bill on Social Development in the 58th Mexican Legislature is herein presented.

Keywords: social development, Congress, political parties, Mexico.

Communication, Social Identity and Globalization

Teresa Páramo Ricoy

The essay's main purpose is to analyze the relationship that communication, globalization, culture and social identity have established within the last decades. Communication technology during the last two decades development has been analyzed by a number of authors, and based on a literature review, the study questions some of the proposals made by the authors studied, on relation to the impact of globalization and the new forms of communication upon culture and social identities.

Keywords: communication, globalization, social identity.

Liberation Psychology: Learning from Latin America

Mark Burton

Liberation Social Psychology (LSP, psicología social de la liberación) has developed amongst a body of psychologists in Latin America over the last decade. This article explores the context in which LSP grew from the work of Ignacio Martín-Baró and was developed by Maritza Montero, amongst others. Within LSP, key concepts emerge, including “conscientization”, “realismo-crítico”, “de-ideologisation”, a social orientation, “the preferential option for the oppressed majorities” and methodological eclecticism. The application of LSP is explored with

ABSTRACTS

reference to three domains. First, it is suggested that community social psychology as practised in some parts of Latin America reflects LSP in its emphasis on social transformation and participatory methods. Second, psychosocial work with victims of state oppression, which adopts a highly social and societal orientation, embodies LSP. Third, social analyses that explicitly adopt socio-psychological-political analyses of the social realities confronting countries in Latin America embrace, in different ways, principles and concepts of LSP. Finally, some of the challenges facing LSP are discussed.

Keywords: Liberation Social Psychology; oppression; transformation.

Social Representations of Democracy: The Invisible Practices

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and Sandra E. González Ramírez

Under the context of the theory of representations, the linkages between practices and concepts are widely discussed herein. For this purpose, the models of democracy proposed by two groups –whose contents serve to refer connections between ideas and practices– are examined as well. A main conclusion made up in here is that a practice cannot be always associated to a certain practice and viceversa.

Keywords: social representation, social practices, group, communication.

Psychosocial Features of Participation in Mexico's Federal District during the 1994 and 2000 Elections

Manuel González Navarro and Josué Tinoco Amador

This investigation is focused on citizenship participation from the viewpoint of social psychology. We discuss about two important moments in Mexican political life. The 1994 and 2000 elections in Mexico City. We study population expressions, opinions and attributions, and how these topics were related to their political behaviour and electoral preferences. We examine the whole process upon which people constructed their images about political parties, their respective candidates, and finally, their subjective values that led to the vote.

Keywords: political psychology, vote, elections, political parties, citizenship participation.

Reflections upon the Daily Collective Sense of Place and of Belonging in the City of Barcelona

Anna Ortiz Guitart

This article analyses the construction of the residents' sense of place and sense of belonging in two neighbourhoods of Barcelona. Through a qualitative methodology and, particularly, in depth interviews with men and women, this paper shows how people construct their place's identity.

Keywords: Barcelona, sense of place, sense of belonging.