Course: Participatory Action Research (PAR) E10 2143

Instructor: Donna Nevel
Class Location and Time: Wednesday, 4:45 – 6:35
Email Address: denevel@gmail.com
Office Hours: By appointment

Course Description: Introduction to Participatory Action Research

Course Objectives:

1- to gain an understanding of PAR and how it’s understood and practiced in different contexts

2- to gain an understanding of the relationship of PAR to popular education and community organizing

3- to gain an understanding of PAR in the context of other research traditions

4- to develop an ability to create a framework for developing a PAR project or undertaking

Course Assignments

1) Course readings (listed below). There are required readings and additional suggested readings for future work or interest in this area.

2) Reflections on classes and readings (due every three weeks):
As a result of what you’ve read and learned, what are questions or insights you have and/or areas you’d like to learn more about and explore further, and why?

3) Final project: development of critical questions and a framework for developing, analyzing, and evaluating a PAR project or undertaking. This can be based on a project that already exists (for example, one you learned about during the course or were part of/connected to prior to the class) and/or a project that you are envisioning. Either can be done with other students (up to 4) or alone. (This assignment is due at the end of the course)

Grading:
30% class participation
35% reflections
35% final project
Required Texts:


Course Schedule

Class One (Sept. 7):
Participatory Action Research (PAR): Introduction

Readings:

Additional suggested readings:

What is Participatory Action Research, Incite! website

Questions to consider:
What is PAR, and where do we begin?
How do we build a learning community based on principles of PAR?

Class Two (Sept. 14):
Setting the Context: PAR and Gender, Race, Class, Power

Readings:


Two of the following five pieces:
Voices from Within, Dylan Rodriguez, ColorLines, Fall 1998

Under Western Eyes revisited, Feminist Solidarity through Anticapitalist Struggles, Chandra Talpade Mohanty; Signs: Journal for Women in Culture and Society 2003, volume 28, no. 2

Conquest: Sexual Violence in American Indian Genocide, Andrea Smith, Chapter One, pages 7-33, South End Press, 2005


Additional suggested readings:


People in Me, by Robin Kelley, Znet, July 5, 2003, reprinted from ColorLines

Race-ing Justice, Disenfranchising Lives: Manning Marable, Znet, December 10, 2006

Color of Violence, the incite! anthology, Sistas Makin’ Moves: Collective Leadership for Personal Transformation and Social Justice, pages 196-207, South End Press, 2006

Bridging the Gap: Feminism and Participatory Action Research, Alice McIntyre, Patricia Maguire; Feminisms and Participatory Action Research Conference Papers, June 22-24 2001, Boston College

Questions to consider:
What framework and context might PAR provide to address difference, identity, and their relationships to power? How might this differ from other research traditions?

How do we think about and meaningfully integrate who we are—with respect to gender, race, class, sexuality, migration status and our relationships to different forms of power—as we’re engaging in PAR?

Videos:
1) Girl Like Me, by Kiri Davis
2) No More Violence Against our Sistas --Sista II Sista video
Class Three, Four, Five (Sept. 21, Sept. 28, Oct. 5):
PAR, Sharing Our Stories and Wisdom, Popular Education, and Social Transformation

Readings:

Class Three:

Women Creating Change: The Center for Immigrant Families’ English Literacy Project, by Ujju Aggarwal, Priscilla Gonzalez, Donna Nevel, Perla Placencia in Empowering Women Through Literacy, Mev Miller and Kathleen King, editors

Pedagogy of the Oppressed, Paulo Freire, chapter 2, pages 71-86; chapter 3, pages 87 -124

Knowing, Learning, Doing, Participatory Action Research, Juliet Merrifield, NCSALL, Volume One, Issue A, February 1997

Class Four/Five:
Pedagogy of the Oppressed, Paulo Freire, Introduction, pages 11-27


Segregated and Unequal: The Public Elementary Schools of District 3 in New York City, Center for Immigrant Families

Poems/Excerpts: Pedro Pietri, Aurora Levins Morales, Edwidge Danticatt

Looking for Activists in Unlikely Places: One White Southern Woman’s Journey, M. Brinton Lykes, Founders Day speech, Hollins, March 2, 2006

Serving the Public Interest Through PAR, E.A. Hills and M.K. Schneebberger, Association for Science in the Public Interest Conference

Class 3
Laying the foundation

Class 4
Escuela Popular de Mujeres/Women’s Popular Education Program:
Community workshops
Class 5
PAR Project to Challenge Segregation and for Justice in OUR Public Schools

Questions to consider:
What is the role and meaning of sharing our stories?
What are the connections and intersections among research, activism, popular education, community organizing?
What are the role and meaning of “expertise”, knowledge, wisdom?
How do we gauge “success”?

Resource people:
Ujjju Aggarwal, Center for Immigrant Families collective
Marilyn Barnwell, Bloomingdale Family Program

Class Six (Oct. 12):
PAR: Principles, Theory, and Method and Its Location Within a Wider Research Discussion

PAR Methodology; action research, other forms of research and data analysis and interpretation—differences and similarities

Readings:

The Role of Language and Discourse in the Investigation of Privilege: Using Participatory Action Research to Discuss Theory, Develop Methodology, and Interrupt Power, Brett G. Stoudt, Published online: 15 October 2008

Action and Knowledge: Breaking the Monopoly with Participatory Action Research, Fals-Borda, Orlando and Rahman, Mohammad Anisur (1991), Chapter 9, pages 121-134

The Action Research Dissertation Kathryn Herr and Gary L. Anderson, Chapters Three and Four, pages 29-68

In From the Cold? Reflections on Participatory Research From 1970 – 2005 Budd L. Hall

Additional suggested readings:

Participatory Action Research, Alice McIntyre, Chapter One, pages 1-13

16 Tenets of Participatory Action Research Robin McTaggart
Questions to consider:
What are some differences and similarities among PAR methodology, action research, and other forms of research and data analysis?

Resource person:
Professor Gary Anderson

Class Seven (Oct. 19):
PAR and Popular Education, Indigenous Knowledge, Social Movements, and Human Rights

Readings:

PAR and Aboriginal Epistemology: A Really Good Fit


Additional suggested readings:


Environmental Popular Education and Indigenous Social Movements In India, Dip Kappour

Questions to consider:
How do PAR and human rights principles come together?

Resource person:
Alan Levine, constitutional and human rights lawyer, PAR Project: The Rights of Indigenous Peoples in Costa Rica

**Class Eight, Nine (Oct. 26, Nov. 2):**  
**PAR and Youth Organizing, Schools, Justice in Public Education**

**Readings:**
Empowerment and Practitioner Action Research, Chapter 4, Kathryn Herr, in Studying Your Own School: An Educator’s Guide to Practitioner Action Research, Second Edition

Polling for Justice, NYCORE, and GGE materials

A System that Does Not Work for Our Children, op-ed, El Diario and Gotham Schools, Ujju Aggarwal and Perla Placencia, Center for Immigrant Families

The Action Research Dissertation, Kathryn Herr and Gary L. Anderson, Chapter Two, pages 8-28


Additional suggested readings:

An Unnatural Disaster: A Critical Resource Guide for Addressing the Aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in the Classroom, NYCORE

Storytelling Rights The uses of oral and written texts by urban adolescents, Amy Shuman, pages 3-14

**Class 8**

**PAR and Organizing for Justice in our Public School Communities**

**Class 9**

**PAR and Youth/Young People’s Organizing**

**Questions to consider:**
How can PAR shape, inform, and impact our organizing for educational justice?
How can youth and educators, together with families and community members, organize for justice in our public school communities?

**Resource people:**

class 8: New York Collective of Radical Educators (NYCORE);

class 9: Girls for Gender Equity

**Video:**

Granita de Arena (Grain of Sand), Jill Friedberg, 2005

**Class Ten, Eleven (Nov. 9, 16): Cultural Resistance, PAR, and Popular Education**

**Readings:**

For classes 10/11:

Lykes, M. Brinton, in collaboration with the Association of Maya Ixil Women, Creative Arts and Photography in Participatory Action Research in Guatemala, Chapter 25, pages 269-278; Peter Reason and Hilary Bradbury (eds.), Handbook of Action Research: Participative Inquiry and Practice. Thousand Oaks and London: SAGE

CIF Photo exhibit: Exhibit displays work of Latin American women, Amanda Del Balso

Guggenheim Bilbao exhibition materials
Cai Guo Qiang: I Want To Believe

In Wild Garden, Dian Marino, Re-Framing: Hegemony and Adult Education Practices, Chapter 6, pages 103-118,

Sharon Verner Chappell, Young People’s Art Works Toward Social Change: Performing Visions of Utopia, Community Arts Network Reading Room

http://www.artinfo.com/news/story/37024/what-good-is-political-art-in-times-like-these/?page=1

Optional but encouraged:

Ethnicity, Sexuality, and All that Jazz: Musical Text as Confessional Space, Mishlyn Ramanna, in Gender and Sexuality in South African Music, editors, Chris Walton and Stephanus Muller
OR
Race rebels: culture, politics, and the Black working class, Robin D.G. Kelley, Chapter 7, pages 161-181

Additional suggested readings:

But is it Art? The Spirit of Art as Activism, Nina Felshin (ed.), Intro., pages 9-29

Participatory Action Research, Alice McIntyre, Chapter Two, Page 15-32


**Class 10**

a) The Processes of Documentation--and Whose Voices?
b) Cultural resistance, PAR, and popular education

**Class 11**

Making our Stories Visible
Challenges we Face

**Questions to consider:**

How can and do cultural and artistic forms of expression and resistance shape, intersect with, and emerge from PAR and popular education?

How are our voices silenced, and how can we resist that process and make our voices—and our lives--more visible?

**Resource people:**

Arab Women Active in the Arts and Media (AWAAM)

**Video:**
Clips from videos by Arab Women Active in the Arts and Media (AWAAM)
Class Twelve (Nov. 23):
PAR and Ethical Challenges; “Co-opting” PAR

Readings:


Translating Participation from North To South: A Case Against Intellectual Imperialism in Social Science Research, C. Chambers and H. Balanoff, Chapter 6 in Education, Participatory Action Research, and Social Change, Edited by Dip Kapoor and Steven Jordan

Questions to consider:
What are some of the ethical issues and challenges we face when engaging in PAR?

What are some of the challenges in maintaining PAR as PAR—and who is the judge?

Class Thirteen, Fourteen (Nov. 30, Dec. 7):
PAR in Action; PAR as a Transformative Process:
Ongoing Struggles for Social, Racial, and Economic Justice
**engaging in PAR as community organizers, advocates, activists, community members, students, cultural workers, educators, academics**

Readings:

Highlander Center: Historical and Philosophical Tour, Highlander materials
A Brief History of the PAR Collective Michelle Fine, Institute for Participatory Action Research and Design (IPARD) website

Different Eyes/Open Eyes: Community-Based Participatory Action Research, Caitlin Cahill, Indra Ross-Moore, and Tiffany Threats and Response to Chapter 5, by Pauline Lippman, Revolutionizing Education, Julio Cammarota and Michelle Fine (editors), Routledge, 2008

Read at least two of the following three:

Popular Education and Social Movements in India: State Responses to Constructive Resistance for Social Justice, Dip Kapoor, Convergence, Volume XXXVII, Number 2, 2004


Notes and Queries for an Activist Street Anthropology: Street Resistance, Gringopolitica, and the Quest for Subaltern Visions in Salvador de Bahia, Brazil Samuel Veissiere, Chapter 15, in Education, Participatory Action Research, and Social Change, Edited by Dip Kapoor and Steven Jordan

Additional suggested readings:

Field Museum, Center for Cultural Understanding and Change, Collaborative Research: A Practical Introduction to PAR for Communities and Scholars, pages 22-32

Questions to consider:
PAR: From the streets to the universities—toward what ends?

What role can PAR play in movements for justice? What examples and models of PAR can we draw upon as we engage in our own work, research, and organizing?

How can we insure that PAR is truly a transformative and liberatory process?

Looking at the past, present, and future, how can PAR be implemented and infused in our own lives and work?

Videos:
A clip from the MTD video from Argentina; Another clip from Amandla