



V-Dem Lunch Seminars Spring 2018 Detailed Schedule

The Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) Institute is hosting several leading scholars on democratization and democracy during spring 2018. Please find below information about the scholars, research, duration of stay and scheduled seminars.

17 January: Steven Wilson (visiting scholar 29 Dec-19 January)

Title: Social Media and Mobilization in Latin America

Abstract: This article tests several hypotheses regarding the complex relationship between social media usage and mass mobilization. It presents a new dataset of the full text and metadata of some 500 million geocoded tweets from eight Latin American countries. Using custom-written GIS software, the province of origin of each tweet has been identified. In conjunction with the EMBERS dataset of protest events, this data is used to test whether social media is used organizationally (that is, prior to protest) or informationally (that is, during a protest). In addition, leveraging the segment of the population taking part in protest, and using computerized topic analysis on the full text of the tweets, the article explores social media's utility as a source of measurement for sources of popular grievance.

Bio: Dr. Steven Lloyd Wilson is an assistant professor of political science at the University of Nevada, Reno. He earned his Ph.D. in political science from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 2016, and serves as the Project Manager of Computational Infrastructure for the Varieties of Democracy Institute at the University of Gothenburg. His research focuses on comparative democratization, cyber-security, and the effect of the Internet on authoritarian regimes. He also works on a variety of projects involving network and content analysis of social media around the world.

31 January: Rachel Riedl (visiting scholar 29 January – 2 February)

Title: Authoritarian-Led Democratization

Abstract: There are currently two very different visions – in a sense even diametrically opposed visions – for why authoritarian regimes become democracies when they do. The first perspective holds that dictatorships democratize at moments of *little choice*. The regime is splintering and crumbling from within (O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986); rising popular protests threaten to topple the dictator and his inner circle violently, especially when the regime is highly personalized (Acemoglu and Robinson 2006, Geddes 1999); emergent bourgeoisies demand democratization to protect their burgeoning fortunes from autocratic expropriation (Ansell and Samuels 2014, North and Weingast 1989); and/or superpower patrons insist on democratization as a condition for continued, essential aid and support (Bratton and van de Walle 1997). As Dahl (1971) so memorably put it, if the costs of repression come to exceed the costs of toleration, authoritarian regimes can be expected to step aside, grudgingly, allowing democracy to emerge and their opponents to assume power. I advance a second perspective (along with coauthors Slater, Wong and Ziblatt): dictatorships democratize when they perceive *little risk*. Relative economic equality, asset mobility, and/or natural resource abundance mean democracy will not produce overwhelming pressures for downward redistribution (Boix 2003, Dunning 2008);

regime insiders have “skeletons in the closet” on their opponents, allowing them to step aside without fear of transitional justice (Nalepa 2010); dictators have a “usable past” that will allow them to pursue redemption and renovation in a competitive democracy (Grzymala-Busse 2003); military rulers know that they can retreat to their barracks and reassume their professional duties unmolested (Geddes 1999); and/or authoritarian leaders can define the terms and timing of their own exit, allowing them to “game democracy” in their own elitist favor. This paper offers a unified theoretical framework to demonstrate how democratization can sometimes be – and oftentimes is – a strategic choice much more than a forced move.

Bio: Rachel Beatty Riedl is associate professor of political science at Northwestern University, where she is a faculty associate at the Institute for Policy Research, the director of the French Interdisciplinary Group, and serves on the Executive Committee of the Program of African Studies. The author of the award-winning *Authoritarian Origins of Democratic Party Systems in Africa* (Cambridge University Press, 2014), she studies institutional development in new democracies, local governance and decentralization policy, authoritarian regime legacies, and religion and politics, with a regional focus in Sub-Saharan Africa. She has published in the *Journal of Politics*, *Comparative Political Studies*, *Studies in Comparative International Development*, *African Affairs*, among others. Riedl is the Chair of the Comparative Democratization section of the American Political Science Association. A former Kellogg Institute visiting fellow, Yale Program on Democracy Fellow, and Faculty Fulbright Scholar, she holds a PhD from Princeton University. Riedl is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and has conducted policy analysis for USAID, the World Bank, the State Department and the Carter Center on issues pertaining to governance, elections, democratic representation and identity politics.

14 February: Sebastian Elischer (visiting scholar 12-16 February)

Title: How Often and Why Do Military Coups Usher in Civilian Rule? Coups, Post-Coup Elections and Autocratic Resilience in the Post-Cold War World

Abstract: Drawing on the literature on autocratic resilience and the logic of fuzzy-set theoretical models, the article examines the political consequences of all post-1989 military coups. It analyzes the extent to which juntas remain in or withdraw from power in the aftermath of a coup. A few quantitative studies claim that post-Cold War coups have a higher propensity to usher in democratization than coups that took place during the Cold War. This medium-N analysis finds little reason to be enthusiastic about the political outcomes of post-Cold War coups. It argues that a high degree of citizens involvement in civil society organizations and the absence of social tensions to be necessary and sufficient conditions for military withdrawal from power in the aftermath of a coup. Results for cases in which the armed forces remain in power indicate that in almost all cases the outcome is a foregone conclusion as the armed forces do not appear to be receptive to pressure by outside actors.

Bio: Sebastian Elischer is assistant professor of political science at the University of Florida. His research examines the evolution of ethnic and religious identities in sub-Saharan Africa. His 2013 book *Political Parties in Africa* was published by Cambridge University Press. Previous articles appeared in *Comparative Politics*, *Democratization* and *African Affairs*. He currently works on a book manuscript examining the relationship between African states and conservative Sunni communities.

28 February: Valeriya Mechkova 50% seminar

Title: Gendered Accountability: When and Why Do Governments Respond to Women's Policy Priorities?

Discussant: Kunal Sen

Abstract: Previous research has found that policy priorities tend to differ between men and women, particularly in the developing world, where social roles tend to be more gendered. For example, men tend to prioritize investments in infrastructure, while women prioritize issues like access to clean water and childcare.

Relatedly, representation of women in positions of political power has been argued to improve the implementation of women's policy priorities. We combine these lines of work by investigating whether greater descriptive representation (i.e., greater proportions of women in the legislature and executive), leads to greater substantive representation (better outcomes in policy areas that women prioritize). We consider the interaction of descriptive representation at country level with individual level characteristics such as level of women's political awareness, political participation and policy preferences. We then examine how these relate to a variety of outcomes areas that women tend to prioritize: maternal mortality, infant and child mortality, access to clean water and enrollment of girls in primary, secondary and tertiary schools. We test the results in Sub-Saharan Africa, a region that has experienced the fastest and largest rate of change in descriptive representation and where many of the outcomes in question are critical to wellbeing.

Bio: Valeriya is a PhD candidate at the Department of Political Science, University of Gothenburg, within the Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) project since the autumn of 2016. In her dissertation she focuses on how government accountability affects human development outcomes such as education and healthcare. She studies the gender aspects of accountability as well as clientelism as a specific type of accountability strategy. Previously Valeriya worked as V-Dem's analyst and data operations manager, starting from May 2013 until August 2016.

1 March: Kunal Sen (visiting scholar 27 February – 2 March)

Title: Political Settlements and Immiserizing Growth Episodes

Abstract: Economic growth in developing countries is an “episodic” phenomena with countries undertaking discrete shifts from periods of low to periods of high growth and vice versa. Not all growth acceleration episodes lead to reductions in poverty, and there is wide variation in the relationship between growth and poverty decline across episodes of growth of the same magnitude or duration. I show that several cases of growth acceleration episodes may be defined as episodes of immiserizing growth, in that poverty either increases or remains roughly the same across the duration of these episodes. Similarly, I show that not all growth deceleration episodes lead to increases in poverty. I then provide a political economy explanation for episodes of immiserizing growth, focusing on the nature of the political settlement, and in particular on the distribution of power. Using VDEM's measures of political power, I show the deep determinants of immiserizing growth episodes lie in the distribution of power between elites and non-elites and within sets of elites.

Bio: Kunal Sen is Professor of Development Economics in the Global Development Institute, University of Manchester, UK, and Joint Research Director of the DFID-UK funded Effective States and Inclusive Development (ESID) Research Centre. His current research is on the political economy of development. Professor Sen's recent books are *The Political Dynamics of Growth Episodes*, Oxford University Press, 2017 and *Out of the Shadows? The Informal Sector in Post-Reform India*, Oxford University Press, 2016. He has also published over 100 articles in journals including *Labour Economics*, *Journal of Comparative Economics*, *Public Choice*, *Review of Income and Wealth*, *Journal of Development Economics*, *Journal of Development Studies*, and *World Development*. He has won the Sanjaya Lall Prize in 2006 and Dudley Seers Prize in 2003 for his publications.

14 March: Nicholas Kerr (visiting scholar 12-16 March)

Title: Electoral Cycles of Democratic Satisfaction and the Quality of Elections in Africa

Abstract: Elections are a core institution of modern democracy and numerous studies have shown how free and fair elections can confer regime legitimacy by increasing citizen's satisfaction with democracy (SWD). What is less clear, however, is whether the positive effect of elections persist during other stages of the political process (i.e. non-electoral periods). This paper theorizes dynamic effects of election quality on democratic

satisfaction, focusing on how the quality of a previous election can provide information for citizens to assess the outputs of the political system. We argue that clean elections positively affect citizen's satisfaction toward democracy around election time but their effect tends to decrease during non-electoral periods. On the other hand, fraudulent elections tend to have a negative, persistent effect on satisfaction with democracy in electoral and non-electoral periods. Further, we also expect that fraudulent elections widen the gap in SWD between electoral winners and losers and the SWD gap lingers on in non-electoral periods. Using the Afrobarometer surveys (Rounds 1-6) including approximately 165,000 Africans in 34 countries, we find supporting evidence for our theoretical expectations.

Bio: Nicholas Kerr is an assistant professor of comparative politics in the Department of Political Science at the University of Alabama. His research and teaching experiences coalesce around issues in comparative politics and African politics with specific focus on comparative political institutions, democratization, electoral integrity, gender and politics, and public opinion. Nicholas' current research agenda focuses on how multiparty elections in electoral democracies and competitive autocracies shape popular evaluations of political legitimacy including, trust in the electoral process, satisfaction with democracy, and support for regime principles. There are two main avenues of inquiry within this agenda. The first explores the design and performance of electoral management bodies (EMBs) in Africa with emphasis on how political elites and citizens respond strategically to the autonomy and capacity of EMBs. The second strand of his research examines the relationship between citizens' campaign and electoral behavior and popular evaluations of political legitimacy. Specifically, Nicholas focuses on how direct experiences with election management, electoral manipulation, and third-party actors as well as the outcomes of elections influence citizens' evaluations of 1) election integrity, and 2) the performance of state and regime institutions.

15 March: Marcus Tannenberg 50% seminar

Title: Popular Support for Authoritarian Rule in China: Estimating self-censorship with list experiments

Discussant: Nicholas Kerr

Abstract: The study of popular support for authoritarian regimes, and the comparative study of political attitudes, has long relied on the assumption that survey respondents provide truthful answers on surveys. However, when measuring regime support in closed political systems, there is a distinct risk that individuals are less than forthcoming due to fear that their opinions may be made known to the public or the authorities. In order to test this assumption, we conducted a novel web-based survey in China in which we included four list experiments of commonly used items in the comparative literature on regime support. We find systematic bias for all four measures as a result of self-censorship; substantially more individuals state that they support the regime with direct questioning than do when presented with our anonymous, indirect list experiments. Self-censorship is further most prevalent among the wealthy, the educated, urban, and female respondents. These findings indicate that prior studies that have found high levels of support for the Chinese regime using these particular measures likely overestimate the true level of support. Further, cross-national studies which compare popular support across regime type may be systematically biased if responses are not subject to the same level of falsification across regime types.

Bio: Marcus Tannenberg is a PhD candidate at the V-Dem Institute at the Department of Political Science at the University of Gothenburg since the fall of 2015. His primary research interest is legitimacy and popular support in autocratic regimes, and survey methodology in politically repressive settings.

11 April: Ani Sarkissian (visiting scholar 9-13 April)

Title: Government Support for Religion and the Varieties of Democracy

Abstract: Does government support or favoritism toward some or all religious groups affect the type and qualities of democracy in a country? Scholars have long noted the fundamental role of religious freedom in liberal democratic governance, as it encompasses important rights to conscience, association, and expression.

However, few scholars of religion and politics have studied how government support of religion affects democratic outcomes. Using the Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) dataset to measure different principles of democracy and data from the Pew Research Center and Fox's Religion and State Dataset to measure government favoritism of religion, this paper questions whether government support for religion creates a more pluralist and participatory environment for a wide range of groups, or whether it politically favors some groups and hinders the rights of others. It examines the effects of different forms of religious favoritism, including religious establishment, funding, and access to policymaking on electoral, liberal, egalitarian, deliberative, and participatory democracy.

Bio: Ani Sarkissian is Associate Professor of Political Science at Michigan State University. Her research in comparative politics focuses on democratization, authoritarian regimes, religion and politics, state-society relations, and minority politics.

26 April: Lars-Erik Cederman (visiting scholar 25-27 April)

Title: Ethnic Inequality and Conflict: The Ethnic Power Relations Dataset

Abstract: This presentation describes the Ethnic Power Relations Dataset and provides an overview of research findings that have been produced with these data during the past few years. The main focus is on the link between ethnic inequality and civil war.

Bio: Lars-Erik Cederman is Professor of International Conflict Research, ETH Zürich. His research interests include nationalism, ethnic conflict, democratization and state formation. He is the author of *Emergent Actors in World Politics: How States Develop and Dissolve* (Princeton University Press, 1997), and co-author of *Inequality, Grievances and Civil War* (Cambridge University press, 2013) with Kristian Skrede Gleditsch and Halvard Buhaug. His publications also include recent articles in *American Political Science Review*, *International Organization*, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, *Journal of Peace Research*, and *World Politics* among others.

7 May: Svend-Erik Skaaning (visiting scholar 7-11 May)

Title: Restrictions on Passive and Active Voting Rights during the First Wave

Abstract: Although much scholarly work has been devoted to the first wave of democratization, previous studies have primarily been occupied with the changes in and differences between dominant understandings of democracy, studies of single countries, and/or have taken an aggregate and rather crisp view of democracy, including the extension of passive and active suffrage. Against this backdrop, this paper presents a disaggregate, comparative overview of the developments in passive and active suffrage restrictions in Western countries from 1789 to 1920. The analysis is based on the Historical Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) project. This rich source offers indicators that distinguish between different sorts of restrictions for different chambers (if applicable), such as age, property, literacy, occupation, income, taxation, and ethnicity/religion. The overview provides more nuanced evidence for a large number of countries, which gives a unique opportunity to reassess theories developed to account for franchise extensions, sequencing of political rights, and complementary or substitution between different ways to restrict access to political power.

Bio: Svend-Erik Skaaning is professor of political science at Aarhus University and co-principal investigator of V-Dem. His research interests include the conceptualization, measurement, and explanation of democracy, civil liberties, and the rule of law. He has published extensively on these issues in journals such as *Comparative Political Studies*, *Democratization*, and *Journal of Democracy*. Among his recent books is *The Rule of Law: Definitions, Measures, Patterns, and Causes* (Palgrave).

9 May: Marc Ratkovic (visiting scholar 7-11 May)

Title: Causal Inference through the Method of Direct Estimation

Abstract: We propose a method for estimating the causal effect of a treatment, binary or continuous, on an outcome in the presence of a high-dimensional vector of confounders. Rather than estimate an intermediate quantity, like a propensity score or selection model, we fit a tensor-spline regression model for the outcome and then directly estimate counterfactual quantities of interest. Estimation combines a marginal correlation screen and a new sparse Bayesian model that achieves optimal predictive bounds on the outcome and treatment effect. The method extends to instrumental variable, mediation, and sequential-g estimation. A simulation study and two applied examples illustrate the methods.

Bio: Marc Ratkovic is currently an Assistant Professor in the Department of Politics at Princeton University. His research builds on the intersection between machine learning, causal inference, and political methodology. He has focused on developing statistical methods for drawing reliable causal inference from social science and other observational data. His work has won the Society for Political Methodology's Gosnell Prize for Excellence in Political Methodology and the Tom Ten Have Citation at the Atlantic Causal Inference Conference. Marc received his PhD in political science and Masters in Statistics from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 2011 under David Weimer. His dissertation developed several methods for variable selection and fitting high-dimensional models with applications to political science.

23 May: Sirianne Dahlum

Title: Chaos on Campus: Universities and Mass Uprisings

Abstract: Numerous historical examples from both rich and poor countries suggest that universities are hotbeds of political protest. However, the generality, importance, scope and causal nature of this relationship has never been properly quantified. This paper investigates whether universities cause protest, drawing on global geocoded information on the location and characteristics of roughly 12000 universities across the globe, combined with geocoded data on political protest events in Africa and Central America in the 1991-2015 period. These data comprise information on factors such as whether universities are public or privately owned and date of founding. Our analysis supports the proposition that locations with more universities are more likely to experience mass protest. Furthermore, this effect is particularly pronounced for universities not owned by the government in dictatorships. Using pre-1900 universities as an instrument for present-day universities, we argue for a causal interpretation of the universities-protest relationship.

Bio: Sirianne Dahlum is a postdoctoral fellow at the Varieties of Democracy institute. She obtained her PhD from the University of Oslo in 2017, studying the relationship between education, mass mobilization and political instability. Her current work focuses on mass protest, authoritarian regimes, political violence and female empowerment.

20 June: Bernard Grofman (visiting scholar 18-24 June)

Title: Reasonable Choice Models of Voter Turnout

Abstract: Rational Choice models of voter turnout seemingly lead to empirically falsified expectations, such as most (or even all) voters being predicted not to vote. This has led some authors to reject rational choice models of turnout as completely useless. I show the usefulness of utility/incentive based approaches to turnout derived from what I have called a "reasonable choice" perspective that takes into account the key elements of rational choice models: P, B, C, and D. This perspective (a) recognizes that people generally have more than one reason for the things that they do, and that they sometimes do things for reasons that even they do not fully understand. (b) It acknowledges that those reasons almost always include factors that cannot be described in terms of consequences for specific outcomes such as who wins an election. (c) It looks at turnout in terms of what economists call "comparative statics," i.e. looks at how changes in the level of various explanatory variables affects changes in turnout, rather than trying to predict whether or not someone will vote, and thus does not seek to predict absolute levels of turnout but only relative levels of turnout. (d) It

recognizes that common sense approaches to explaining turnout variations, including ones often regarded as antithetical to rational choice, such as the Gerber, Green and Shachar (2003) concept of consuetude, may readily be given incentive and information based interpretations of the sort that might be offered by an economist. For example, a reasonable choice approach leads us to ask questions like "When is voting most likely to become a habit?" and (e) A reasonable approach to voter turnout generates the expectation that most policy interventions designed to raise turnout levels will have only very limited effects.

Bio: Bernard Grofman is Professor of Political Science and Jack W Peltason Endowed Chair of Democracy Studies at the University of California, Irvine, and former Director of the UCI Center for the Study of Democracy. His research deals with topics such as theories of representation (including minority voting rights and the comparative study of electoral rules and constitutional design), party competition, and behavioral social choice; with recent work also on political persuasion and satire. He is co-author of five books (four from Cambridge University Press and one from Yale University Press), and co-editor of 23 other books; with over 300 research articles and book chapters, including ten in the American Political Science Review. A member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences since 2001, he has been a scholar-in-residence at universities and research centers in the U.S., Canada, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Spain, and the UK, and he has an honorary Ph.D. from the University of Copenhagen. His work on redistricting has been cited in nearly a dozen U.S. Supreme Court cases over the course of the past four decades. In 2015, while serving as a Special Master for a federal district court, he drew new court-ordered congressional districts for the State of Virginia that were used in the 2016 elections. In 2017 he won the Charles Merriam award, given biennially by the American Political Science Association for lifetime achievement in research applications in the area of public policy.

All Lunch Seminars are taking place at the room Stora Skansen, Department of Political Science, University of Gothenburg. Address: Sprängkullsgatan 19, 40530, Gothenburg.

For any questions, please contact Natalia Stepanova at natalia.stepanova@v-dem.net

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