

Changing Teaching - Changing Learning

Participatory

Action

Research:

in

An Experiment

Inquiry

Michaelne Cox

Associate Professor

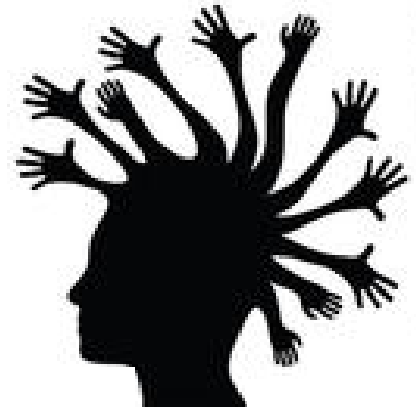
Dept of Politics and Government



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Road Map...

- ***What*** is Participatory **Action Research?**



- # The Experiment:
- ***Why*** PAR?
 - ***How*** to incorporate?
 - ***Who*** to engage?

What is PAR?

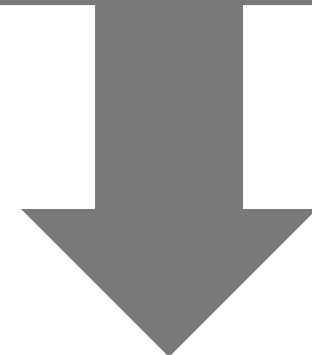
Multiple approaches but...

Research and Action
must be done
WITH people and
not *ON* or *FOR* people

Integration!

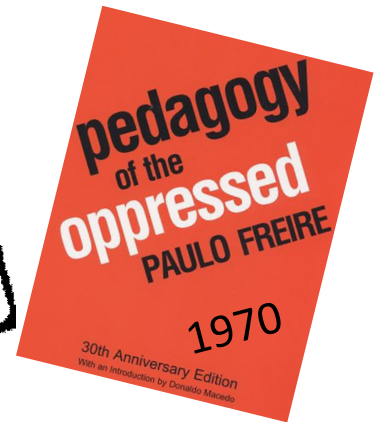
Connecting
academic interests
with education
and community
development

Pioneers in PAR
1940s – Present



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PAR is informed by Critical Pedagogy



Role of Education:

- allow learners to regain sense of **humanity**
- recognize pedagogy is a **political act**
- treat learners as **co-creators of knowledge**
vs. "banking" concept of student,
empty object for teacher to fill

What is PAR ? Some features...

- Researcher **removes biases**;
becomes an “instrument” or facilitator
- Can use **multiple forms of data**;
quant/qual; primary and secondary
- Findings typically **rich in description**

What is PAR ? Some more features...

- Stress on **process**, not product
- Ongoing **inductive analysis**
- Data analysis, findings, conclusions provide **meaning**
- Findings inform **practice**

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The Experiment

Why PAR?

- To connect theory and practice



Fall 2011

POS 496 Seminar

Introduction to Political Inquiry

*Emphasis on
"thinking, doing, and writing" in political science*

- **Overview**
Interdisciplinary nature of political studies:
historical development, contemporary trends
- **Introduction**
Different disciplinary empirical practices
- **Skill-building**
Critical thinking, oral and written expression
- **Professional development**
Thesis, conference, publication research/writing

Mondays 6-8:50 pm
Conference Room 417

Dr. Cox
mcox@ilstu.edu

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...Why PAR ?

- Address issues; improve situations;
make change
- Promote **professional growth**;
develop skills, knowledge base
- Promote **collaboration**; is democratic;
encourage “community”

How to Incorporate ?

- **Readings on Political Study**
 - history/current status of the discipline
 - inquiry and empirical approaches
 - cultural and ethical dimensions
- **Added application/case readings**
- **IRB training**

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Next...

**Gauged Student
Research Interest:**

*We want
to make a
difference!*



Broad topic: Civic engagement and democracy

Narrow topic: Community service/Volunteerism

Contacted Community Orgs: Red Cross, YWCA

*Q: How can orgs best **recruit** and **retain** volunteers?*

(What are incentives? What are barriers?)

PAR as Problem-Solving Who to Engage ?

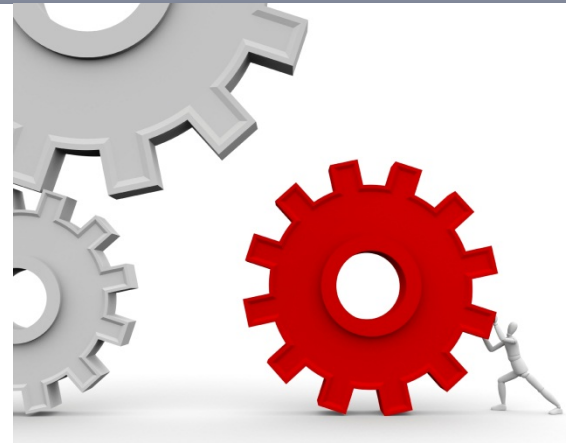


- Professor,
graduate student teams
- Community organizations
Red Cross, YWCA
- General public

Collaboration on:

- Thesis question
- Lit review
- Methodology
 - Interviews
 - Focus groups
 - Questionnaires
- Analyses
- Findings/Discussion

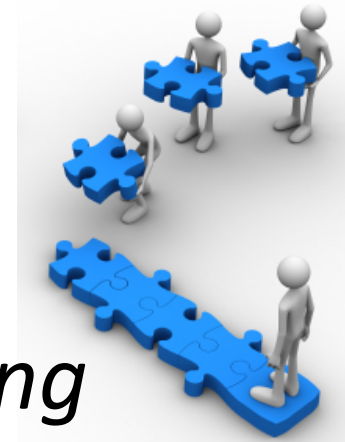
The Challenges of PAR



- Acknowledging political **bias**
- Making group/**collaboration** work
- Sharing **power**; encouraging participation
- **Teaching and learning** (practice and skills)
- Assessing **outcomes**

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The Results



Academic interests: *knowledge building*

+

Educational goals: *learning*

+

Community development: *capacity building*

= **Lessons Learned from PAR**