

JOSH LERNER
CURRICULUM VITAE

joshalerner(at)gmail(dot)com

EDUCATION

- PhD in Politics - The New School for Social Research, New York** 2005-2011
Exams: Comparative Politics (Honors), American Politics (Honors)
Dissertation: "Making Democracy Fun? Games as Tools for Democratic Participation" (Honors)
My dissertation explores if and how games can enhance democratic participation. I map how games have been used as tools for democracy, illustrate the political lessons of game design theory, and compare participatory processes using games in Argentina and Canada. I find that participation tends to be more attractive *and* effective when games and game design techniques are used.
Committee: David Plotke (chair), Stephen Duncombe, Carlos Forment, Tim Pachirat, Katie Salen
- MSc in Urban Planning - University of Toronto** 2002-2004
Thesis: "Building a Democratic City: How Participatory Budgeting Can Work in Toronto"
Client: City of Toronto, Community Engagement Unit
- BA in Sociology & Psychology - Wesleyan University, Middletown, CT** 1996-2000

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Adjunct Professor:

- The Politics of Urban Planning & Development (Fordham University, New York) Spring 2009
Elections & Parties (Fordham University) Fall 2008

Teaching Assistant:

- The Left: Old Left, New Left, Future Left (The New School) Fall 2008
Re-Imagining New York (The New School) Spring 2008
Social Thought I: Social Change (The New School) Fall 2006
Planning in Canada (University of Toronto) Summer 2004
World Regions and Our Ecological Footprint (University of Toronto) Spring 2004
Urban Geography (University of Toronto) Fall 2003

Educator:

- Brooklyn Center for the Urban Environment, New York** Spring 2006 - Spring 2008
Facilitated interactive workshops and walking tours on urban studies and urban planning for elementary, middle and high school students, and their parents.

English Instructor:

- Masters Idioms** - Rosario, Argentina Spring 2005
Berlitz Language School - Kosice, Slovakia Fall 2001 - Spring 2002

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Research Interests: participatory democracy, participatory planning, social movements, democratic learning, games, Latin America

Research Consultant - Toronto Community Housing *Spring 2009 - Summer 2010*

Designed and facilitated two-year participatory action research project with 25 public housing tenants, evaluating Toronto Community Housing's \$9 million participatory budgeting process.

Visiting Researcher - Educating Cities Latin America, Rosario, Argentina *Spring-Summer 2005*

Conducted field research on Rosario's participatory budgeting and planning programs. Observed 12 budgeting assemblies and interviewed 40 budget delegates, to assess their democratic and citizenship learning. Designed and facilitated research workshops for city staff.

Research Assistant - University of Toronto *Summer 2004*

Built newspaper archives on public space conflicts, compiled census data, and designed children's survey on youth citizenship (for Prof. Sue Ruddick). Reviewed planning theory literature on Foucault and Habermas (for Prof. Kanishka Goonewardena). Designed and facilitated participatory workshops linking ecological footprints and neoliberal globalization (for Prof. Judith Stamp).

Research Intern - Project for Public Spaces, New York *Summer 2003*

Researched and wrote profiles of leading scholars and practitioners advocating community-based planning of public spaces.

POLICY AND COMMUNITY WORK

Co-Director - The Participatory Budgeting Project, New York *2006-present*

Founded and managed technical assistance and advocacy organization focused on participatory budgeting. Delivered talks, workshops and consultation for local governments and organizations. Led design of first participatory budgeting process in the U.S., in which residents directly decided how to spend \$1.3 million budget of Chicago's 49th Ward.

Steering Committee Member - Planners Network (international progressive planning association) *2003-present*

Executive Committee Member - Learning Democracy by Doing Conference *2007-present*

Helped plan Toronto conference in 2008 and Rosario conference in 2010.

NGO Development Volunteer - US Peace Corps, Kosice, Slovakia *2000-2002*

Program Advisor - ETP Slovakia

Assisted Slovak NGO with management of UNDP rural development program for Roma communities, national Sustainable Cities program, and other regional development programs.

Co-Coordinator - University Leadership Development Program

Managed leadership training program for university students from Central and Eastern Europe.

Advisor - Romany Legal Defense Fund and Good Romany Fairy Kesaj Foundation

Assisted with development of advocacy projects for the Roma minority in Eastern Slovakia.

PUBLICATIONS**Peer-Reviewed Articles:**

Under Review: "Playing with Power: Participatory Planning Games in Rosario's Villas," *Latin American Perspectives*.

"What Games Can Teach Us About Democratic Participation: Participatory Urban Development in Rosario's Villas," in *Examining the Places We Live: Slums and Urban Poverty in the Developing World*, Washington DC: The World Bank, 2010.

"Learning Democracy through Participatory Budgeting: Who Learns What and So What?," in Elizabeth Pinnington & Daniel Schugurensky (eds.), *Citizenship Learning and Participatory Democracy Throughout the World*, Cambridge, MA: Cambridge Scholarly Press, 2009.

"Participatory Budgeting in North America: The Case of Guelph, Canada," (with Elizabeth Pinnington & Daniel Schugurensky) *Journal of Public Budgeting, Accounting & Financial Management*, 2/3(21), 2009.

"Could Participatory Budgeting Work in the United States?," (with Gianpaolo Baiocchi) *The Good Society*, 16(1), 2007.

"La Dimensión Educativa de la Democracia Local: El Caso del Presupuesto Participativo," (with Daniel Schugurensky) *Temas y Debates*, 13, 2007.

"Who learns what in participatory democracy? Participatory Budgeting in Rosario, Argentina," (with Daniel Schugurensky) in Ruud van der Veen, Danny Wildemeersch, Janet Youngblood & Victoria Marsick (eds.), *Democratic Practices as Learning Opportunities*, Rotterdam: Sense Publishers, 2007.

Magazine Articles and Policy Reports:

"Government can't solve budget battles? Let citizens do it," (with Daniel Altschuler) *The Christian Science Monitor*, April 5, 2011.

"Chicago's \$1.3 Million Experiment in Democracy," (With Megan Wade Antieau) *YES! Magazine*, April, 2010.

"Money Talks: How Participatory Budgeting Can Transform Politics," *Grassroots Economic Organizing*, 2(1), Summer 2008.

"Four Lessons for Progressives from Venezuela's Recent Referendum," *VenezuelaAnalysis.com*, December 6, 2007.

"Una Nación de Democracia Participativa? Los Consejos Comunales y el Sistema Nacional de Planificación en Venezuela," (with Juan Carlos Rodríguez) *Revista SIC*, 693, April 2007.

"Communal Councils in Venezuela: Can 200 families revolutionize democracy?" *Z Magazine*, 20(3), March 2007.

"Participatory Budgeting: A New Tool for Democratic Decision-Making," (with Jez Hall) *Transformation*, 5, Winter 2007.

"Let the People Decide: Transformative Community Development through Participatory Budgeting in Canada," *Shelterforce*, 146, Summer 2006.

"Why the World Social Forum Needs to Be Less Like Neoliberalism," *Toward Freedom*, January 18, 2006

"Participatory Budgeting in Canada: Democratic Innovations in Strategic Spaces," (with Estair Van Wagner) The Transnational Institute, 2006.

"Planning Open Space: The World Social Forum and Neoliberalism," *Progressive Planning*, 163, Spring 2005.

"Up, Down, Inside, Outside: (New) Directions for Progressive Planning in the U.S.," *Progressive Planning*, 162, Winter 2005.

"Beyond Civil Society: Public Engagement Alternatives for Canadian Trade Policy," Canadian Institute for Environmental Law and Policy, 2003.

AWARDS

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|---|------------|
| 6 under 36 Community Development Leader - <i>Shelterforce</i> Magazine | 2011 |
| Dissertation Fellowship - The New School | 2010 |
| Finalist in paper competition "Slums & Urban Poverty in the Developing World" - USAID | 2010 |
| Boren Fellowship - National Security Education Program | 2009 |
| Janey Research Fellowship - The New School, for research in Argentina | 2008 |
| Katznelson Scholarship - The New School | 2007 |
| Gellert Fund Scholarship - The New School | 2006 |
| Janey Research Fellowship - The New School, for research in Venezuela | 2006 |
| Alan Tonks Planning Scholarship - University of Toronto | 2004 |
| University of Toronto Fellowship | 2003, 2004 |

SELECT PRESENTATIONS

"From Budget Cuts to a People's Budget?," Global Metropolitan Studies Initiative talk, University of California Berkeley, April 27, 2011

"Participatory Budgeting in the US," Lectures in Planning Series, Columbia University, February 15, 2011.

"Participatory Budgeting: A New Tool for Democratic Decision-Making," National League of Cities Congress, Denver, December 2, 2010.

"Introduction to Participatory Budgeting," *United States Social Forum*, Detroit, June 25, 2010.

"Making Democracy Fun? Games as Tools for Community Participation," *Deepening Democracy as a Way of Life* conference, Rosario, Argentina, May 13, 2010.

"What Games Can Teach Us about Community Participation: Participatory Urban Development in Rosario's Villas," *The Places We Live: Slums & Urban Poverty in the Developing World*, USAID policy seminar, Washington DC, April 30, 2010.

"Can Participatory Budgeting Work in the U.S.?" *The New York State Political Science Association* conference, New York, April 25, 2009.

"Participatory Budgeting: Public Control over Public Money," *The City from Below* conference, Baltimore, March 29, 2009.

"Participatory Budgets: From Venezuela to the U.S.," *Forum on the Solidarity Economy*, Amherst, MA, March 21, 2009.

- "Using Games for Democratic Decision-Making," *Learning Democracy by Doing: Alternative Practices in Citizenship Learning and Participatory Democracy*, University of Toronto, October 17, 2008.
- "Playing with Power: Empowered Political Games in Participatory Democratic Processes," *The American Association of Geographers Annual Meeting*, Boston, April 16, 2008.
- "Communal Councils in Venezuela: Nationalizing Participatory Planning," Planners Network Conference: *Race, Class and Community Recovery: From the Neighborhood to the Nation and Beyond*, New Orleans, June 2, 2007.
- "Presupuestos Participativos: Una Herramienta para la Gestión Democrática," *El IVU y el Desarrollo Municipal: 1era Conferencia sobre las Oportunidades que brinda el IVU*, Sociedad Puertorriqueña de Planificación (Puerto Rican Planning Society), San Juan, Puerto Rico, May 24, 2007.
- "Presupuestos Participativos en Norteamérica: Extensiones horizontales y submunicipales," *International Conference on Participatory Budgeting*, Málaga, Spain, March 30, 2007.
- "Co-ops and Participatory Democracy," *2nd National Conference of Democratic Workplaces*, New York City, October 13, 2006.
- "Communal Councils in Venezuela: Participatory Democracy at the National Level?," *Local Democracy Convention*, Madison, Wisconsin, October 1, 2006.
- "Participatory Budgeting with Youth," Planners Network Conference: *Tending the Garden: From Grassroots to Green Roofs*, Chicago, June 10, 2006.
- "Who Learns What in Participatory Democracy?" *Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences*, York University, Toronto, May 30, 2006.
- "Learning citizenship and democracy through participatory budgeting: The case of Rosario, Argentina," (with Daniel Schugurensky) *Democratic Practices as Learning Opportunities: Comparing International Experiences & Understandings*, Teachers College/Columbia University, New York, November 4, 2005.
- "Participatory Budgeting in Canada," *The Alternatives Forum: From Local Action to Global Citizenship*, Montreal, September 10, 2005.

LANGUAGES

Spanish: Advanced
Portuguese: Advanced written understanding
Slovak: Intermediate
Czech: Intermediate written understanding