



CRITICAL STUDIES

in

DEMOCRACY

&

POLITICAL LITERACY

PAUL R. CARR, SERIES EDITOR

Why do so few people vote? What is political engagement? How does education intersect with democracy and political literacy? What can be learned from interdisciplinary studies on democracy? How do we cultivate political literacy? What is the relevance of elections in light of war, poverty, discrimination, social inequalities, etc.? What are the alternatives to the traditional electoral, representative, party-politics models that have characterized our societies? Is the mainstream media holding government to account, disseminating propaganda, or fuelling the need to pacify the population? How do international systems, approaches, and realities related to democracy compare, and what can we learn from others? These are some of the questions addressed through this book series.

Seeking to fill an important gap in the literature, the series takes on the theme of democracy in a multi-/inter-disciplinary, comprehensive, and critical way. Some of the leading research in the field indicates that the scope, depth, and quality of educational materials available is limited, and can lead to a relatively apolitical, non-critical understanding and assessment of what democracy is, and what it should be. Some books have democracy in the title but do not make it the focus, and often books that address more directly, for example, multiculturalism, media studies, or school reform may delve into the area of democracy without fully deconstructing what it is, how it functions, how people can shape and intersect with it, and how it is used (or misused) to distort power relations, which is at the base of teaching, learning, and action. The need for critical analyses, perspectives, and resources offering a broader range of understanding of the multiple, nuanced, and complex realities of democracy is, therefore, a fundamental motivation behind this book series..

Critical Studies in Democracy and Political Literacy seeks authors, voices, and perspectives to more concisely and critically explore the meaning and essence of democracy within contemporary realities, either from theoretical, conceptual, and/or empirical perspectives. The overlapping and interdisciplinary nature of the study of democracy bleeds naturally into the areas of media studies, sociology, political science, peace studies, multiculturalism, feminist studies, and cultural studies, all of which have a natural and inextricable relationship to and within education. With democracy as its focus, the series presents a broad range of materials specifically tailored to teacher education and scholars and students within the education field as well as those in related fields.

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Paul Carr, Series Editor  
Lakehead University (Orillia)  
prcarr@gmail.com

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<p><b>A NEW BOOK SERIES</b> <b>COUNTER-HEGEMONIC DEMOCRACY AND SOCIAL CHANGE</b></p>
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**BOOK SERIES EDITOR**

Paul R. Carr

Associate Professor

Departments of Sociology and Interdisciplinary Studies

Lakehead University (Orillia)

CANADA

[prcarr@gmail.com](mailto:prcarr@gmail.com)

**DESCRIPTION**

The word “democracy” is increasingly attached to an array of concepts, themes and political and social realities and visions, yet there are currently a number of groups, movements, interests and actors around the world who are contesting the normative, hegemonic meaning and manifestation of formal democracy. Many people do not see their interests served by electoral, representative democracy, that which concerns political parties, voting and tightly controlled electoral processes. Rather, there is visible concern in many quarters with not only the formal process of how elections are shaped and governments are formed but, also, with the political, economic, cultural, social and militaristic outcomes of such institutionalized configurations. There is widespread cynicism, decreasing voter participation, the general sentiment of disenfranchisement and marginalization, and increasing levels of resistance and mobilization in the form of alternatives to the formal “democratic” model, which could be characterized as “counter-hegemonic democracy”. Counter-hegemonic democracy concerns lived realities inside of as well as outside of the formal political vacuum, touching on how people seek to build a more resilient, deeper, thicker, more critically engaged and meaningful democracy. Some examples could be the mass anti-war, pro-environment, Occupy, World Social Forum and other social movements that have sought to remove some governments and make others more accountable, or to make the world bodies that frame international politics more aligned with the

needs of the masses that do not control the levers of power. There are also many other movements that start and cultivate causes through social media, or which seek some form of change at the local level. While often omitted from the mainstream media, many people are not perturbed from seeking social and political change outside of the formal strictures and structures of power, often influencing them as well as carving out terrain for those not considered within the strictly defined and formalized elite decisionmaking circles. This book series connects with this notion of counter-hegemonic democracy, and seeks out debates, ideas, concerns, examples and proposals that extend and construct knowledge within an inter- and multi-disciplinary vantage-point, including sociology, political science, political economy, economics, education, cultural studies and other connected areas. The books in this series will speak to educators, researchers, scholars, and students interested in democracy, political sociology, multicultural education, social movements, decolonization, media studies and peace studies as well as other connected areas.

**KEYWORDS:** counter-hegemonic, democracy, participatory democracy, democratic alternatives, social justice, social movements, political literacy, peace, critical pedagogy, media studies, transformative education

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**FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO SUBMIT A PROPOSAL,** please contact Paul R. Carr directly. The manuscript proposal should include the following:

1. Name, email, telephone number and mailing address
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4. Proposed title
5. A 300-word description of the focus of the proposed manuscript
6. A draft table of contents
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Final manuscripts will be in the area of 100,000 words, and should be based largely on original and previously unpublished work.