



UvA-DARE (Digital Academic Repository)

Democratic Deepening in Third Wave Democracies: Experiments with Participation in Mexico City

Harbers, I.

DOI

[10.1111/j.1467-9248.2007.00644.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9248.2007.00644.x)

Publication date

2007

Document Version

Final published version

Published in

Political Studies

[Link to publication](#)

Citation for published version (APA):

Harbers, I. (2007). Democratic Deepening in Third Wave Democracies: Experiments with Participation in Mexico City. *Political Studies*, 55(1), 38-58. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9248.2007.00644.x>

General rights

It is not permitted to download or to forward/distribute the text or part of it without the consent of the author(s) and/or copyright holder(s), other than for strictly personal, individual use, unless the work is under an open content license (like Creative Commons).

Disclaimer/Complaints regulations

If you believe that digital publication of certain material infringes any of your rights or (privacy) interests, please let the Library know, stating your reasons. In case of a legitimate complaint, the Library will make the material inaccessible and/or remove it from the website. Please Ask the Library: <https://uba.uva.nl/en/contact>, or a letter to: Library of the University of Amsterdam, Secretariat, Singel 425, 1012 WP Amsterdam, The Netherlands. You will be contacted as soon as possible.

UvA-DARE is a service provided by the library of the University of Amsterdam (<https://dare.uva.nl>)

Democratic Deepening in Third Wave Democracies: Experiments with Participation in Mexico City

Imke Harbers

Leiden University

After the initial transition to democratic rule the question of how to improve the quality of democracy has become the key challenge facing Third Wave democracies. In the debate about the promotion of more responsive government, institutional reforms to increase direct participation of citizens in policy-making have been put on the agenda. The Federal District of Mexico City constitutes a particularly intriguing case in this debate. This article explores how political participation developed in Mexico City between 1997 and 2003 and what effects this has had on democratic deepening. It develops an ideal-type conceptual framework of citizen participation that outlines the conditions under which participation contributes to democratic deepening. Overall, the case of Mexico City highlights how the promotion of participation can fail to make the aspired contribution to democratic deepening and might even have negative effects on the quality of democracy.

When the Third Wave of democratization (Huntington, 1991) reached Latin America in the late 1970s many of the region's authoritarian regimes underwent a transition to democracy. Today, Latin America is the first region in the developing world to be governed almost wholly by democratically chosen leaders (United Nations Development Programme, 2004). Nevertheless, democracy on the continent is still experiencing a profound crisis of confidence. In the early years of the Third Wave, scholars were mainly concerned with the likelihood of democratic breakdown. Attention shifted to the quality of democracy as hybrid regimes – in which authoritarian practices continued to exist within formally democratic systems – emerged in country after country. The key challenges facing Third Wave democracies currently are how to improve the quality of democracy and how to increase democratic performance.

Mexico City constitutes an intriguing case in this debate. Under the Mexican authoritarian regime the political arrangement for the Federal District was particularly exclusionary, so the need for democratic change was great. Since 1997 the city has been governed by the Partido de la Revolución Democrática (PRD), a left-leaning reformist party, which has emphasized the importance of participation and engaged in institutional reforms to create spaces for direct citizen involvement. The deepening of democracy and the restructuring of state–society relations through increased participation have featured prominently in the political discourse of the city. As Mexico City is the political center of the country,



political developments in the capital radiate beyond the city itself and affect the Mexican political system as a whole. According to a Mexican saying, whatever happens in Mexico happens in the Federal District. The mayors of Mexico City have become important national political figures and former mayor López Obrador was a candidate in the 2006 presidential elections.

This article explores how participation developed in the Federal District of Mexico City between 1997 and 2003 and what effects this has had on democratic deepening. To analyze participation, the article develops an ideal-type conceptual framework of citizen participation. The framework aims to highlight the conditions under which the promotion of participation contributes to democratic deepening. Based on data gathered during field research the article shows that participation in the Federal District falls short of the ideal-type and has resulted in neo-populist outcomes.¹ Overall, the case of Mexico City highlights how the promotion of participation can fail to make the aspired contribution to democratic deepening and might even have negative effects on the quality of democracy.

From Consolidation to Democratic Deepening and Citizenship

Much of the recent literature on Latin American democracies suggests that the process of democratization is partial. Even now, although considerable time has passed since the breakdown of the authoritarian regimes the new democracies do not meet the expectations of the transition period. There is the feeling that democracy in Latin America is ‘incomplete’.

In the early years of the Third Wave, scholars were mainly concerned about the consolidation of democracy, i.e. the likelihood of democratic breakdown (see Diamond *et al.*, 1997; Linz and Stepan, 1996; Mainwaring *et al.*, 1992). Democracy was generally defined in terms of Dahl’s concept of polyarchy and the main focus of study was the institutional attributes of the regime (see O’Donnell, 1993; 1996). Democratic consolidation, according to Mark Gasiorowski and Mark Power (1998, p. 743), refers to ‘the process by which a newly established democratic regime becomes sufficiently durable that democratic breakdown – a return to non-democratic rule – is no longer likely’. Juan Linz (1990, p. 156) defines consolidation not as a process but rather a state of affairs ‘in which none of the major political actors, parties, or organized interests, forces, or institutions consider that there is any alternative to democratic processes to gain power ... democracy must be seen as the “only game in town”’.

Central to both Linz’s as well as Gasiorowski and Power’s definition of consolidation is the lack of alternatives to democracy. Their analysis is based on the premise that the two possible paths are either regression to autocracy or progression to democracy. As the Third Wave continued, however, it became clear that instead of outright democratic breakdown the region saw the emergence of hybrid regimes, containing democratic as well as autocratic elements.

Kurt Weyland (1996; 1999; 2003) and Kenneth Roberts (1995) introduced the concept of neo-populism to analyze these hybrid regimes in Latin America (see also Demmers *et al.*, 2001). Classical populism had been associated with the activist state characteristic of import substitution industrialization (ISI). Weyland and Roberts argued that populism had not disappeared with the abandonment of ISI. They drew attention to underlying affinities between neoliberalism and populism as both 'share an anti-status-quo orientation, an anti-elite discourse, and a transformatory stance' (Weyland, 2003, p. 1098). Weyland stripped the concept of populism of its socio-economic components and defined it 'as a political strategy through which a personalistic leader seeks or exercises government power based on direct, unmediated, uninstitutionalized support from large numbers of mostly unorganized followers' (2003, p. 1097). Roberts (1995) pointed out that under neoliberalism unpopular macro-level economic policies are often supplemented by highly visible micro-level programs which provide material benefits to specifically targeted groups. Displaying these social programs as a personal initiative of the politician for 'his people' underscores the unmediated relationship between the leader and the masses. Neo-populist politicians interact with the citizens mostly through the mass media. They bypass intermediary institutions and rely heavily on opinion polls and plebiscites. Citizens do not share a subjective experience of participation and become 'passive consumers' rather than 'active participants' (Weyland, 2003, pp. 1103–5). Mechanisms of horizontal accountability and constitutional checks and balances are limited as a result of neo-populist political practices. As Roberts (1995, p. 113) points out, neo-populism exploits and exacerbates the deinstitutionalization of political representation.

A new body of literature emerged within this context and stressed the need to deepen democracy. Drawing on earlier work in democratic theory that had emphasized the centrality of participation for the quality of democracy (Barber, 1984; Macpherson, 1977; Pateman, 1970), the deepening democracy literature aimed to provide a normative framework rather than providing a mere analytical tool. The term 'deepening' thus indicates a move away from regarding democracy primarily as a regime category. Rather than classifying a country as either democratic or non-democratic, the deepening democracy literature draws attention to variations within democracies and to democratic quality.

Deepening democracy calls for the restructuring of state–society relations. One of its central elements is the emphasis on the promotion of democratic values such as participation and deliberation. Democratic deepening requires opening the political system to all citizens (Adams, 2003, p. 133). Because even under formally democratic Latin American regimes access to the political system has been denied to large sections of society, the creation of more inclusive political-institutional arrangements is necessary (Alvarez, 1993, p. 193).

The concept of citizenship is often used to draw attention to the fact that the persistence of inequality in society poses a substantial challenge for the realization

of rights, even in formally democratic regimes (see Grugel, 2002; Jelin and Hershberg, 1996). Poverty, for example, often means exclusion from meaningful participation in shaping society and state. The discourse of citizenship underscores the right of poor people to be recognized as bearers of political, social and cultural rights (Dagnino, 2003; Taylor, 2004). In this regard, proponents of deepening democracy stress the importance of transforming the discourse about urban services from the perception of service provision as a political favor into one of services as citizen rights (e.g. Alvarez, 1993, p. 196). The term 'citizen participation' is derived from this conception of citizenship and refers to the ability of poor people to participate in politics as full citizens, rather than as clients.

While proponents of deepening democracy criticize polyarchy as insufficient, they share with it an emphasis on institutionalized processes. Much of the deepening democracy literature focuses on institutional design. Archon Fung and Erik Olin Wright (2003, p. 4) argue that 'the problem has more to do with the specific design of our institutions than with the tasks they face as such'. Participatory institutions should facilitate and structure the active involvement of large numbers of citizens in policy-making. Getting the institutions of participation right is therefore a central concern.

Most arguments about the potential of participatory institutions are based on case studies. Sonia Alvarez (1993), for example, develops her conception of deepening democracy based on the Popular Democratic Municipal Administrations of the Brazilian Workers' Party (PT). Hilary Wainwright (2003) examines the participatory budget process in Porto Alegre, Brazil, as well as other democratic experiments in East Manchester, Luton and Newcastle. Fung and Wright (2003) draw on experiences in Porto Alegre, Kerala and Chicago. Thus, these authors aim to draw lessons from successful cases of participatory institution building.

Citizen Participation and Democratic Deepening: A Conceptual Framework

In order to contribute to the deepening of democracy, participation must meet certain criteria. On the basis of the work on deepening democracy, this article develops an ideal-type conceptual framework of citizen participation. The framework aims to specify which type of participation contributes to democratic deepening. Five dimensions of citizen participation can be derived from the literature (see Table 1).

The first dimension refers to the moment of participation in the policy process. Fung and Wright distinguish between perpetual participation and brief democratic moments in electoral competitions, in which elites mobilize participation for specific outcomes. They argue that 'most democratic processes are front-loaded in the sense that popular participation focuses on deciding a policy

Table 1: Five Dimensions of Citizen Participation

1. Moment of participation in the policy process	Perpetual participation throughout the policy process, including monitoring of implementation
2. Institutional framework	Participation structured through deliberative institutionalized processes; emphasis on the involvement of organized civil society as intermediary
3. Content of issues and decisions	Practical orientation of participation toward problem solving
4. Formation of opinions	Opinion developed through face-to-face deliberation
5. Origin of legitimacy	Legitimacy derived from process of deliberation; emphasis on following deliberative procedures

question (as in a referendum) or selecting a candidate (as in an election) rather than on monitoring implementation of the decision or the platform' (Fung and Wright, 2003, p. 31). Democratic deepening requires a higher level of participation over time and throughout the policy process.

Secondly, to ensure that participation can be sustained over time processes need to be institutionalized. Citizens involved in these processes should share a certain understanding of values and norms (March and Olsen, 1989). Institutionalization in this context is understood broadly as a regularized pattern of interactions between actors (see O'Donnell, 1994; 1996). While the participatory budget process in Porto Alegre, for example, is not formally codified, it is nevertheless institutionalized. Institutionalized processes should aim to involve not only individual citizens, but award an active role to organized civil society (Wampler and Avritzer, 2004), which mediates interactions between citizens and the institutions of participation.

Thirdly, citizen participation should have a concrete orientation towards problem solving (Fung and Wright, 2003). Hence, most of the democratic experiments described in the literature are set at the local or neighborhood level. This preference for local institutions is explained by the fact that they are 'closer to home' and therefore particularly well suited to get citizens involved. Local institutions are more permeable and more vulnerable to citizen scrutiny than national institutions (Alvarez, 1993, p. 213). Citizens should be close to the point of action and therefore well placed to monitor implementation of agreements.

Fourthly, opinions should be generated through deliberation. Meeting fellow citizens in a face-to-face setting and listening to their positions and concerns should be a key component of the democratic experience. During deliberative processes reasoned arguments should be presented in order to persuade fellow

citizens. Citizens should participate as equals in these processes, rather than as clients, and should contribute to the shaping and development of democratic practices (Avritzer, 2002; Fung and Wright, 2003).

Finally, legitimacy should be derived from this process of deliberation. Participation is a democratic experience and the best solutions emerge only when all citizens are able to share their knowledge. Because citizens have the opportunity to participate in decisions and are able to develop an understanding of opponents' views, policies generated by deliberation are more legitimate than those made in a top-down manner and encounter less opposition during implementation (Fung and Wright, 2003).

This framework of citizen participation embodies a particular conception of democracy that not all scholars will agree with. The concept of deliberation, for example, has sparked critical debate. While many authors associated with the literature on deepening democracy have emphasized its democratizing potential, others have pointed to the undemocratic elements of deliberation (e.g. Przeworski, 1998; Stokes, 1998). Given this conception of democracy, however, the framework provides a useful tool as the five dimensions specify the conditions under which participation contributes to democratic deepening. In the following sections the framework will be applied to the case of Mexico City.

Citizen Participation in Mexico City between 1997 and 2003

During the 1960s and 1970s, while the majority of Latin American countries experienced military takeover, Mexico maintained a remarkably stable civilian regime. Nevertheless, the country was generally not considered a democracy until the late 1990s. Through a combination of clientelism, co-optation, electoral fraud and repression, the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI) managed to maintain a firm grip on power, making Mexico one of the most enduring authoritarian regimes in the region.

One of the PRI's defining characteristics was its ability to undermine, accommodate and co-opt social movements in order to prevent mobilized citizens from challenging the party. Fear of co-optation has led many social movements to be distrustful of political parties and avoid alliances, even with parties of the opposition (Davis, 1997, p. 178; Gilbert and Gugler, 1992, p. 185; Ward, 1990, p. 91). During the PRI regime almost all access to the political system was channeled through party-affiliated corporatist organizations. Under these conditions most participation was either regime-supportive or comprised the petitioning and contacting of public officials to influence the allocation of public goods (Cornelius and Craig, 1991). In the case of regime-supportive actions, many citizens participated because they either expected specific material pay-offs or feared that failure to participate would result in personal economic costs. As the PRI saw widespread abstention as a serious danger for regime legitimacy, pressure on

citizens to turn out at elections was high. Nevertheless, the PRI was unable to reverse the developing long-term trend toward lower political participation. This decline was particularly pronounced in the Federal District of Mexico City.

Within the Mexican authoritarian system the political arrangement for the Federal District was particularly exclusionary. Andrew Nickson (1995, p. 199) concluded in his study on local government in Latin America that 'few major cities in the world have less local level democracy than Mexico City'. There were no elections for local authorities, and citizens had no means of holding local officials accountable. Between 1928 and 1997 the city was governed by a *regente*, an appointed official who was directly responsible to the president. This lack of democracy is all the more noteworthy if one considers the significance of the city for the country. Eleven percent of the national electorate lives in the Federal District, even though the capital only occupies 0.1 percent of the surface of the country (Gómez Tagle and Valdés Vega, 2000). It is not only the political but also the economic and cultural capital of Mexico.

Since the 1960s the electorate of the Federal District (*Distrito Federal* [DF]) has demonstrated increased discontent with this political arrangement and the PRI experienced a persistent decline of voter support in the Federal District (Bauer de la Isla and Wirth, 2001; Ward, 1990). The PRI government's inability to respond adequately to the catastrophic earthquake of 1985 undermined its legitimacy even further. Civil society groups, which had formed in the aftermath of the earthquake to organize the rescue of family and friends, mobilized and exerted extensive pressure on the government to open up the city's political institutions. They joined forces with opposition parties in challenging the PRI on this issue. Over the following decade the PRI would try to avert democratization of the DF through a variety of cosmetic reforms. Eventually, however, the PRI was forced to give in and on 17 July 1997 local elections were held.

In these first local elections the Partido de la Revolución Democrática (PRD), a party that had been closely associated with the movement for democratization of the Federal District and that had ties to several civil society groups that had emerged after the earthquake, achieved a landslide victory. Not only was its candidate, Cuauthémoc Cárdenas, elected mayor (*jefe de gobierno*), tallying nearly twice as many votes as the runner-up PRI candidates, but with 38 out of 66 seats, the PRD also held an absolute majority in the new legislative assembly (*Asamblea Legislativa del Distrito Federal* [ALDF]).

Since 1997 the PRD has been the strongest political actor in the Federal District. The fact that the party presented itself as committed to promoting participation is considered one of the most important reasons for its success (Davis and Alvarado, 2004, p. 136). A combination of factors made the promotion of participation beneficial for the PRD. More than seven decades of PRI rule had led to a crisis of intermediary institutions. Survey data indicate that confidence in these institutions, especially in political parties, was low. In 2001 81 percent of

Mexicans believed that politicians in general were either corrupt or very corrupt (*Reforma*, 29 August 2002). So instead of just asserting that its rule would be more transparent, the PRD attacked the system of intermediation itself and promised citizens direct access to policy-making.

Democratization, in the PRD discourse, now referred to the complete reshaping of state–society relations through the promotion of direct participation of citizens in decision and policy-making. It thus constituted a break with the corporatist past. Through the emphasis on ‘authentic’ participation, i.e. participation without corporatist mechanisms of distortion and co-optation, the PRD aimed to set itself apart from the PRI. The emphasis on participation has become the central building block of the PRD’s party identity (Tejera Gaona, 2001). Nevertheless, the meaning of participation was intensely contested within the party, as was the road-map for realizing the party’s participatory project. The party had emerged from a broad alliance of former PRistas, opposition groups and social movement activists. While the representatives of social movements demanded radical institutional reforms to promote grass roots democracy, other groups within the party favored a more cautious approach to participation. The outcome of this intra-party struggle was the new Citizen Participation Law (*Ley de Participación Ciudadana* [LPC]), which the ALDF adopted on 26 November 1998, about one year after the new government had taken office.

Formalized Participation

With the introduction of the LPC participation came to be structured according to a formula that combined neighborhood representation with mechanisms of direct democracy. The main unit of territorial representation became the neighborhood (*colonia*). For the purpose of the first elections in 1999 the Federal District was divided into 1,352 such neighborhoods, each with approximately 5,000 registered voters.

Neighborhood committees, the first pillar of formalized participation, are collegial bodies that consist of one coordinator and between six and fourteen members, depending on the number of registered voters in the district. The primary purpose of these committees is to serve as a link between residents and authorities. On the one hand, their task is to aggregate, articulate and represent the interests of neighbors *vis-à-vis* district authorities.² On the other hand, they have to disseminate information about government activities, programs and public works that concern the neighborhood and its residents. In other words, they were supposed to partially take over the role of intermediary institution classically played by political parties at the local level.

Despite the PRD’s claims about the importance of participation, however, the legal framework of the neighborhood committees was weakly developed and failed to provide the committees with adequate authority and resources. Neither

the city government nor the district authorities are obliged to involve committees in decision-making or even consult them. The committees do not have a budget and neither coordinators nor members receive any kind of remuneration for their work.

The first elections for the neighborhood committees were held on 4 July 1999. The organization of the elections was in the hands of the newly established Electoral Institute of the Federal District (*Instituto Electoral del Distrito Federal* [IEDF]), an independent public agency created to ensure the integrity of electoral processes in a country with a legacy of electoral fraud. Organizing these elections was a tremendous challenge for the young IEDF. There were more than 40,000 candidates distributed over about 3,800 electoral platforms (*planillas*) to fill 14,314 posts in 1,352 electoral districts.³ In neighborhoods with several competing platforms, the number of seats each platform received on the committee was determined according to the principle of proportional representation. In the 190 electoral districts with only one registered platform, this platform needed only one vote to win.

The PRD administration had continuously emphasized the significance of the new Citizen Participation Law in democratizing the Federal District, and the neighborhood election was considered its first acid test. The results of the election, however, were disappointing. One of the defining features was the lack of popular interest in the process. The overwhelming majority of the population abstained from voting. Only 9.5 percent of registered voters had participated, 10 percent of whom had returned invalid ballots (Carothers Flores, 1999, p. 100). Compared to the 1997 elections for the ALDF and *jefe de gobierno* the turnout rate in the neighborhood elections signifies a drop of 86 percent.

As the neighborhood committees were supposed to create a space for 'authentic' participation, political parties had been banned from presenting platforms.⁴ This ban on the involvement of parties was substantiated by the regulations for the electoral campaign (Martínez Espinoza, 2001, p. 120). Neither colors nor names were permitted to distinguish platforms. The only means of identification allowed was a number, which referred to the order in which the different platforms registered. As platforms did not receive public funding for the campaign, the cost was supposed to be borne entirely by the platforms and their sympathizers.

Even though the major parties – PRD, PRI and Partido Acción Nacional (PAN) – had initially supported the exclusion of parties, when election time came they devoted considerable energy to circumventing this ban. Most platforms were affiliated with political parties. The PRI, with its strong territorial organization, succeeded in presenting platforms in about 90 percent, the PRD in 80 percent and the PAN in 30 percent of all electoral districts (*La Jornada*, 2 July 1999). Political parties not only mobilized their members to form platforms, they were also involved in coordinating and organizing the campaigns.

For the voters the formal exclusion of political parties meant that the cost of voting was high because citizens had lost party labels as short cuts to electoral decisions. In neighborhood elections, voters might sometimes have been able to infer party identities of platforms because they knew about the previous political involvement of candidates. In most cases, however, voting for a nameless, colorless platform probably did not seem very appealing. Further, the unofficial involvement of political parties discredited the process in the eyes of many citizens, especially since most voters were unable to detect the party identities of all registered platforms, but, through media coverage were nevertheless aware that political parties were participating clandestinely.

The weak legal framework and the difficult circumstances of the elections meant that the neighborhood committees got off to a difficult start. The vast majority of the committees were unable to overcome the legitimacy crisis that overshadowed their creation. In 2003 the Instituto de Investigaciones Sociales (IIS) conducted a large-scale survey among members and coordinators of about 600 neighborhood committees.⁵ During the data collection the interviewers encountered a substantial number of '*comités fantasmas*', i.e. committees that apparently did not exist any more or left no trace of ever having existed. The committees that survived are struggling with declining membership. Upon formation, the average number of committee members was eleven. Three years later only about half of the initial committee members are still active. Committees have generally been unable to mobilize their neighbors or to establish working relationships with other organized groups. The overwhelming majority of respondents (83 percent) indicate that their committee has never worked together with other organizations in the community.

In the absence of resources and support from the authorities, most committees led an isolated existence. They were unable to link up with organizations in their neighborhood, either with residents or with the authorities. The first pillar of the Law of Citizen Participation – neighborhood representation – was therefore unable to live up to expectations. In December 2001 the ALDF passed an amendment to the LPC to suspend the elections for the neighborhood committees, scheduled for July 2002, until further notice.

In addition to the neighborhood committees, the LPC established mechanisms of direct democracy such as plebiscites and referenda as the second pillar of participation. These mechanisms, however, so far appear to share the somber fate of the neighborhood committees. Only one of the provisions for direct democracy in the LPC has been applied. In July 2002 *jefe de gobierno* López Obrador called a plebiscite on a controversial infrastructure project to extend the city highways known as 'the second floors'. According to the LPC the winning option has to receive the valid votes of at least one third of all registered voters in order for a plebiscite to be binding. With only 6.6 percent turnout, however, not even both options combined managed to approach the required mark (Instituto Electoral del Distrito Federal, 2003). As with the neighborhood elections, the abstention

rate was above 90 percent. The process, which had consumed a considerable amount of public resources, was widely regarded as a failure.

The Shift Toward Informal Participation after 2000

The PRD had promised to democratize the Federal District by promoting participation. The main contribution to this project during the Cárdenas administration had been the Citizen Participation Law (LPC) of 1998, which constituted the basis for formalized participation. When Cárdenas's successor Andrés Manuel López Obrador, also of the PRD, took office in 2000, the popular disenchantment with the LPC had become apparent.⁶ Instead of reinvigorating the neighborhood committees, however, López Obrador sought to advance a new kind of participatory democracy. In this, he relied heavily on two informal mechanisms of citizen participation: consultations by telephone (*consultas telefónicas*) and neighborhood assemblies (*asambleas vecinales*). These two mechanisms will be discussed below.

Between his inauguration in 2000 and December 2003 López Obrador carried out four consultations by telephone. During these consultations registered voters were invited to vote either for or against a certain policy proposal by calling a free phone hotline over a two-day period. López Obrador promoted the consultations as an innovative new way of participation that required only a minimal amount of citizens' time.⁷ Moreover, consultations were supposed to make participatory democracy possible at a low cost. A closer examination of these consultations, however, casts doubt on their democratizing potential.

Firstly, despite López Obrador's claims that he aimed to transfer power to the people, the authority to set the agenda for consultations rested solely with him. He identified the issues on which citizens were consulted and determined the options available. In October 2002, in response to sustained criticism of the lack of a legal framework for the consultations, López Obrador created the Special Program for Public Consultations by Telephone (*Programa Especial de Consultas Públicas vía Telefónica*). This special program was set up without the involvement of the legislative assembly, however. López Obrador was the sole convener and organizer of the consultations. The IEDF, which by law is entrusted with the organization and verification of all electoral processes, was excluded. This arrangement – even if it has been clean so far – provokes suspicions about manipulation, either through outright fraud or through a bias in the question.

Secondly, overall turnout for the consultation was low. Participation ranged between less than 1 and about 10 percent of the electorate (see Table 2). López Obrador dismisses all concerns about this relatively low level of participation. He argues that – regardless of the number of participants – the decision was taken by more than one person and is therefore by definition superior.

Thirdly, concerns have been raised about a possible bias among participants. While López Obrador claims that the consultations put him in touch with the authentic

Table 2: Consultations by Telephone

Date	Topic	Votes in favor (percentages)	Votes against (percentages)	Turnout**
7–8 December 2002	Continuation of López Obrador as <i>Jefe de Gobierno</i>	95.3%	4.7%	10.4%
19–20 January 2002	'The second floors' Extension of city highways	71.5%	28.5%	1.2%
24–25 November 2001	Increase in the price of a metro ticket	59%	41%	0.7%
24–25 February 2001	Introduction of Daylight Saving Time	25%	75%	4.8%

Source: *Coordinación Técnica, Gobierno del Distrito Federal.*

*The percentage of turnout has been calculated based on an electorate of 6,668,520 citizens, the number of registered voters at the time of the plebiscite in 2002 (Instituto Electoral del Distrito Federal, *Estadística del Plebiscito 2002, Mexico, DF: Instituto Electoral del Distrito Federal, 2003*).

will of 'the people', opposition parties have claimed that participants were not representative of the general population. A comparison of different types of consultations on the same topic seems to support this view. 'The second floors' are a controversial infrastructure project strongly favored by López Obrador. Between January and September 2002 the issue was subject to a consultation by telephone, a survey and a plebiscite. The comparison of outcomes shows that there is a considerable 'pro-López Obrador bias' among those who were likely to participate. A survey conducted one week prior to the plebiscite illustrates this distinction between likely participants and the general population (Consulta Mitofsky, 2002a). Table 3 indicates that support for the project is most pronounced in the consultation by telephone.

During his electoral campaign López Obrador promised that citizens would be able to decide periodically whether or not he should serve out his term in office. Based on article 39 of the Mexican constitution, which deals with national sovereignty and the form of government, López Obrador argues that the people have the right to revoke the mandate of a politician *at any time*. In December 2002 López Obrador therefore conducted a consultation on whether he should continue as *jefe de gobierno* or resign. As expected, López Obrador emerged victorious from the consultation with a phenomenal approval rate of over 95 percent. Again, however, there was a difference between likely participants and the general population. A survey conducted seven days prior to the consultation indicates that

Table 3: Support for the 'Second Floors' by Type of Consultation

	<i>General population</i>		<i>(Likely) 'participants'</i>	
	<i>In favor of the project</i>	<i>Opposed to the project</i>	<i>In favor of the project</i>	<i>Opposed to the project</i>
Informal Consultation, 19–20 January 2002 [†]			71.5%	28.5%
Survey, 14–15 September 2002 [‡]	47.1%	44.5%	74.9%	22.6%
Plebiscite, 22 September 2002 [§]			65.3%	33.9%

Sources: [†]*Coordinación Técnica, Gobierno del Distrito Federal*; [‡]*Consulta Mitofsky, Plebiscito sobre los segundos pisos al Viaducto y Periférico*; [§]*Instituto Electoral del Distrito Federal, Estadística del Plebiscito 2002*.

while 96 percent of likely participants supported the *jefe*, only 79 percent of the general population were in favor of his continuation (Consulta Mitofsky, 2002b). Overall, due to the reasons outlined above, the democratizing potential of the consultations remains doubtful.

The neighborhood assemblies are the second informal mechanism López Obrador uses to communicate with citizens. While consultations by telephone occur sporadically, the neighborhood assemblies try to establish a link between the government of the Federal District (*Gobierno del Distrito Federal* [GDF]) and citizens on a more regular basis. According to the Citizen Participation Law neighborhood committees should call assemblies to discuss issues of concern to the neighborhood. When López Obrador took office, however, he integrated these assemblies into his social program, the Programa Integrado Territorial de Desarrollo Social (PIT) and centralized their organization. There are two rounds of assemblies per year. In the first round the program's priorities for the coming year are presented and citizens are provided with information about the various sub-programs. The second round of assemblies takes place at the end of the year and informs citizens how the resources of the PIT have been allocated. Turnout for the assemblies has ranged between less than 1 and just under 3 percent of registered voters (see Table 4).

As with the consultations by telephone, opposition parties frequently criticize the PIT and the neighborhood assemblies as partisan. Even though there is no data on the party identities of attendants at the assemblies, some inferences can be made about their party sympathies. About one-third of attendants at the assemblies (31 percent) are beneficiaries of the PIT.⁸ The high number of beneficiaries is, in part, caused by the fear that failure to attend will lead to the revocation of the PIT entitlement card.⁹ This illustrates that – regardless of whether or not the fear that the PIT card may be revoked is justified – many citizens perceive the assistance

Table 4: Neighborhood Assemblies in the Federal District 2001, 2002 and 2003

<i>Main topic of the round of assemblies</i>	<i>Dates of the assemblies</i>	<i>Overall number of assemblies</i>	<i>Average number of attendants per assembly (Overall turnout*)</i>
Presentation of the PIT 2001	10 March until 25 April 2001	1,159	98 (1.7%)
Crime Prevention Program	4 and 5 May 2001	824	53 (0.7%)
Presentation of the Budget for the past year	9 November until 16 December 2001	1,171	151 (2.7%)
Presentation of the PIT and activities planned for 2002	6 February until 17 March 2002	1,206	157 (2.8%)
Presentation of the Budget for the past year	10 October until 1 December 2002	1,131	120 (2%)
Presentation of the PIT 2003	14 March until 29 April 2003	436	147 (1%)
Presentation of the Budget for the past year	7 November until 6 December 2003	588	138 (1.2%)

Source: *Gobierno del Distrito Federal, Dirección General de Participación Ciudadana.*

*The percentage of turnout has been calculated based on an electorate of 6,668,520 citizens: the number of registered voters at the time of the plebiscite in 2002 (Instituto Electoral del Distrito Federal, *Estadística del Plebiscito 2002, Mexico, DF: Instituto Electoral del Distrito Federal, 2003*).

as a favor that requires some kind of repayment rather than their right as citizens. They come to the assemblies not to debate critically, but rather to demonstrate support. As such, the neighborhood assemblies constitute a continuation of regime-supportive political participation characteristic of the PRI regime.

The Dirección General de Participación Ciudadana (DGPC), which is in charge of organizing the assemblies, records whether the government of the borough (*delegación*) sent representatives to the assemblies. In the two boroughs governed by the PAN none of the assemblies were attended by representatives. In the only PRI-governed borough, representatives were present at half of the assemblies. Attendance of representatives in PRD-governed boroughs, however, was 82 percent. This indicates that PRI and PAN do not perceive the PIT as a politically neutral aid program. Interestingly, the data also indicate at which assemblies the borough government contributed to 'presenting an image of unity' with the city government. None of the PAN or PRI governments contributed to presenting such an image. In the PRD-governed boroughs, however, representatives failed to contribute to this image at only 7 percent of the assemblies.

Neighborhood assemblies have been as unsuccessful as neighborhood committees in linking up with organized civil society. Less than 6 percent of the assemblies were attended by representatives of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) or community organizations.¹⁰ This lack of involvement of civil society organizations is all the more remarkable as it stands in sharp contrast to participatory experiences in other Latin American cities. In Porto Alegre, for example, NGOs played a crucial role in the participatory budgeting process. In Mexico City, however, civil society organizations remained distrustful of the assemblies. The extensive use of co-optation during the PRI regime had made many social movements wary and they appear to have guarded their independence from partisan interference by not getting involved.

In sum, the assemblies seem to be a way to inform citizens about the activities of the government, rather than deliberative fora. The agenda of the assemblies is determined by the city government with little or no involvement of neighborhood actors. The benefit of this arrangement is that it creates a certain level of transparency as to how government funds are spent. This reduces the possibilities of large-scale corruption. The guidelines for the eligibility of assistance under the PIT and the allocation of funds, however, continue to be determined without citizen involvement. The task of citizens is to monitor the program rather than to participate actively. Citizens are mobilized but they do not actually take control.

The discussion above has pointed out several limitations of informal participation. Firstly, due to the weak legal standing of the mechanisms of informal participation the authority of outcomes is also weak. The assemblies lack the power to take binding decisions. The legal authority of outcomes of telephone consultations also remains dubious. Secondly, these informal processes must be characterized as

top-down participation. The power to set the agenda remains in the hands of the political elite. The *jefe de gobierno* controls the process without the involvement of neutral external agencies such as the IEDF. In particular the assemblies are designed to pass information downward, rather than to open up policy spaces to citizen involvement. Thirdly, the informal mechanisms of participation appear to function as a tool to mobilize López Obrador's supporters. Evidence suggests that a substantial number of those who participate in these processes are PRD sympathizers or López Obrador supporters. The analysis of the consultations shows that a significant difference exists between (likely) participants and the general population. In the case of the neighborhood assemblies, the evidence also points toward a substantial pro-López Obrador bias among attendants. The following section will analyze the implications of the development of formalized and informal participation in the Federal District on the basis of the conceptual framework.

Toward Citizen Participation? Outcomes of Participatory Experiments in Mexico City

While the conceptual framework of citizen participation outlined in Table 1 above constitutes an ideal-type, it provides a useful tool for the analysis of participatory processes and their ability to contribute to democratic deepening. Applying the five dimensions of the framework to the developments in the Federal District shows that – despite the rhetorical emphasis on participation – the institutions and mechanisms to promote participation that emerged between 1997 and 2003 in their current state are unlikely to contribute to democratic deepening. The outcomes of participation in the Federal District are summarized in Table 5.

Firstly, participation in the Federal District has to be characterized mostly as front-loaded and intermittent. This is particularly true with regard to the con-

Table 5: Outcomes – Participation in the Federal District of Mexico City

1. Moment of participation in the policy process	Intermittent, front-loaded participation
2. Institutional framework	Unmediated participation; direct connection between citizens and political leader emphasized; intermediary groups bypassed; partisan orientation of informal participation
3. Content of issues and decisions	Abstract expression of approval or disapproval; citizens as consumers of public services
4. Formation of opinions	No emphasis on deliberation; 'the people already know'
5. Origins of legitimacy	Legitimacy derived not from institutional processes but from the approval of 'the people'

sultations by telephone. Neighborhood assemblies and committees could potentially provide spaces for more sustained participation over time and promote transparency by involving citizens in all steps of the policy process. In the case of Porto Alegre, for example, public assemblies are the pillars of the participatory budget process (PB). In the Federal District citizens may express complaints and put forward demands, either through the neighborhood committees or through the assemblies. The process of policy-making itself, however, remains essentially a 'black box'. Mechanisms to provide feedback and to inform citizens how their demands have been dealt with are absent. Even neighborhood committees and assemblies are therefore characterized by front-loaded, intermittent participation. Secondly, there is no perpetual participation in the policy process and generally organized civil society is not involved. Participation is mostly unmediated such as in the case of consultations by telephone. Without interference from political parties or other organized groups López Obrador calls directly on 'the people'. While neighborhood assemblies may superficially appear to be deliberative bodies, the analysis above has shown that their task is to pass information downward rather than to promote critical debate. Many beneficiaries of López Obrador's social programs attend the assemblies to demonstrate support. In this sense, even in the neighborhood assemblies the direct connection between the political leader and individual citizens – rather than intermediary institutions or organizations – is emphasized.

Thirdly, citizens are generally not involved in the generation of solutions to neighborhood problems. Instead, they are treated as consumers of public services. The neighborhood assemblies provide a forum to voice complaints and to make demands. The neighborhood committees should act as intermediaries between citizens and authorities in passing on petitions and grievances. The knowledge of citizens about local problems and their potential solutions is not used in a systematic way.

Fourthly, face-to-face deliberation has not become an established practice. López Obrador aims to capture popular sentiments rather than to promote debate among citizens. In this view, one of the advantages of the consultations by telephone is precisely that they demand so little of citizens in terms of time and effort. The result of this is, however, that citizens are deprived of sharing the democratic experience of citizen participation.

Finally, the discourse of legitimacy emphasizes the direct connection between the political leadership and the people, rather than deliberation. If there is a conflict between the perceived 'will of the people' and institutional procedures, the former must take precedence. An illustrative example of such practices is the consultation on the continuation of López Obrador as *jefe de gobierno*.

Concluding Discussion

The type of participation that has developed in the Federal District does not fit within the parameters laid down in the conceptual framework of citizen partici-

pation. In its present form, participation in the Federal District is unlikely to contribute to the deepening of democracy. Not only is participation in the DF unlikely to be beneficial, however, but the type of participation that emerged might actually have detrimental effects on democracy.

The outcome of participatory experiments in the Federal District – summarized in Table 5 – displays striking similarities with the type of state–society relations described by the work on neo-populism. Neo-populist political practices are characterized by unmediated, uninstitutionalized participation that bypasses intermediaries such as unions and political parties. There is a strong emphasis on the direct connection between the leader and his followers. Legitimacy is not derived from the adherence to formal rules and procedures but instead based directly on the approval of ‘the people’. Neo-populism therefore, as Roberts (1995) has pointed out, exploits and exacerbates the deinstitutionalization of political representation. Checks and balances within the political system suffer as a result of neo-populist practices. Under these conditions, the promotion of participation might increase problems with the quality of democracy, rather than solve them.

To be sure, governing a megalopolis like Mexico City is a difficult task. The city is struggling with a broad range of social, economic and ecological problems. Nevertheless, the PRD has successfully navigated the city into the era of democratic governance and the idea of democratic governance as such has never been seriously challenged. In this sense, the Federal District has made significant progress toward more responsive and accountable government.

The analysis of Mexico City also shows, however, how attempts to promote participation can fail to make the aspired contribution to democratic deepening. Institutional reforms to promote participation do not produce change by themselves, if they conflict with political action. Rhetorically, the PRD has adhered to the normative ideal of deepening democracy through the promotion of participation. The outcome of the reforms, however, should be characterized as neo-populist participation. While it may provide previously excluded voters with a voice, they are not incorporated into the political system as citizens.

The experience of Mexico City illustrates several shortcomings in the literature on building participatory institutions and points out directions for further research. The literature generally neglects or underemphasizes the importance of contextual factors. Fung and Wright, for example, stress the importance of institutional design for successful participatory experiences. They introduce the rather vague concept of countervailing power, which refers to ‘a variety of mechanisms that reduce, and perhaps even neutralize, the power-advantages of ordinarily powerful actors’ (Fung and Wright, 2003, p. 260). Suggestions about the generation of countervailing power remain tentative and underdeveloped.

Recent work by Brian Wampler and Leonardo Avritzer (2004) begins to address this shortcoming by analyzing the conditions of success and failure of participatory

experiments in Brazil beyond institutional design. They argue that participatory processes require an alliance between elected politicians and organized civil society. Under what conditions such an alliance can emerge should be a key question for future research. The relationship between participation and contextual factors needs to be explored further to improve our understanding of the conditions under which the promotion of participation contributes to democratic deepening.

In certain contexts the risk that the promotion of participation may lead to neo-populist outcomes and the associated negative effects on democratic institutions may be particularly great. One contextual factor that needs to be considered specifically is the importance of city size. All successful experiments with citizen participation have taken place in cities that are only a fraction of the size of Mexico City (Davis and Alvarado, 2004). Porto Alegre and Montevideo, for example, two relatively successful cases, have only 1.2 and 1.4 million inhabitants, respectively, compared to more than 10 million people in the Federal District of Mexico City. In large cities the involvement of citizens may be much harder to organize and, hence, the danger that participatory experiments will degenerate into neo-populist practices may be greater. Moreover, the nature of the authoritarian regime and the previous relationship between the state and organized civil society should be considered. In Mexico City, the reluctance of civil society organizations to get involved in participatory processes (which needs to be understood in the context of the history of co-optation by the PRI) most likely contributed to the limited success of participatory experiments.

(Accepted: 15 May 2006)

About the Author

Imke Harbers, Department of Political Science, Leiden University, PO Box 955, 2300RB Leiden, The Netherlands; email: IHarbers@fsw.leidenuniv.nl

Notes

I would like to thank Barbara Hogenboom, Petr Kopecky, Peter Mair, Maria Spirova, Manfred Schmidt, Robin Best and Thomas Zittel as well as three anonymous reviewers for their helpful comments.

- 1 This article is based on field research conducted in the Federal District of Mexico City between October 2003 and February 2004. The support of the Centre for Latin American Research and Documentation (CEDLA) in Amsterdam for this project is gratefully acknowledged.
- 2 The Federal District is divided into sixteen administrative districts or boroughs, called *delegaciones*. Prior to 2000 the highest officials in these boroughs were appointed by the *regente* or, since 1997, by the *jefe de gobierno*. In 2000 the *jefes delegacionales* were elected for the first time. *Jefes delegacionales* are elected for a three-year term. There is no legislative assembly at the borough level.
- 3 The data regarding the number of registered platforms vary between 3,794 (Carothers Flores, 1999, p. 98), 3,808 (Martínez Espinoza, 2001, p. 118) and 3,830 (Sánchez Mejorada, 2000, p. 91). The indications regarding the number of candidates vary between 40,000 (Sánchez Mejorada, 2000, p. 91) and more than 43,000 (Alvarado and Davis, 2003, p. 154).
- 4 According to Sartori's minimal definition a party is any political group identified by an official label that presents at elections, and is capable of placing through elections candidates for public office (Sartori, 1976, p. 63). In this sense, platforms became parties the moment they signed up for the neighborhood elections. Under Mexican law, however, only political groups officially registered with the Instituto Federal Electoral (IFE) are considered parties. Legally, the platforms are therefore not parties, even though they perform the same functions.

- 5 The survey was commissioned by the Instituto Electoral del Distrito Federal (IEDF) and carried out by the Instituto de Investigaciones Sociales (IIS) of the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM). I would like to thank Dr Julia Flores Dávila for making the database available to me.
- 6 Cárdenas did not serve out his full three-year term. When he started his campaign for the presidential elections of 2000 Rosario Robles, the PRD secretary of government, became *jefe de gobierno* for an interim period of fifteen months.
- 7 Information about López Obrador's position is drawn from the transcripts of his daily press conferences (see in particular 2, 25 and 26 November 2001; 20 January 2002; 25 November 2002). These transcripts are available on the website of the government of the Federal District (<http://www.df.gob.mx>).
- 8 The data were provided by the Dirección General de Participación Ciudadana (DGPC) of the Gobierno del Distrito Federal. The data for the number of attendants who are beneficiaries of the PIT are based on the first round of assemblies in 2003 during March and April.
- 9 Interview with an official of the DGPC, 2 February 2004.
- 10 The percentage refers to the second round of assemblies in 2003.

References

- Adams, F. (2003) *Deepening Democracy: Global Governance and Political Reform in Latin America*. Westport CT: Praeger.
- Alvarado, A. and Davis, D. (2003) 'Participación Democrática y Gobernabilidad en la Ciudad de México: El Reto del PRD en la Transición Política', *Estudios Sociológicos*, 21 (61), 135–66.
- Alvarez, S. (1993) 'Deepening Democracy: Popular Movement Networks, Constitutional Reform, and Radical Urban Regimes in Contemporary Brazil', in R. Fisher and J. Kling (eds), *Mobilizing the Community: Local Politics in the Era of the Global City*. Newbury Park CA: Sage Publications, pp. 191–219.
- Avritzer, L. (2002) *Democracy and the Public Space in Latin America*. Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Barber, B. (1984) *Strong Democracy: Participatory Politics for a New Age*. Berkeley CA: University of California Press.
- Bauer de la Isla, P. and Wirth, C. (2001) 'Democracy in Mexico's Capital: Structural Reforms and Democratic Governance', *Democratization*, 8 (2), 25–44.
- Carothers Flores, C. (1999) 'Comités Vecinales', *Bien Común y Gobierno*, 5 (57), 95–100.
- Consulta Mitofsky (2002a) *Plebiscito sobre los Segundos Pisos al Viaducto y Periférico*. Available from: <http://www.consulta.com.mx> [Accessed 1 December 2003].
- Consulta Mitofsky (2002b) *Consulta sobre la Continuidad del Jefe de Gobierno*. Available from: <http://www.consulta.com.mx> [Accessed 1 December 2003].
- Cornelius, W. and Craig, A. (1991) *The Mexican Political System in Transition*. San Diego CA: Center for US-Mexican Studies.
- Dagnino, E. (2003) 'Citizenship in Latin America: An Introduction', *Latin American Perspectives*, 30 (2), 211–25.
- Davis, D. (1997) 'New Social Movements, Old Party Structures: Discursive and Organizational Transformations in Mexican and Brazilian Party Politics', in W. Smith and R. Korzeniewicz (eds), *Politics, Social Change and Economic Restructuring in Latin America*. Miami FL: North-South Center Press, pp. 151–86.
- Davis, D. and Alvarado, A. (2004) 'Mexico City: The Challenge of Political Transition', in D. Chavez and B. Goldfrank (eds), *The Left in the City: Participatory Local Governments in Latin America*. London: Latin American Bureau, pp. 135–68.
- Demmers, J., Fernández Jilberto, A. and Hogenboom, B. (eds) (2001) *Miraculous Metamorphoses: The Neoliberalization of Latin American Populism*. London: Zed Books.
- Diamond, L., Plattner, M., Chu, Y. and Tien, H. (1997) *Consolidating the Third Wave Democracies: Themes and Perspectives*. Baltimore MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Fung, A. and Wright, E. (eds) (2003) *Deepening Democracy: Institutional Innovations in Empowered Participatory Governance*. London: Verso Books.
- Gasiorowski, M. and Power, M. (1998) 'The Structural Determinants of Democratic Consolidation', *Comparative Political Studies*, 31 (6), 740–71.
- Gilbert, A. and Gugler, J. (1992) *Cities, Poverty and Development: Urbanization in the Third World*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Grugel, J. (2002) *Democratization: A Critical Introduction*. Basingstoke: Palgrave.
- Gómez Tagle, S. and Valdés Vega, M. (eds) (2000) *La Geografía del Poder y las Elecciones en México*. Mexico DF: Plaza y Valdés, pp. 39–94.
- Huntington, S. (1991) *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late 20th Century*. Norman OK: Oklahoma University Press.
- Instituto Electoral del Distrito Federal (2003) *Estadística del Plebiscito 2002*. Mexico DF: IEDF.
- Jelin, E. and Hershberg, E. (1996) *Constructing Democracy: Human Rights, Citizenship, and Society in Latin America*. Boulder CO: Westview Press.
- Linz, J. (1990) 'Transitions to Democracy', *Washington Quarterly*, 13 (3), 143–64.
- Linz, J. and Stepan, A. (1996) *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation*. Baltimore MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Macpherson, C. B. (1977) *The Life and Times of Liberal Democracy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Mainwaring, S., O'Donnell, G. and Valenzuela, J. (eds) (1992) *Issues in Democratic Consolidation: The New South American Democracies in Comparative Perspective*. Notre Dame IN: University of Notre Dame Press.
- March, J. and Olsen, J. (1989) *Rediscovering Institutions: The Organizational Basis of Politics*. New York: The Free Press.
- Martínez Espinoza, M. (2001) 'Participación Política: Instrumento de Democracia y Convivencia', in *Instituto Electoral del Distrito Federal, Ensayos*. Mexico DF: IEDF, pp. 91–131.
- Nickson, A. (1995) *Local Government in Latin America*. Boulder CO: Lynne Rienner.
- O'Donnell, G. (1993) 'On the State, Democratization and some Conceptual Problems: A Latin American View with Glances at Some Postcommunist Countries', *World Development*, 21 (8), 1355–69.
- O'Donnell, G. (1994) 'Delegative Democracy', *Journal of Democracy*, 5 (1), 56–69.
- O'Donnell, G. (1996) 'Illusions about Consolidation', *Journal of Democracy*, 7 (2), 34–51.
- Pateman, C. (1970) *Participation and Democratic Theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Przeworski, A. (1998) 'Deliberation and Ideological Domination', in J. Elster (ed.), *Deliberative Democracy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 140–60.
- Roberts, K. (1995) 'Neoliberalism and the Transformation of Populism in Latin America: The Peruvian Case', *World Politics*, 48 (1), 82–116.
- Sánchez Mejorada, M. (2000) 'La Participación Ciudadana en el Distrito Federal. Reflexiones sobre la Ley y las Elecciones Vecinales', *El Cotidiano*, 16 (99), 78–91.
- Sartori, G. (1976) *Parties and Party Systems: A Framework for Analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Stokes, S. (1998) 'Pathologies of Deliberation', in J. Elster (ed.), *Deliberative Democracy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 123–39.
- Taylor, L. (2004) 'Client-ship and Citizenship in Latin America', *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, 23 (2), 213–27.
- Tejera Gaona, H. (2001) 'Cultura y Participación Ciudadana', in *Instituto Electoral del Distrito Federal, Ensayos*. Mexico DF: IEDF, pp. 53–88.
- United Nations Development Programme (2004) *Democracy in Latin America: Towards a Citizens' Democracy*. Available from: <http://www.undp.org> [Accessed 15 May 2004].
- Wainwright, H. (2003) *Reclaim the State: Experiments in Popular Democracy*. London: Verso Books.
- Wampler, B. and Avritzer, L. (2004) 'Participatory Publics: Civil Society and New Institutions in Democratic Brazil', *Comparative Politics*, 36 (3), 291–312.
- Ward, P. (1990) *Mexico City: The Production and Reproduction of an Urban Environment*. London: Belhaven Press.
- Weyland, K. (1996) 'Neopopulism and Neoliberalism in Latin America: Unexpected Affinities', *Studies in Comparative International Development*, 31 (3), 3–31.
- Weyland, K. (1999) 'Neoliberal Populism in Latin America and Eastern Europe', *Comparative Politics*, 31 (4), 67–96.
- Weyland, K. (2003) 'Neopopulism and Neoliberalism in Latin America: How Much Affinity?', *Third World Quarterly*, 24 (6), 1095–115.