

Economic Democracy Project
Brooklyn College, Graduate Center for Worker Education

25 Broadway, 7th Floor

New York, NY 10004

P: 212.966.4014

Coordinator: Kenneth Edusei

kedusei@brooklyn.cuny.edu

Director: Mike Menser

morphospace@gmail.com

Faculty Fellows: Alan Aha (Puerto Rican and Latino Studies), Ken Estey (Political Science)

Summary

Economic democracy is the idea that the principles of popular sovereignty and the values of freedom, solidarity, and equality should be applied to the economic system in a way that empowers all stakeholders from workers and owners to residents, and customers. EconD practices do this by promoting inclusive and meaningful participation in terms of financing, ownership, management, regulation, waste disposal, and/or consumption. Pluralistic in its origins and history, EconD projects vary in their relationships to states, markets, communities, and individuals. Though some regard themselves as liberal capitalist and others as state socialist, many others eschew such categories (associationists, anarchism) or aspire to more experimental and pluralistic frames (e.g. solidarity economy, social economy). Still others root themselves in dissimilar ethical or cultural traditions: religious communitarianism, indigenous philosophy) EconD projects occur in multiple sectors including banking and finance (e.g. credit unions), the workplace (ESOPs, worker coops), consumption (consumer coops), land ownership (community land trusts), and service delivery (public utilities).

The Economic Democracy Project at the GCWE is composed of faculty from Brooklyn College, CUNY, and across the NYC region who work to create and cultivate collaborations among faculty, students and community partners to further research, teaching and organizational projects pursuing a more equitable, inclusive and empowering political-economic system. The group focuses on economic and workforce development, participatory governance and administration; environmental justice; public housing, banking and financing; renewable energy; immigrant and worker rights; ecological resilience; and the regional food systems. By its very nature it is pluralistic in approach and inclusive in terms of scale and sector. Projects explored range from federal

government-funded programs to community-based projects, large-scale infrastructure, to household and neighborhood-based initiatives. The group seeks to research and bring together diverse movements and histories, analyze contemporary models, and promote best practices across all sectors. Examples of models and projects include community land trusts, tenant empowered public housing, municipal and community-owned energy production; worker, producer and consumer cooperatives in the food system; public banking and democratically managed finance; community-based resilience and emergency response; participatory budgeting; and other programs that create links among elected officials, city agencies and local residents while democratizing power in terms of ownership and/or management.

Faculty Board (with affiliation and speciality)

Michael Menser - Philosophy, Brooklyn College (sustainable economic development; participatory budgeting)

Jocelyn Wills - History, Brooklyn College (history of capitalism; place based pedagogy)

Celina Su - Political Science, Brooklyn College (participatory budgeting research)

Ken Estey - Political Science, Brooklyn College (worker coops in Brooklyn)

Justin Steinberg - Philosophy, Brooklyn College (democratic theory)

Samir Chopra - Philosophy, Brooklyn College/CUNY GC (intellectual property and cyber law)

Veronica Manlowe - Business, Brooklyn College (internships)

Tom Angotti - Hunter College; Urban Planning

-Jessica Gordon Nembhard - Community Justice and Social Economic Development, Department of Africana Studies, John Jay College (African American economic history; worker coops)

-Marianna Povlaskaya - Earth and Environmental Sciences, Hunter/GC (mapping economic democracy)

-Ron Hayduk, Political Science, Queens College (participatory budgeting research; voting rights)

-Carmen Huertas-Noble, CUNY Law School (worker coop development)

-Gianpaolo Baiocchi - Gallatin School, NYU (participatory budgeting, democracy and globalization)

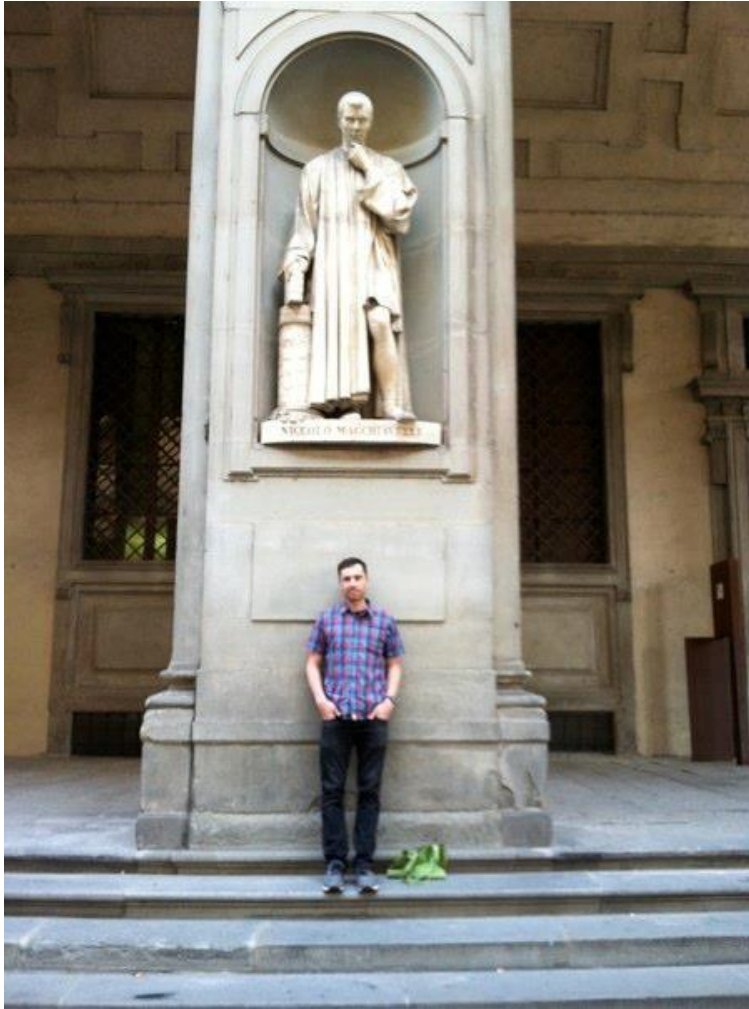
-Carol Gould-Hunter College, CUNY GC; democratic theory and social philosophy

Justin Steinberg:

Justin Steinberg is Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Brooklyn College. His research focuses on early-modern (17th Century) moral and political thought, especially the work of Benedict Spinoza. He is currently working on a manuscript on the relevance of the affects (emotions) for civic life in Spinoza's thought. More generally, Steinberg studies the emergence of democratic thought in the modern period and the role that the concept of freedom played in justifying egalitarian

political structures. He also maintains research interests in social ontology and the problem of how we distinguish forms of domination from other relations of dependence.

Favorite work(s) in economic democracy: these are not so much works in economic democracy as works that can inform our thinking about economic democracy: Spinoza's Political Treatise; Bakunin's God and the State; Philip Pettit's Republicanism; Philippe Van Parijs's Real Freedom for All.



Ron Hayduk is Professor of Political Science at Queens College, CUNY. Hayduk's research interests focus on political participation, elections and voting, race and ethnicity, and immigration and social movements. He has published two books and two edited books, including *Democracy for All: Restoring Immigrant Voting Rights in the U.S.* More recently, Hayduk has written about immigration reform policy, elections in New York, and the Occupy Wall Street movement. Formerly a social worker, Hayduk worked in New York City government, and consulted to policy organizations. Hayduk is a member of the New York City Participatory Steering Committee and Research Board, Co-Founder of the Coalition to Expand Voting

Rights, and an active member of the Professional Staff Congress, the union of faculty and staff at the City University of New York.

Celina K. Su

Celina Su is an Associate Professor of Political Science at the City University of New York. Her interests lie in civil society and the cultural politics of education and health policy. She is especially interested in how everyday citizens engage in policy-making—via deliberative democracy when inclusive institutions exist, and via protest and social movements when they do not.



Jocelyn Wills

A Canadian by birth, Jocelyn Wills zig-zagged her way to New York from Vancouver, British Columbia, via Texas, Minnesota and the many dotted roads that connect the contiguous United States with Canada and Mexico. Along the way, she encountered both dazzling diversity and disturbing disparities. This collision of the American promise with everyday reality informs all of her research and teaching interests, which include: the cultural history of capitalism; narratives of success, failure and self-making; and the incorporation and commodification of American life. Wills is completing a microhistory of 19th-century economic and social strivers. Her current research focuses on American boom-and-bust, and the experiences of workers, consumers, and small business operators in post-Civil War Brooklyn.

Carmen Huertas

Associate Professor Huertas-Noble is the founding director of the Community & Economic Development Clinic (CEDC) at CUNY School of Law. She earned her J.D. from Fordham University Law School, where she was a Stein Scholar in Public Interest Law and Ethics and served on the staff of the Environmental Law Journal. Prior to joining the CUNY faculty, Professor Huertas-Noble was an Adjunct Professor at Fordham Law School where she supervised students in its CED Clinic. She also

served as a senior staff attorney in the Community Development Project (CDP) of the Urban Justice Center (UJC). As part of CDP, she worked with neighborhood residents to form nonprofits as well as established organizing groups to create alternative institutions, such as worker-owned cooperatives (cooperatives).



Jessica Gordon Nehmbard

JESSICA GORDON Ne is Associate Professor of Community Justice and Social Economic Development in the Department of Africana Studies at John Jay College, of the City University of New York (CUNY) in New York City, USA. She recently completed a year as a visiting scholar in the Economics Department’s Center on Race and Wealth at Howard University, and was Master Teacher (July 2007 and 2009) at the Center’s Summer Institute for Research on Race and Wealth. She has also been a visiting scholar at the Centre for the Study of Cooperatives at the University of Saskatchewan in Canada (academic year 2008-09), and is a research affiliate for that Centre’s “Linking, Leverage, Learning: Social Enterprises, Knowledgeable Economies and Sustainable Communities” project, and co-investigator for the “Measuring the Impact of Credit Unions,” Community and University Research Partnerships project, at The Centre for the Study of Co-operatives.



Veronica Manlowe

Veronica Manlow is assistant professor of business. She wrote *Designing Clothes: Culture and Organization of the Fashion Industry* (2007/2009), published by Transaction Publishers. Courses taught include Research Methods, Applied Research Methods, Principles of Marketing Management, Multicultural Marketing, Fashion Marketing, Organizational Behavior and Leadership. Manlow's research specialization is organizational structure, culture, leadership and the creative process of fashion design and branding. Fashion is of interest to her from a social and cultural perspective as it relates to both applied and theoretical questions concerning the individual, industry, modernity and the global economy.



Ken Estey

Ken Estey (PhD, Union Theological Seminary, 1998). His research interests include the intersection of power, politics and religion with particular focus on the relationship between labor and Protestant Christianity in the United States.

