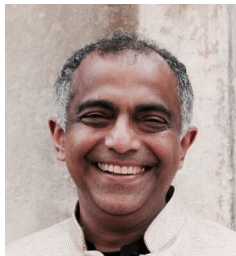


**Thursday,
Oct 3**

**FALL 2019
SEMINAR SERIES**

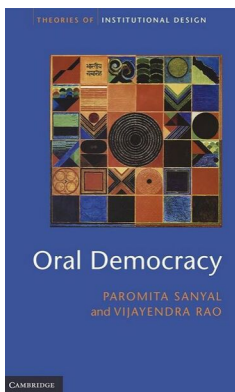


Oral Democracy: Deliberation in Indian Village Assemblies

A Book Talk with the Author

Vijayendra Rao

Lead Economist, Development Research Group, The World Bank



Oral Democracy studies citizens' voices in civic and political deliberations in India's gram sabhas (village assemblies), the largest deliberative institution in human history. It analyzes nearly three hundred transcripts of gram sabhas, sampled within the framework of a natural experiment, allowing the authors to study how state policy affects the quality of discourse, citizens' discursive performances, and state enactments embodied by elected leaders and public officials. By drawing out the varieties of speech apparent in citizen and state interactions, their analysis shows that citizens' oral participation in development and governance can be improved by strengthening deliberative spaces through policy. Even in conditions of high inequality and illiteracy, gram sabhas can create discursive equality by developing the "oral competence" of citizens and establishing a space in which they can articulate their interests.

12:00 - 1:30 PM | LIGHT REFRESHMENTS SERVED

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RONALD O. PERELMAN CENTER FOR POLITICAL SCIENCE & ECONOMICS
133 SOUTH 36TH STREET | SUITE 230
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