

Call for Papers: Creating Publics, Creating Democracies

That there is a relationship between publicness and democracy has often been taken for granted. However, at this time of widespread instability, political upheaval and experimentation, when publics are increasingly being called upon to act, it is sometimes in the name of democracy, but not always. By exploring how ideas and practices of publicness and democracy are being constituted, enacted, related and reconfigured in different settings, this workshop aims to investigate the modes of public action and democracy being invoked, imagined and struggled over around the world. We welcome paper proposals from a diversity of approaches, particularly research and works in progress that help us to collectively consider:

- How *issues* become matters of public concern and how, where and when public practices intersect with forms of democracy, or other forms of politics?
- How *actors* (individuals, groups, institutions, networks, materials, devices) become public and whether forms of democratic politics emerge as a result?
- How public *spaces* are assembled and how they become spaces of democratic or other forms of politics?
- How *relations* between modes of public action and forms of democratic politics are being mediated and how *methodologically* such relations can be traced, mapped, analysed, theorised and better understood?

Building on the success of the July 2011 interdisciplinary workshop, *Creating Publics*¹, we seek working papers from fields including (but not limited to): anthropology, politics and public policy, cultural studies, environmental studies, sociology, science and technology studies, information studies, geography, planning and media studies. We hope that through engaging with empirical and/or conceptual works together, this workshop will serve as an opening for conversations about the creation of publics and democracies.

We invite abstracts of up to 250 words to be submitted to Sarah Batt (a.s.c.batt@open.ac.uk) by 16 March 2012. For further information or if you have questions, please contact Sue Pell (exs02sp@gold.ac.uk). The workshop programme will be announced in May.

<http://www8.open.ac.uk/ccig/events/creating-publics-creating-democracies-call-for-papers>

The two-day workshop event will be held in central London on 18 & 19 June 2012. This initiative is a collaboration organised by: The Publics Research Programme at The Centre for Citizenship, Identities and Governance at the Open University; The Centre for Global Media and Democracy at Goldsmiths College, University of London; and, The Centre for the Study of Democracy at the University of Westminster.

¹ Creating Publics, July 2010: see <http://www8.open.ac.uk/ccig/events/creating-publics-workshop>

See: Publics Research Programme: <http://www8.open.ac.uk/ccig/programmes/publics>

Centre for the Study of Democracy: <http://www.westminster.ac.uk/research/a-z/centre-for-the-study-of-democracy>