

to the bare minimum”(83) reads more as the author’s ideological agenda than it does an empirical assessment of everyday life on the streets of Havana. Arguments such as this, if they are not going to be explained in more detail, should be left out entirely. One wonders if the pressure to publish shorter and shorter volumes is partly to blame here.

With this said, paired with additional material that could help fill the gaps noted above, White’s book offers instructors a thoughtful text to introducing students in world history or international development studies to a complex and multilayered set of histories that continue to shape current and future prospects for people living in the “developing world.”

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**Stephan D’Arcy, *Languages of the Unheard: Why Militant Protest is Good for Democracy* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2013). 232 pp. \$24.95 Paperback.**

In *Languages of the Unheard*, Stephen D’Arcy offers readers “a normative standard” that can assess when and how militant protest is good for democracy. One of the strongest aspects of *Languages* is the treatment of Martin Luther King as a political theorist. D’Arcy utilizes King to craft a four part definition of militancy: “grievance-motivated, adversarial, and confrontational collective action” (26); where adversarial indicates opposing positions that are no longer open to change through dialogue and confrontation is the act of “seek[ing] out direct conflict” (27). This sets up D’Arcy’s basic argument. Militant protest is democratic because it can reopen dialogue and debate on issues that self-interested elites (bureaucratic and capitalist) would otherwise treat as settled.

In *Languages*, Democracy is defined as “public autonomy, that is, the self-governance of the people through inclusive, reason-guided public discussion” (4). D’Arcy places an emphasis on public autonomy to distinguish it from ‘liberal’ conceptions of democracy:

The demand for public autonomy is democratic in a much richer sense than mere public choice [i.e. voting]. Public autonomy requires that the people dictate the terms of social co-operation based on broadly shared understanding of the common good and the requirements of justice, after a thorough process of inclusive wide-ranging discussion (23-24).

Premised on the goal of achieving public autonomy as the ideal form of democracy, D’Arcy persuasively argues militancy is democratic if it meets four standards that, in the words of King, give “voice to the voiceless.” These standards are:

opportunity principle – have a reasonable chance of creating new

opportunities for dialogue.

agency principle – those most directly affected take the lead in resolving grievances.

autonomy principle – the power of the people to govern themselves democratically is enhanced.

accountability principle – acts can be defended as acting in good faith for the purpose of improving the public good (6-7).

If assessed on the terms D'Arcy lays out for himself, the author carries out an analytically sound defence of his stated aim: to defend some forms of militancy as aiding democracy by giving voice to the voiceless. D'Arcy's argument is also greatly aided by his clear and straightforward writing style. One strength of D'Arcy's book lies in the way he is able to tease apart distinctions about forms of militant action. The author's conclusion that Black Bloc tactics can be democratic if they focus on 'protective' functions – "repelling police violence, [and] deterring mass arrests" – for other protesters instead of causing property destruction provided a fresh perspective on Black Bloc tactics. D'Arcy's thoughtful consideration of 'grievance rioting' (147-149 and 152-157) and his argument that "people's militias" (i.e. Zapatistas) (178-183) may be able to carry out armed struggle for broad based social movements in service of democratic ends also offer compelling insights.

While D'Arcy provides many useful frameworks, distinctions and insights, his two main audiences, deliberative democrats and activists, will likely lament substantive aspects of D'Arcy's argument. Deliberative democrats will find D'Arcy's formulation of public autonomy under-theorised. The author defines public autonomy as "the power of the people to govern themselves" and political communities are simply defined as those affected by a given issue. What constitutes an 'affected community' and what role the state will play in promoting or regulating public autonomy is left undefined. By not theorising the role of institutions and taking a clear position on the state, D'Arcy's vision of public autonomy needs further clarification.

The lack of standards to define the boundaries of affected communities also means that D'Arcy avoids theorising how representational voices and authority is constituted among 'affected communities.' By not theorising representational voice, D'Arcy fails to tackle how the internal politics of marginalised communities are also capable of oppressive practices along lines of gender, class, race and sexual orientation. Public autonomy may be well suited to addressing these forms of oppression within groups but D'Arcy has a homogenising tendency that treats groups as not internally fractious.

Activist communities will likely question D'Arcy's constant refrain throughout the book as democracy is impeded by intransigent "big corporations and big governments." If we take the case of Indigenous peoples as an example, a significant culprit is left off the hook – large segments of the public in settler

societies that do not want to significantly alter the terms of colonial domination

The problem stems from D'Arcy's reliance on 'hypothetical reasoning' – where idealized scenarios are posited and the author works through the scenario in order to produce analytical arguments and principles. These theories are then applied to empirical cases without delving into a rich contextual analysis of the situation. D'Arcy's truncated descriptions of case studies can then leave out the role of racist or patriarchal publics and confine the problem to 'intransigent elites.' D'Arcy's reliance on idealised scenarios greatly hinders his ability to shed new light on how oppressive power circulates by delving into rich contextual analysis of past cases where militant protest has occurred.

D'Arcy's reliance on hypothetical reasoning also prevents him from fully engaging with 'non-violent realists' like Taiiaki Alfred and Gandhi. D'Arcy briefly mentions that Alfred has a "firm preference for 'nonviolent contention'" (59) and asserts Gandhi and King "attached great moral importance to nonviolence" (77). But for Alfred and Gandhi, advocating for non-violence is based on a means-ends calculation that assumes violent means of social transformation will impair the ability of societies to manifest non-violent ends.

D'Arcy is right in challenging the view that militant protest is an impediment to dialogue, institutional procedure, 'law and order' and other forms of democratic decision-making. Yet, the author's focus on normative standards and hypothetical reasoning prevents him from addressing other important questions. Namely, why do so many people in democratic societies view militant protest as anti-democratic, and how do we proliferate these practices in a way that contributes to just societies?

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**Vivienne Poy, *Passage to Promise Land: Voices of Chinese Immigrant Women to Canada* (Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2014). 288 pp. \$39.95 Paperback.**

In *Passage to Promise Land*, Vivienne Poy confronts challenges on two different but related fronts: not having a conventional base of primary source materials, and having a close personal connection with the subject at hand. Neither challenge is insurmountable. Many scholars have addressed these potential obstacles by expanding the traditional definition of sources, bringing self-awareness to their subjectivity, and questioning assumptions around primary sources and academic objectivity in the first place. One might also argue that these problems are not problems at all. Rather, they are an opportunity to apply creativity and fresh