Ruhiya Kristine K. Seward, Ph.D.

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CURRENT POSITION

Research specialist, Bureau for Development Policy, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), New York. April 2009 – present.
I am a research specialist with the e-governance team in the Bureau for Development Policy at UNDP. I conduct research and analysis and write policy on information and communication technologies for human development (ICTD). Subjects include mobile technologies, democratic and digital governance, open government/open data, e-participation, social networks and social media, and public administration reform.

EDUCATION

Ph.D. in Political Science. Field exams in Comparative Politics (Major) and Political Theory (Minor). Graduate Faculty of Political Science, New School for Social Research. May 2012. Dissertation: Fusing Identities and Mobilizing Resistance in Chiapas and Mexico, 1994-2009.

M.Sc. (Econ) International Relations, London School of Economics. Coursework in International Politics, Environment & Development and Conflict & Peace. Thesis: Regional Peacekeeping in Protracted Conflict: ECOMOG Intervention in Liberia. July 1993.

B.Sc. (Hon) Journalism, University of Colorado, Boulder. Honors thesis: History and Politics of Liberia. May 1990.

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Research interests cluster around two main areas of study: contentious politics and human development. The first includes broader categories of people's participation, such as the study of different kinds of collective political struggles around indigenous rights, ecological/environmental concerns and democratization; the role of political identity and cognitive liberation in catalyzing movements; and how participation and collective action is changed or augmented with the addition of new information and communication technologies (ICTs). The second area of research is in human development, particularly international institutions and policy making in relation to governance, ICTs and human rights.

Main subject areas include comparative politics, international relations, contentious politics, political theory, indigenous rights, human development and international policy/institutions.

DISSERTATION

Fusing Identities and Mobilizing Resistance in Chiapas and Mexico, 1994-2009.

Zapatista political identity functioned as a mobilizing resource for the Chiapas rebellion in Mexico by generating core themes of socioeconomic rights and political justice associated with the left-aligned, progressive Catholic and indigenous aspects of the movement's base. Though 'resources' are normally understood strictly in terms of monetary support in social movements, this research showed that there are other kinds of significant non-material-based resources in social movement organization. By developing a broad-based discourse in their online/email declarations, communiqués and stories, the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN) united local concerns in Chiapas with transnational issues such as indigenous rights and activism against neoliberalism. This developed the movement itself over time, allowing the rebellion to resonate with many different kinds of actors and stimulating innovative support networks locally and globally. By analyzing the dynamics of identity and discourse in the Chiapas rebellion from 1994 through 2009, this research showed how political identity shapes social movement formation and mobilization.

Committee: New School for Social Research. 6 East 16th St, 7th Floor, New York, NY.

Dr. David Plotke (chair), Professor, Political Science. plotked@newschool.edu.
Dr. Deva Woodly, Assistant Professor, Political Science. woodlyd@newschool.edu.
Dr. Sanjay Ruparelia, Assistant Professor, Political Science. ruparels@newschool.edu.

Dr. Louise E. Walker, Assistant Professor at Northeastern University, History.
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FELLOWSHIPS • STUDY ABROAD

Arab American Business Fellowship (AABF). Business for Diplomatic Action and the U.S. Center for Citizen Diplomacy. October 2008.

Sawyer Dissertation Fellowship, Mellon Foundation Sawyer Seminar on Constitutional Design and Politics of Difference, September 2002-May 2003.

University Dissertation Fellowship & Research Scholarship, New School for Social Research, Sept 2001-May 2002 and August-October 2000.

Institute for Democracy and Diversity, Transregional Center for Democratic Studies, University of Cape Town and New School, Cape Town, South Africa, January 2000.

Transregional Center for Democratic Studies Fellowship, Graduate Faculty of Political Science, New School University, New York, September-December 1999.

PUBLICATIONS

WORKING PAPERS

- Political Identity as a Resource in Mobilizing Resistance. (in process 2013)
- Myths and realities of new media and participation, with Raul Zambrano, UNDP (in process 2013)

DEVELOPMENT POLICY PUBLICATIONS

- *Mobile Technologies and Empowerment: Enhancing human development through participation and innovation*, with Raul Zambrano. Democratic Governance Group, UNDP (April 2012).
- *From Connectivity to Service Delivery: Case studies in e-governance,* with Raul Zambrano. UNDP (January 2013).
- *Mobile Technologies and Innovation: Case studies in m-governance,* with Raul Zambrano. UNDP (September 2013).

PEER REVIEWED JOURNALS

- Democratisation and Urban Politics in South African Townships, with Janet Cherry and Jeremy Seekings. 2000. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 24: 4 (Dec).*

RECENT CONFERENCES AND SEMINARS

- *Mobile and social innovation: Governance, human empowerment and the role of ICTs for development*. Bahrain International eGovernment Forum. April 2013.

EMPLOYMENT

Interim director/change management. New York. January 2005 – December 2008. Work included establishing permanent fiscal, legal and administrative structures; instituting new human resource and fiscal policies and practices; developing budgets and endowments; overhauling marketing & research products; instituting quality assurance measures, codes of performance and evaluation processes; working closely with Boards of Directors; and ensuring contract compliance with city, state and federal funding agencies. Clients: Soho Properties, Inc. (Jan-Dec 2008); Nur Ashki Jerrahi Foundation (Dec 2005-Dec 2007); Project for Psychiatric Outreach to the Homeless (Jan- Sept 2005).

Research assistant. Political Science, New School for Social Research. September 1999 - May 2003. Conducted research on political identities, democratization and other international political developments in Mexico, South Africa and Northern Ireland along with background research for courses on democratic transitions and comparative politics for Professors David Plotke and Courtney Jung. Also edited proposals, book drafts and papers for publication.

Instructor/teaching fellow. Eugene Lang College. Spring 2002.
Developed syllabus and taught introductory seminar on comparative politics as part of the university's teaching fellowship.

Research assistant. University of Cape Town, South Africa. March 1998 – December 1998. Conducted research on local civic and political movements in transition in three townships in Cape Town. Research included household surveys in three separate communities on knowledge of and attitudes to civic and political organizations, as well as extensive interviews with civic and local government leaders. Published in the *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 24: 4 (Dec 2000). Advisor: Prof. Jeremy Seekings.

Project consultant. UNDP, Malawi. March 1997 – March 1998. Worked to foster pro-poor participation in development programming in the Local Governance and Development Management and Sustainable Livelihoods Programmes in the Malawi Country Office. Developed strategic plan and proposal to establish a Center for Participatory Development to promote broad political and socio-economic participation at the community, organizational and national level. Also developed participatory tools and techniques for facilitating community assessment and planning to analyze local adaptive strategies and community development vision. Work contributed to five-year strategy for UNDP Programme Support.

Project coordinator. International Eye Foundation, Malawi. January 1995 - February 1997. Established three innovative projects on food security, health and nutrition monitoring and income generating activities, developing partnerships with government, international donors, NGOs and community members. Work included: Developing proposals, budgets and hiring project staff; producing training materials and educating traditional authorities in sustainable agriculture; organizing national food security network; and conducting district-wide anthropometric survey. Reports: *Chotsogolera Zokambirana ndi Anyakwana: Boma la Chikwawa.* Illustrated guide of Monitoring for Empowerment for Traditional Authorities, Chikwawa District. *Community-based Research Report on Monitoring for Empowerment.* Both produced for Ministry of Health, International Eye Foundation and UNICEF.

Research. Refugee Studies Program, Oxford University, UK & Malawi. January - December 1994. Conducted research on structures, operations and relationships between church organizations and beneficiaries. Involved extensive interviews with NGO staff and refugees as well as field visits throughout Malawi and Mozambique. Project funded through donations and independent fund-raising.

OTHER WORK EXPERIENCES

- Facilitator. Brooklyn Bureau of Community Services. May - December 2003.

- Facilitator. Program Planning, Margaret Sanger International Training. Summer 1999.
- Editorial Assistant. Constellations Journal of Critical and Democratic Theory, New School University, New York. 1999.
- International Observer for United Nations Election Assistance Service, Malawi. 1994.
- Research Assistant. Media Natura, London, UK. 1993.
- Researcher for Ann Taylor, Member of Parliament, Shadow Minister for Environmental Protection, House of Commons, London, UK. 1992.
- Researcher for the Rt. Hon. Lord Cocks of Hartcliffe, Former Chief Whip of the Commons, House of Lords, London, UK. 1991.
- Press Intern for Senator Tim Wirth, U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C., USA. 1989.

Languages: English. Conversational Spanish and Chichewa.
Basic knowledge of French & Portuguese.

Extensive work and travel experience in southern Africa, Europe, Middle East and Central America.

REFERENCES

Dr. David Plotke, Professor, Political Science, New School for Social Research. 6 East 16th St, 7th Floor, New York, NY. 212-229-5747. plotked@newschool.edu.

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Mr. Raúl Zambrano, Senior Policy Advisory, Democratic Governance Group, Bureau for Development Policy, United Nations Development Programme. 304 East 45th Street, FF-1014A, New York, NY 10017. 212-906-6654. raul@undp.org.

* née: Kristine Kathryn Jones. Articles published under that name.