Model of Civic Community: Conceptualizing Community for Democratic Practice

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Community has been recognized as necessary unit for democracy. The contemporary configuration of our communities requires us to develop a comprehensive model of community, through which we can assess its internal and external dynamics. Moreover, the community model should embrace potential to enhance civic engagement and democratic practices in order to improve local communities’ strategies for addressing many emerging issues. For this, I develop a model of civic community based on a critical review and synthesis of three influential modern social thinkers’ theories: Talcott Parsons’s system theory, Pierre Bourdieu’s field theory and Jürgen Habermas’s theories of communicative action.

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Although community is a morally charged type of human collective life, we must notice that its deepest driving force is derived from human beings’ essential needs of survival and growth. Community serves for people by protecting its members from external threats and allowing them to efficiently obtain and manage resources, while human morality evolves, as some moral philosophers and evolutionary biologists have