



Transcending Dichotomies:

The Many Faces of Youth Dissatisfaction in Democracy

av

Ali Abdelzadeh

Akademisk avhandling

Avhandling för filosofie doktorsexamen i statskunskap,
som kommer att försvaras offentligt
torsdagen den 5 juni 2014 kl. 10.15,
Hörsal P2, Örebro universitet

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Abstract

Ali Abdelzadeh (2014): *Transcending Dichotomies: The Many Faces of Youth Dissatisfaction in Democracy*. Örebro Studies in Political Science 35.

In the recent scholarly debates over changing citizenship attitudes and norms in advanced democracies, especially when it comes to rising levels of political dissatisfaction, opinion about the political role of young people is divided. For some scholars, they represent a driving force behind the development of new kinds of citizenship values, and constitute an asset to the functioning of political systems. For others, they pose a potential threat to the health of representative democracy, because of their increasing levels of dissatisfaction and civic disengagement. By contrast with these two competing approaches, this dissertation advances the argument that a more balanced view of young people's political activities is called for. Adopting a quantitative approach, it aims therefore to contribute to better theoretical and empirical understanding of young people's political dissatisfaction, and to explain their role in a democratic society. Considering different aspects of dissatisfaction, the current dissertation contributes to previous research in significant ways. Among others things, it adds to our knowledge by showing empirically that, in terms of political dissatisfaction, young people constitute a heterogeneous group, with different political roles and profiles, ranging from the healthy to the more threatening. Moreover, it contributes to previous research by highlighting the crucial role played by fair teachers in providing linkages between young citizens and the wider political system. All in all, the findings in the current dissertation have implications for the ongoing debate over the role and significance of young people in the functioning of democratic systems, and also for political socialization research.

Keywords: political dissatisfaction, adolescents, critical citizens, procedural fairness, political attitudes.

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