

**Reflections on Conference
Jack Reardon**

Saturday November 9, 2013

Workshop Suggestions

“The challenge will be to make the contradictions and ambivalences of the Ostrom’s heritage productive. It means to understand reality in a deeper way, to improve our own theoretical work and to organize new social and political platforms, unions, and alliances – in order to strengthen the potential for emancipatory forces.”

General Reflections

- Why an exclusive right to own nature, when nature was given as a gift to all? Why can only a few expropriate it?
- Is there a way to reconcile the bounty of nature with the poverty of individuals?
- What is the role of property rights and privatization in causing and extending poverty? How can property rights be aligned with the rights of people in order to ensure a decent living for all?

General Reflections

- The role of power: who defines rules; how and on whose terms are institutions developed?

General Reflections

- What about ownership of the private resources that should be owned by all? E.g., who owns the coal, oil, uranium?
- What are the conceptual tools that are useful to go beyond Ostrom?. Is there anything salvageable from neoclassical economics? **(Molly)**.
- Outdated notion that social sciences acting separately can offer efficacious solutions. **(Frieder)** .
- All types of domination must be overcome. Focus must be on neoclassical economics which dominates thinking. **(Frieder)**

What I found most fruitful in Ostrom's work

- I would like to focus attention on her call for greater interaction between the social sciences and take this one step further in arguing that one reason for a lack of debate on a more inclusive role in regulating the commons is economics education itself.
-

The starting point for my discussion is three comments from Elinor Ostrom's work:

- **'Develop better curricula on local governance'** (Ostrom 1999, p. 12).

“Design Principles and Threats to Sustainable Organizations That Manage Commons”

‘Call for cooperation between the social sciences”

Ostrom 2012, “Coevolving Relationships between Political Economy and Economics”

She notes that ‘important developments in science frequently occur at the boundaries of disciplines when scholars from two or more fields discover each other and begin to address old questions in new ways” (2012, p. 24).

- **“Undertaking empirical studies of how citizens, local public entrepreneurs, and public officials engage in diverse ways of providing, producing, and managing public service industries and common property regimes at multiple scales has generated substantial knowledge that is not explained by two models of optimal organizational forms. When one engages in substantial fieldwork, one confronts an immense diversity of situations in which humans interact”**
(Ostrom 2010). **“Beyond Markets and States: Polycentric Governance of Complex Economic Systems”**