



Sturm College of Law
UNIVERSITY OF DENVER

**The Ved Nanda Center for
International & Comparative Law**



**DENVER JOURNAL
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LAW & POLICY**

**Sié Chéou-Kang Center for
International Security & Diplomacy**

2026 Leonard v.B. Sutton Colloquium

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES ON EQUAL PARTICIPATION AS A DEMOCRATIC VALUE



**FRIDAY, APRIL 10, 2026
9:00 AM - 5:00 PM**

**Ricketson Law Building
Room 165**

Schedule & Program

09:00 - 09:30

Registration

09:30 - 09:45

Welcome Remarks

Bruce Smith, Dean and Professor of Law, Sturm College of Law

Kelley Loper, Director, Ved Nanda Center for International & Comparative Law, Sturm College of Law

Rachel Epstein, Professor and Director, The Sié Chéou-Kang Center for International Security and Diplomacy, Josef Korbel School of Global and Public Affairs

09:45 - 10:30

Keynote Address

Gregory H. Fox, Director of the Program for International Legal Studies, Professor of Law, Wayne State University Law School

Democracy and International Law: A Problematic Introduction

10:30 - 10:45

Break

10:45 - 12:15

Panel 1: Participation as Democratic Practice

Moderator: Nancy Leong, Associate Dean for Faculty Scholarship and Provost Professor, Director, Constitutional Rights and Remedies Program, Sturm College of Law

The Limits of Contestatory Democracy, Shreya Atrey, Associate Professor of International Human Rights Law, Faculty of Law, University of Oxford

Equal Participation in International Politics through Democratic Sovereignty: East European Cases and Paradoxes, Rachel A. Epstein, Professor and Director, The Sié Chéou-Kang Center for International Security and Diplomacy, Josef Korbel School of Global and Public Affairs

The Democracy-Participation-Trust Relationship and its Implications for Constitutional Rights Adjudication, David Vitale, Associate Professor, Co-Director of Centre for Constitutions in Context, University of Warwick School of Law

Rule of Law and Democracy: Evidence from a Survey Experiment in China, Shitong Qiao, Ken Young-Gak Yun and Jinah Park Yun Distinguished Professor of Law, Duke University School of Law

12:15 - 02:00

Lunch

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02:00 - 03:15

Panel 2: Participation and Civil Society Under Political Constraint

Moderator: Lisa Conant, Professor of Political Science, Faculty Affiliate of the Sie Center, and Core Faculty of the Institute for Comparative and Regional Studies, University of Denver

Unfashionable Participation: Marginalized Political Agency in the Global South, **Vahid Abedini**, Farzaneh Family Assistant Professor of Iranian Studies, David L. Boren College of International Studies, University of Oklahoma

One Country, Two Conceptions of Justice? A Cross-cultural Approach to Hong Kong's Constitutional Politics, **Marco Wan**, Professor and Director of the Programme in Law and Literary Studies, Faculty of Law, University of Hong Kong

(Un)Equal Participation: Governmental Strategies of Dividing and Demolishing Civil Society in Russia, **Dmitrii Kuznetsov**, Visiting Fulbright Scholar, Ved Nanda Center for International & Comparative Law, Sturm College of Law, PhD candidate, University of Gothenburg, Sweden

03:15 - 03:30

Break

03:30 - 03:45

Panel 3: The Conditions of Equal Participation

Moderator: Wyatt Sassman, Associate Professor of Law, Sturm College of Law

AI, Rights, and the Vita Activa: Rethinking Reskilling for Equal Participation, **Lelia Mooney**, Adjunct Lecturer, Georgetown University School of Continuing Studies (SCS) and the Georgetown University School of Foreign Service (SFS) Center for Latin American Studies (CLAS)

The Role of Democracy and Participation in Protecting a Healthy Environment, **Annecoos Wiersema**, Associate Dean of Graduate and International Legal Programs, Catherine Boggs Endowed Faculty Research Scholar, Professor of Law, Sturm College of Law

Work Families and the Democratic Value of Equal Participation, **Suzanne Kim**, Professor of Law and Chancellor's Scholar, Rutgers Law School

04:45 - 05:00

Concluding Remarks

Kelley Loper, Director, Ved Nanda Center for International & Comparative Law, Sturm College of Law

Anya Szentes, Editor-in-Chief, Denver Journal of International Law and Policy

05:00

Reception

2026 Leonard v.B. Sutton Colloquium

Wifi Access: DU Guest Wifi

To access the presentation abstracts and speaker biographies, scan this QR code or visit our website.



<https://www.law.du.edu/nanda-center/calendar/2026-leonard-vb-sutton-colloquium>

The 2026 Leonard v.B. Sutton Colloquium on “Global Perspectives on Equal Participation as a Democratic Value” is hosted by the Sturm College of Law, the Ved Nanda Center for International & Comparative Law and co-hosted with the Sié Chéou-Kang Center for International Security and Diplomacy at Korbel and the Denver Journal on International Law & Policy



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