

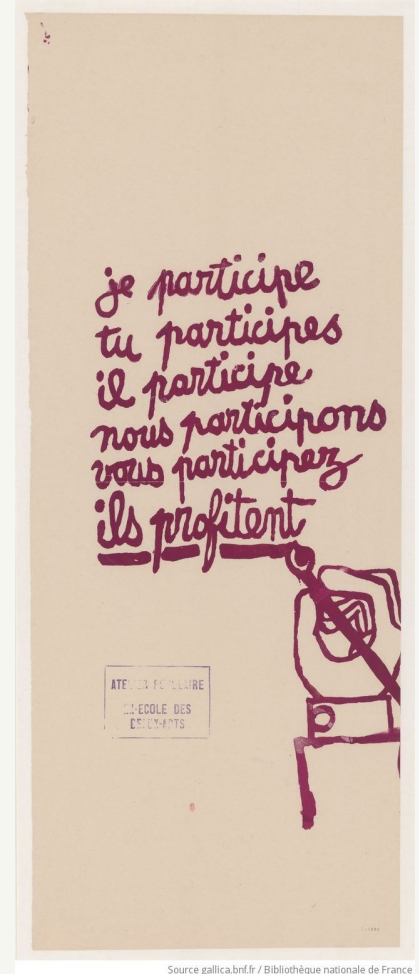
Participation in AI Governance: The Role of Local, Bottom-Up Approaches and Community Resistance

École des maîtres

*Les études critiques de
l'intelligence artificielle: Un
champ en devenir*

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Agenda

Key Terms

Research Question

Theoretical Context

Scale

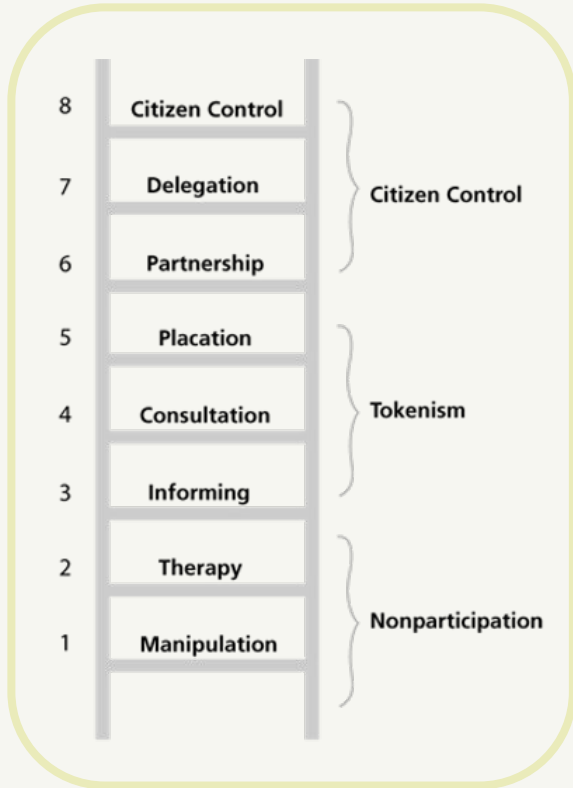
Examples

What is AI Governance?

- Encompasses the role of state and non-state actors in driving decision-making around AI (Ulnicane, 2025)
- Governance can be collaborative or agonistic (Dean, 2017)



What is public participation?



- Sherry Arnstein's ladder (1969), based in the discipline of urban planning
- Conceptualized participation as way of securing political power for marginalized communities
- Examples include polls, surveys, participatory budgeting

Public participation in AI Governance

Top-down

Led by the state or industry

How can AI be socially
beneficial?

How can we manage the risks and
diminish the harms associated
with AI?

Public participation in AI Governance

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Bottom-up

Led by communities, workers, and civil society organizations

How can we organize opposition against the underlying political and economic systems that constitute AI?



What is the role
of local and
bottom-up
approaches to
participation in
AI governance?



Theoretical Context

Historicity of AI as a technology

- Human-Computer Interaction (from 1970s)
- John Dewey (1927)

AI & Power

- Recursive power (McKelvey & Roberge, 2023)
- Machine learning as political orders (Amoore, 2023)

Bottom-up: a change of scale

From centralized to
disaggregated
power

(Young et al., 2024)

From bureaucrats to
local expertise

(Attard-Frost, 2025)

What does bottom-up participation in AI governance look-like?



Artificial Intelligence
and Data Act



Sidewalk Toronto

What does bottom-up participation in AI governance look-like?

Education

Community-building

Resist and Refuse

Thank you!

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