# From Civic Tech to Civic Capacity: The Case of Citizen Audits

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In the months since the protests in Ferguson, Missouri, the Movement for Black Lives has helped inspire a rapid proliferation of "copwatching" groups from Ferguson to Chicago to New York to Baltimore and elsewhere. These groups organize neighborhood "patrols" of residents to monitor police activity and ultimately prevent abuses of police power (Simonson 2016). Meanwhile, in slums around the world, affiliates of Slumdwellers International (SDI) organize landless residents to conduct "pavement censuses," documenting informal uses of land, lines of property, and provision of public services. These monitoring techniques are also used to hold city government officials accountable to promises made but rarely kept to invest in the slums and assure the land rights of current slumdwellers (de Souza Briggs 2008).

In both of these cases, grassroots civil society groups have organized to monitor the conduct of public officials, to generate information about their communities, and to direct these efforts towards activities intended to both goad policy makers and hold them accountable. This mode of participation is what this paper calls "citizen audits": the *organized, strategic use of participatory monitoring techniques to hold government actors accountable*. Citizen audits offer a unique mechanism for generating political accountability and redressing disparities of capture, corruption, or power. Citizen audits achieve this by catalyzing the mobilization and organization of civil society actors. By combining this mobilization with policy-relevant data-gathering, citizen audits generate pressure and influence on policy makers.

Citizen audits are thus, crucially, not about a utopian or idealistic appeal of civic engagement; rather they are realistic and urgent responses to fundamental failures of governance and disparities of political power. As this paper will argue, citizen audits represent a mode of participation that is importantly distinct from two of the prevailing discourses in present-day debates about democracy, civic engagement, and governance reform.

First, citizen audits are distinct from more conventional appeals to transparency, crowdsourcing, or citizen-generated data. Transparency and crowdsourcing are hot topics in the world of civic technology and governance reform, with scholars and practitioners alike intrigued by the possibilities of citizens reporting problems and service failures through vehicles like 311 and online portals (for example, see Noveck 2015). But the examples of organized copwatching and SDI represent a different way of leveraging data, transparency, and community-generated knowledge that ultimately focuses more directly and explicitly on building the long-term civic power of grassroots communities.

Second, citizen audits represent a form of political contestation and mobilization that takes place through channels distinct from the conventional focus in democracy reform on elections, campaign finance, and legislative lobbying. Through citizen audits, grassroots communities attempt to exercise greater influence not on the legislative process, but rather on bureaucratic processes of governance and policy implementation. This shift in focus is important in that it highlights opportunities for building civic capacity and remedying disparities of political power across a wider range of institutions, practices, and venues than is commonly assumed.

## DEFINING CITIZEN AUDITS

To understand the dynamics of citizen audits, let us return to the examples of copwatching and SDI noted earlier.

In the copwatching context, the central concern for these activists is developing modes of accountability for police officers, to counteract systemic forms of racial bias that manifest in everything from arbitrary stop-and-frisk patterns against African-American and Hispanic residents, to excessive use of force. Copwatching patrols have helped shift the calculus of many police officers on the beat, leading to reduced instances of aggression or stop-and-frisk activities, even in the absence of a formal policy change. As Jocelyn Simonson argues, while copwatching is made easier by the availability of technology that can record and disseminate citizen videos of police activity broadly and rapidly—smartphones, YouTube, social media—it is not entirely new, with roots going back to the civil rights movement and earlier. But neither is copwatching just about individual, spontaneous recordings of police activity. What is distinctive about contemporary copwatching is that groups leverage this citizen monitoring function to drive a broader attempt to mobilize and organize constituencies. Copwatching groups are "organized and strategic—the central idea is to prevent police misconduct rather than to catch it" Simonson 2016). The monitoring activities are themselves embedded in a broader effort to organize the community politically. Copwatching groups operate online websites that compile these videos along with 'know your rights' literature. They also are part of larger social movement organizing oriented towards systemic criminal justice reform (Simonson 2016).

Meanwhile, SDI also employs the monitoring functions as a mode of community organizing and power-building (see de Souza Briggs 2008). SDI chapters organize slum communities

to conduct "pavement censuses" documenting patterns of land use, tenancy, and where (if any) public goods such as sewage, water, and other services are provided. These activists use the data as an advocacy tool, giving lie to public officials' promises of investing in poor neighborhoods, and revealing patterns of corruption or neglect. The collection of data also helps identify local needs that the community could then advocate for in city budget decisions. SDI activists leverage this data collection and local knowledge to elevate themselves into necessary—and therefore, powerful—partners for

available, but so long as the control over data remains at the discretion of the officials that citizens are trying to monitor in the first place, the mere provision of the information does not generate the kind of power that we see in citizen audits.

At the same time, the impact on organizing is also critical. Regardless of how much policy makers actually change their approaches in response to citizen audits, the practice of auditing itself helps build the community relationships, and capacities for advocacy and collaboration important to long-term community organizing.

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governments seeking to construct infrastructure and development projects. This local knowledge in turn has enabled SDI chapters to gain the support of individual bureaucrats, thus building greater political influence over time—a tactic that one SDI leader describes as "picking off the state one person at a time." This strategy of leveraging community participation in monitoring the degree to which regulators and businesses alike follow and enforce existing standards has become a more widespread tool for empowering communities and holding policy makers accountable in a variety of contexts (Melish 2010).

In both cases of SDI and copwatching, citizen audits are used as a central strategy for organizing grassroots participation and generating political influence and power. Community members document and monitor existing states of affairs through an organized and strategic process, and then leverage this ongoing monitoring as a tool to both build grassroots civil society organizations and political influence with public officials. These activities build power through two related channels: first by enabling advocacy and influence on government officials through a combination of political pressure and policy-relevant data; and second, by thickening of grassroots organizations among communities themselves.

Indeed, it is critical that citizen audits are autonomous from government officials; it is the grassroots constituents themselves who collect, own, and then deploy the data, giving them greater power than in ordinary transparency regimes where the data is ultimately controlled and potentially limited by government actors. Consider, for example, how different copwatching is from proposals to install "body cams" on police officers. The problem with body cams is that whether or not they alter police behavior depends entirely on what the police department itself chooses to do with the recordings. Will they be made public? Under what restrictions and what time frames? Will community members be able to search, review, and analyze the recordings? By contrast, copwatching involves data that is created, owned, and leveraged by communities themselves. What they may lose in access and scale in generating data, they make up through greater control. The same can be said about SDI members in monitoring public service provision in slums: city officials might make more data

These cases are not unique. The strategy of oppositional, adversarial, yet constructive engagement that leverages grassroots monitoring and data collection represents a new pattern of human rights advocacy, emphasizing a shift from "nonnegotiable material demands and mass confrontation" and from claims of right, to "process-oriented" approaches that attempt to create institutional frameworks that encourage accountability (Melish 2010, 55, 73–4). Through participatory monitoring of public standards and goals—for example via "report cards," citizen auditing, development of alternative proposed budgets, and monitoring of performance indicators—these grassroots groups can track public policy outcomes, diagnose failures and slowdowns, and advocate for policy changes (Melish 2010). Such citizen audits are a potential alternative strategy for generating accountability and building political power among marginalized groups.

## THEORIZING CITIZEN AUDITS

Citizen audits represent a distinctive rethinking of conventional approaches to democratic and participatory theory and institutional design.

One of the most active areas of governance reform today centers around the diffuse "Open Government" movement (O'Reilly 2010). In this movement, a diverse array of policy makers, scholars, reformers, and technologists have highlighted the democracy-enhancing, and governance-promoting aspects of greater transparency and citizen participation. Both of these techniques are made more impactful and, it is argued, valuable by digital technology advances in the availability, publicity, and analyzability of data (for example, see Goldsmith and Crawford 2014; Noveck 2015). Digital tools also empower diffuse citizen expertise to be crowdsourced for civic ends.[1] For example, in Boston's New Urban Mechanics created an app called "Citizens Connect" which creates a streamlined process for residents to report local issues directly to the right municipal agency, empowering them to improve the condition of their neighborhoods. It has been used by over 70,000 residents across multiple platforms, including a web-based interface and Android phone. The app now accounts for one-fifth of all city service requests, or roughly 10,000 per year across Massachusetts.

One aspect of open government is the opportunity created when governments make their data more publicly available for citizens to monitor public officials and policy outcomes. By choosing "open by default" as a governmental data standard—as stipulated by the Obama Administration's Executive Order 13642, for example—governmental entities can ensure that open, machine readable data are readily available to the public. Releasing data via application programming interfaces (APIs), which allow automated export and re-use of datasets in real time, can enable civic technologists and entrepreneurs to use that data for civic ends. Platforms like 311 and Open311 or online websites can allow citizens to report problems and aggregate local knowledge on everything from

part because of the fact that the communities themselves are the drivers of these monitoring and data-gathering efforts. As we have seen in Part I, citizen audits work in part because they focus on long-term power-building, rather than simply generating or disclosing information. The information itself is also not generic, nor passively available, but targeted, focused on the issues of concern to the constituencies, linked to a particular advocacy vehicle to make the information influential and relevant to policy makers.[4]

A second, better analogy might be found in the idea of "crowdsourcing." Here, citizens pool their local knowledge to transmit information about on-the-ground realities to policy makers. Crowdsourcing connotes a more active role for citizens

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spotting potholes to compiling consumer complaints. These open government principles have been a major driver of governance reforms at the local level[2] and at the federal level.[3] But citizen audits as exemplified by the work of copwatchers in the US and SDI globally represent a distinct form of democratic participation from this open government framework— and one that suggests possible implications for designing accountable regulatory policy-making systems.

On first read, the practice of citizen audits might seem akin to the emphasis in modern regulatory theory on transparency and disclosure. By requiring governments to make available documents, briefings, meetings schedules, and other forms of information, transparency provides more information to voters and citizens. This in turn enables them to make more informed choices about policies and policy makers in their capacities as voters and advocates. Meanwhile, the growing availability of data and metrics tracking policy outcomes similarly makes possible a greater degree of informed advocacy and voting on the part of citizens, while expanding the capacity of policy makers themselves to updated and revise policies over time.

But transparency and disclosure are not quite the right model for theorizing the practice of citizen audits as described above. Usually transparency and disclosure regimes connote a stance of openness on the part of government officials, providing data, information, and documentation to a mass and generic public. It is then up to the public to organize and respond accordingly. In contrast to this view of the public as a passive recipient, the examples of copwatching and SDI pavement census suggest a much more active role of lay citizens in generating data and actively monitoring public officials. Further, transparency regimes often leave significant discretion on the part of officials in what they release, how, and in what format. The result can often be a surfeit of information, little of which is relevant, actionable, or usable. Citizen audits, by contrast, focuses directly on monitoring indicators and issues that are of direct importance to the constituencies involved, in large

than transparency regimes, focusing on aggregating data on issues of direct concern. Certainly there is a kind of crowdsourcing involved in citizen audits. Crowdsourcing can enable social monitoring. A prime example of political crowdsourcing is Ushahidi (meaning "testimony" in Swahili) that was initially to map incidents of post-election violence in Kenya in 2008. It aggregated reports that citizens submitted via the web or mobile phones regarding violations of human rights, and tagged them on a publicly available Google map, according to predefined categories. Since then, it has been used in dozens of experiments for election monitoring (Fung, Gilman, and Shkabatur 2013).

Indeed, distinguishing citizen audits from both transparency regimes and crowdsourcing mechanisms points to an important difference between these approaches in their underlying diagnosis of the sources of governmental failure, and theories of democratizing reform. In both transparency and crowdsourcing, the primary defect of the political process is understood as a *lack of information*: if only voters knew more of what policy makers were doing, they could hold these officials accountable; similarly, if only policy makers had better information about facts on the ground, they could do their jobs better. Informational gaps and asymmetries are a reality and worth addressing. But citizen audits as described above exhibits a more sophisticated power-based diagnosis of governmental failure. For these activists, the problem is not a lack of information on the part of policy makers. Rather the root problem is a systematic political indifference towards the needs, concerns, and voice of the marginalized communities represented by these activists.

In many ways, this is a more realistic vision of political failure and response than that which underlies the open government framework. Here, policy makers are rightly seen as embedded in fields of influence and understanding which shapes their behavior. The neglect of minority and marginalized communities is a product of disparities in political power and influence—in the capacity to hold policy makers

accountable—and not just disparities of information. The remedy, then, is to both acquire better information about policy-maker activities and facts on the ground, while also actively leveraging this information to generate greater political power and influence on those policy makers.

In recent years, some democratic theorists have turned to the idea of citizen monitoring and surveillance of government officials as a distinctive form of democratic action and power. Rather than being passive observers, on this view, citizens as watchers—as audience—can exercise a powerful form of influence that relies not on the metaphor of citizen voice (through speech, voting, or deliberation), but rather on the metaphor of the citizen's *gaze*—observing, monitoring, and surveilling decision makers, and in the process placing these decision makers under additional burdens of persuasion, accountability, and efficacy (Green 2010).[5] Such "monitory democracy" prioritizes organizations and institutions that are themselves unelected, but serve as channels for organized monitoring of public officials and actions, utilizing more dynamic but also more chaotic new forms of communication technology (e.g., see Keane 2009; Keane 2011).

Citizen monitoring or surveillance of policy makers represents what theorist Pierre Rosanvallon calls a form of "organized distrust," that is itself a "mode of action [that] cannot be dismissed as mere passivity" (Rosanvallon 2008, 34). What might look like a passivity and apathy on the part of modern voters might in fact be something quite different: a shift or displacement of political activity away from formal and conventional channels of democratic voice, towards such alternative modes of building and exercising political power. Such citizen monitoring may not take the form of a public speech or a voting action, and it may emphasize a negative critique of government rather than proposing an alternative solution. But it nevertheless represents a thoroughly *active*, and *public* assertion of civic power (Rosanvallon 2008, 185). Indeed, the idea of citizen monitoring is more suited for operating in a real, non-ideal political world: rather than positing an overly utopian vision of civic virtue, voice, or participation, monitoring taps into a more realistic form of civic engagement suited to the existing opportunities and capacities of most lay persons. It also takes as given preexisting evils and disparities of power, seeking to mitigate them by expanding popular modes of accountability, rather than trying to bracket or elide these disparities (Green 2010, 24). Citizen audits are thus not just about information, but rather link information to a specifically adversarial and oppositional stance of monitoring, accountability, and influence.

Citizen audits also represent a mode of democratic participation that is distinct from conventional interest in deliberation and voice. Deliberative democracy often casts the project of participation in the light of virtuous, good faith citizens articulating reasons in public, and seeking consensus and mutual understanding. The goal is to minimize, or at least economize, disagreement, to enable progress on matters of common concern.[6] But many citizens lack opportunities to engage in this kind of deliberative voice. Unlike deliberation, citizen audits do *not* seek consensus, or citizen voice; rather they aim to mobilize and sharpen *disagreement* through the

citizen's gaze (Green 2010, 59–61 and 179–81). But this is not to say that such citizen audits are meant to be purely inhibitory and conflictual; they do seek to contribute to systematic policy change and reform. The key is that citizen audits take a stance of *productive contestation*—neither seeking consensus, nor collapsing into raw and unchecked conflict.

Indeed, it is this combination of contestation and policy-relevant engagement that generates responsiveness from political elites by building and accumulation of power on the part of formerly powerless groups. It is the adversarial and oppositional stance that creates this necessary friction, and channeling disagreement and contestation towards productive ends. And it is the knowledge and capacity of the community groups to facilitate effective governance and policy implementation—by monitoring outcomes and providing relevant data to policy makers—that makes this contestation ultimately productive and not solely negative.

Citizens audits make two important moves relative to other accounts of civic engagement: first they are an adversarial and oppositional form of participation; and second, they are focused on monitoring and enforcement, not on policy making in the first instance. What makes citizen audits work effectively is the ways in which the place such power for monitoring and influence in the hands of constituencies themselves. By creating this form of civic power, citizen audits provides for an important mode of accountability and contestation that ultimately drives the kind of policy improvements and responsiveness celebrated by other democratic and participatory accounts of governance.[7]

Citizen audits represent a particular approach to participatory democracy. For thinkers like John Dewey, institutions and civil society organizations alike were necessary to enable citizens to educate themselves, coordinate action, and develop political power (Dewey 2004, 138–142). For Dewey, the problem of elite rule had to be resolved by expanding the ability of citizens to contest political elites and participate in the ongoing and day-to-day routines of policy and politics (Rogers 2009, 91–82). Through such empowered participation alongside experts, citizens would become more knowledgeable and capable over time. The prevailing limits on citizen capacities to express deep knowledge and engage in effective judgment were products of their lowly, disempowered position in governance, rather than an intrinsic failure on the part of lay persons (Dewey 1992; 1925). The growing empirical literature on participatory institutional design points toward institutional arrangements that depart significantly from straightforward resorts to stereotypical vehicles for participation, such as referenda or raw public opinion (for example, see Fishkin 2011; Fung 2006; Gianpaolo, Heller, and Silva 2011; Fung 2011; Fung 2003; Goodin and Dryzek 2006; Russon Gilman 2016; Goodin 2008). But many current forms of citizen engagement in policy making lack actual decisional power, taking the form of advisory or consultation forums or public hearings and other opportunities for general comment.[8] In order to spark and house participation, institutions must provide citizens with actual decisional power (Fung 2003; Fung 2006).[9] Citizen audits offers one mechanism through which these features of participatory governance—engagement of lay citizens,

expansion of their actual decisional power, and the building of political capacity over time—can be realized.

But for citizen audits to be productive in generating accountability and responsiveness—and for them to extend beyond particular instances of community organizing—they need to be embedded in a larger institutional design strategy that makes room for this kind of participatory monitoring and accountability. As we will see in the next Part, this is where the practice of citizen audits can contribute to institutional design questions in regulatory governance.

### INSTITUTIONALIZING CITIZEN AUDITS

However successful SDI or copwatching groups might be, to have impact at scale and in more diverse areas of public

promote racial equity in lending; it also build the countervailing power of minority and poor communities.[11]

Three important design features of the CRA process enabled this countervailing power—features that can be replicated in other regulatory policy designs. First, the CRA process expanded the ability of citizens to define and then monitor outcomes. The CRA proposed flexible standards for judging whether a bank met local credit needs without specifying what these needs might be. This created space for community groups to participate in defining "local needs," and evaluating themselves whether those needs were met (Barr 2005, 183–6). Second, the agency also collected and made public data on bank lending that helped citizens conduct these evaluations (Barr 2005, 113). Third, the CRA process provided citizens

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policy advocacy, citizen audits need more direct links to policy making levers and institutions, rather than being perpetually battling for influence and impact (Melish 2010).[10] The diffusion of digital technology and proliferation of government data combined with the ubiquity of mobile devices may also provide an opportunity to amplify diffusion through existing institutional organizations. Some of the impact of copwatching and SDI pavement censuses stems from publicity, shaming, and public relations. But more effective impact came where these groups were able to engage with governing bodies themselves, leveraging their organizing and monitoring activities to pressure policy makers directly.

Given their focus on street-level monitoring of officials and outcomes, the institutional site for citizens audits is likely to be in regulatory agencies, not in electoral or legislative arenas. As institutions tasked with the development and implementation of specific policies, regulatory agencies can serve as a unique "nexus of democracy and governance," creating spaces for a wider range of stakeholders and citizens to engage directly in policy formulation and implementation in a way that is difficult in context of traditional democratic institutions of elections and legislatures (Ansell 2011; Warren 2009). Citizen audits can be formally embedded in and facilitated by regulatory processes to make citizen surveillance and monitoring an essential and productive part of regulatory governance.

In the federal regulatory context, the Community Reinvestment Act of 1977 offers an example of a similar dynamic where communities leverage citizen audits and participatory monitoring to build and exercise countervailing power. While the substantive focus of the CRA is to address racial disparities in credit access and lending, the most important innovation of the CRA was its system of engaging community groups in its enforcement regime. In the process, the CRA did more than

with leverage on banks by empowering them to request agency examinations for banks that community groups felt were falling short of local needs. These examinations had real consequences, as banks needed a good CRA "score" to gain regulatory approval for mergers—giving banks an incentive to engage with those groups (Barr 2005).[12] The end result was that in cities with well-organized community groups, the CRA institutionalized some degree of countervailing power, which often led to banks pro-actively engaging those groups in direct negotiations over alternative lending practices and projects (Brescia 2008).

Regulations and public policies can thus be designed to foster countervailing power through citizen audits, if they provide a forum and means for citizens to monitor outcomes—such as the articulation of standards that outline the goals of the policy and the collecting of data or other metrics on outcomes—and if they provide citizens with real leverage by empowering them to trigger actual policy and enforcement proceedings.

Broadening beyond the CRA example, we can posit a few institutional design elements that would make it more likely for citizens audits to take place, and to have productive impact on regulations. First, agencies can specify broad policy objectives and standards that it seeks to meet. This could, in turn, create clear institutional norms for broad based civic engagement to empower community led organizations. Second, agencies can make available more forms of unfiltered data about their operations. This information would be publically available and fully transparent in easily machine readable form to spur a digital community of technologists to use this data toward civic facing ends.

These two suggestions are familiar in much of the pragmatist governance and regulatory reform literatures. But in addition, agencies can build-in hooks or levers through which

stakeholder groups can trigger a response if, in their view, these standards are not being met. This could take the form of an inspection trigger like the CRA provision, or might involve a mandatory hearing request putting the regulators in conversation with citizen auditors.

## CONCLUSION: BUILDING CIVIC CAPACITY IN THE 21st CENTURY

This very brief account of citizen audits suggests several important lessons for promoting civic engagement, democratic renewal, and civic capacity today.

First, citizen audits suggests a pathway for grassroots organizers to build more durable civic power, by organizing constituencies to act simultaneously in an oppositional, advocacy-oriented stance putting pressure on officials, and a collaborative, productive stance providing relevant information that can help improve the policies themselves. This combination of expressing grievance while contributing to governance represents a strategic shift for many organizers.[13]

Second, the idea of citizen audits suggests a very different approach to policy design and implementation on the part of bureaucrats and policy makers themselves. Instead of focusing solely on the end result, policy design can build in hooks and levers around which affected stakeholders can mobilize and engage productively. Thus by providing access today, and by building in procedures for community groups to submit their own reports or audits, policy makers can encourage this kind of productive civic engagement in ways that empower stakeholders and help ensure the effectiveness of the policies themselves.

Third, this focus on civic capacity and civic power offers an important corrective to several of our prevailing discourses about democracy reform and civic engagement. We must look beyond technology-enabled silver bullets such as transparency and open data to interrogate how these opportunities can be leveraged to build durable, lasting, and effective forms of grassroots power. At the same time, we must look beyond our conventional focus on legislative and electoral arenas to consider how the day-to-day processes of governance and bureaucracies can be harnessed to promote participation and civic power.[14] ∎

## NOTES

1. Crowdsourcing had originally been championed as an effective strategy for open-source economics production.
2. See e.g. New Urban Mechanics division in Boston, and the network of open government city policies run by Bloomberg Philanthropies.
3. See e.g., the White House's Open Government Initiative; crowdsourced complaing mechanisms developed by the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.
4. This is what Archon Fung, Mary Graham and David Weil (2007) call "targeted transparency," distinguishing from ordinary transparency regimes that simply disclose information, untethered to any particular topical focus or any link to an enforcement or advocacy response.
5. It is worth noting that this focus on building power and organizing constituents also distinguishes citizen audits from the kind of spectator power that Green valorizes. Green focuses on the power of *unorganized* spectators, "linked together in their shared experience of nondecision, nonpreference, and relative subordination to political elites" (Green 2010, 63). While the activists in citizen audits are generally outside of the decision-making or reason-giving spaces, they nevertheless are deliberately organized and mobilized as groups.

6. For a canonical account of deliberative democracy see Amy Gutmann and Dennis Thompson 1998 and 2004.
7. Rosanvallon suggests that citizen surveillance can be inhibitory and counterproductive by incentivizing inaction (Rosanvallon, 253–9). But as we will see in Part III, if embedded in an institutional structure, such monitoring and accountability can be exactly the kind of adversarial check and spark that drives productive shifts in policy responsivess.
8. See, e.g., Bohman, "Representation," 86–87; See also Warren, "Citizen Representatives," 55 ("Administrators typically understand 'participation' as a strategy for gaining advice, coopting pressures, and improving services, in this way seeking to increase the legitimacy of their policies. They are looking for citizen 'engagement' and 'involvement'—not citizen decision-making.")
9. Fung, "Varieties of Participation"; Fung, "Recipes for Public Spheres," 346. See also Carole Pateman, Participation and Democratic Theory (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 46 (The very motivation to engage in political participation requires that individuals feel a "sense of political efficacy"); Fung, Empowered Participation, 71 (Participants "must believe that there is some benefit to participation: that meetings are not just talk shops or venting sessions"); Gerald Frug, "City as a Legal Concept," Harvard Law Review 93 (1980): at 1070 ("power and participation are inextricable linked: a sense of powerlessness tends to produce apathy rather than participation, while the existence of power encourages those able to participate in its exercise to do so").
10. See Melish (2010), at 111: "Yet, despite the growing mobilization of civil society groups to produce such information, there is no current institutional mechanism in place for ensuring that such valuable testimonies, proposals, indicators, and experiences in fact penetrate regulatory policy-making and administrative programs for the poor. It is here, then, that the central regulatory challenge for the future lies: how to institutionally link the human rights-based indicators, standards, and knowledge reservoir of new accountability - data points that seek to measure and assess human wellbeing in terms that reflect the dignity-based perspectives of those in poverty themselves - with the broader institutionalized processes of new governance-based regulatory administration, competitive performance review, and decisionmaking processes."
11. In this, the CRA is part of an often-forgotten legacy of the War on Poverty and its efforts to empower citizen and community groups through welfare policy, mobilizing them as a countervailing power against established economic and political interest groups. See e.g. Melish (2010) and Cazaneve (2007).
12. Note that this regulatory oversight became more effective after 1995 regulations and revisions which specified three tests by which these firms would be evaluated: a lending test, and investment test, and the service test.
13. On this shift from "grievance to governance," see e.g. Ford convening and Olguin-Taylor (2016).
14. On the potential of participatory engagement through the regulatory process in the US, see Rahman (2017) and Rahman (2016).

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