

SEMESTER ONE 2008 POLITICAL SCIENCE PROGRAM SEMINAR SERIES

IN PRAISE OF EXCLUSION

Associate Professor Suzanne Dovi

University of Arizona

Wednesday 28 May, 4pm

Seminar Room A Coombs Building, Bldg 9, Fellows Road

Enquiries: E: seminars.polsci@anu.edu.au

In Praise of Exclusion makes three claims. First, democratic theory should not understand exclusion as anti-democratic. Political exclusion is not only unavoidable, it can also be desirable for democratic institutions to better approximate their ideals. Second, democratic theory needs to differentiate between principled and unprincipled forms of political activity. To this effect, I recommend one criterion for evaluating how democratic institutions exclude--namely, by the oppression principle. The third and more general claim, is that we need additional criteria for assessing democratic institutions: instead of evaluating democratic institutions by the ways that they include, it is also necessary to examine the institutional mechanisms and informal norms used to limit, constrain, and block out the voice of some.