Report to the Deliberative Democracy Consortium: Building a Deliberation Measurement Toolbox[HP Author1]

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Version Notes

This version has been updated, relative to Version 1, to include results from a AmericaSpeaks deliberation. Some editing changes have been made as well.

Introduction: Setting the Boundaries of this Project[1]

This project was charged with creating a toolbox of measures for evaluating democratic deliberation, a toolbox of use to practitioners and researchers of deliberation. Measures were developed and tested at multiple deliberation sites, including the Virtual Agora Project, a large National Science Foundation grant project in Pittsburgh, PA; a nationally-representative deliberation of young adults held by the Canadian Policy Research Network; deliberation among local communities in Connecticut held by Public Agenda and Connecticut Community Conversations; and a large deliberation among community members in Memphis, Tennessee held by AmericaSpeaks and Shaping America's Youth. Results from these projects help validate a toolbox of measures that show great promise as indicators of the positive consequences of democratic deliberation. This report discusses the social science theory behind these measures, presents the evidence for these measures, makes recommendations for researchers and practitioners, and provides tips regarding how practitioners can better demonstrate the value of the deliberations they hold, including suggestions for better evaluation design and better survey questions.

A good measurement toolbox should be of great value to those interested in deliberation. With a couple exceptions, there are few measures of the consequences or quality of deliberation with a proven record. Indeed, some observers have suggested that it is unlikely researchers will be able to detect most effects of deliberation[Peter Muh2], in part because the effects may be small and require repeated deliberation experiences. In an encouraging sign, this report introduces a set of measures that does detect strong effects of deliberative experiences, even in one-day deliberations with relatively few participants. In addition to the value such measures may have to individual researchers and practitioners, a toolbox of measures may also have community-wide benefits. If

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I would like to heartily thank several people without whom this project would simply not have been possible. At the Deliberative Democracy Consortium, Tonya Gonzales's guidance and oversight helped move the project along and insured necessary resources. At CPRN, I worked closely with Mary Pat MacKinnon and also with Judy Watling, Nandini Saxena, and Louise Jauvin and Mark Anderson (who is with Ekos, a polling firm CPRN used). At Public Agenda / CCC, I worked closely with Nancy Polk and also with Will Friedman. At AmericaSpeaks, I had the pleasure of working with Joe Goldman and Ashley Boyd. On the Virtual Agora Project I would like to especially express appreciation for the contributions of Kim Falk-MacArthur and Elizabeth Style, our social science coordinators, as well as Jeffrey Lam, our software developer and the many student research assistants who made the project possible. Finally, I would like to thank Jed Miller, currently at the ACLU, for connecting me with the practitioners who have collaborated with this project and Irene Wairimu, at America Speaks, who administered project funds. I have also worked with people in other deliberative organizations, but an acknowledgement of their contributions as well as the final results from the research conducted at these sites, will await a future version of this report.

researchers and practitioners could agree on a set of measures to consistently use in evaluating deliberations, the findings would be comparable across these deliberations—allowing researchers and practitioners to make inferences about what features of these deliberations have various effects—what works to bring about a given outcome and what does not.

A deliberation measurement toolbox project is potentially vast. Volumes of material currently exist regarding possible methods of assessment that could be pertinent to deliberation. Deliberation itself consists of an array of social processes whose measurement spans the gamut of possibilities in the social sciences, a vast space indeed. Any attempt to comprehensively catalog possible measures and methods for the study of deliberation would yield too much material to be practical. In addition, other projects are already underway to catalog and recommend measures for practitioners based on many past evaluative efforts by practitioners. In an examination of a number of such practitioner survey instruments for possible inclusion in this Toolbox Project, I concluded that most survey questions employed by practitioners fall short of standards of clarity and precision in social science research and do not appear to have well-elaborated theoretical underpinnings. A rigorous measurement toolbox would need to steer clear of such questions.

To avoid duplicate effort, make this project tractable, and insure the quality of the measurement toolbox, it was necessary to narrow my focus. To accomplish this, I sought to focus this endeavor in a way that played to my knowledge and strengths as well as staying within a limited budget. I was trained as a political scientist in the subfield of public opinion research and am engaged in research on the political psychology of deliberation. Thus, the focus here will be heavily on closed-response survey questions concerning psychological rather than sociological processes and attending more to the kinds of questions political scientists ask about deliberation. A promising content coding scheme for deliberative quality will also be introduced. The goal is a deliberation measurement toolbox that could encourage rigorous research on deliberation within a more integrated conceptual framework. Many methods have their value for research and evaluation. Various forms of interpretive analysis such as ethnographies and discourse analysis can provide valuable insights. I believe, however, that these many methods can complement each other and that what is provided here can help elucidate an important portion of the subject of study.

WHAT RESEARCHERS AND PRACTITIONERS SHOULD GET OUT OF THIS REPORT:

- Tested questions ("instruments") for evaluating deliberations. These are questions that have shown promise for detecting effects of deliberation.

- A theoretical framework that helps explain the larger significance of the questions and suggests directions for further examining deliberation effects.

- Practical advice on how to go about rigorously establishing the effectiveness of deliberation and guidelines for how to construct your own

survey questions. Practitioners will no doubt want to develop their own questions, in addition to considering the ones suggested here.

This report will begin with the theoretical framework, which helps clarify the questions introduced later. The theory section will explain what core questions are being asked, offer a definition of deliberation, and introduce a theoretical framework called agency theory. The next section will offer some practical advice on how to rigorously establish the effectiveness of deliberation and guidelines for constructing your own survey questions. The third section will offer a variety of survey questions, explain their purpose, and mention how they have been tested. Readers are of course invited to skip to the section of most interest to them. Several sections contain a summary for readers who do not wish to read all of that section. Look for bulleted points near the end of each section.

Theory

Core Questions

What does it mean to "evaluate a deliberation"? People have proposed multitudes of evaluative questions regarding deliberation. To grasp what it means to evaluate a deliberation, it may be helpful to identify a few core questions rather than listing these multitudes. Two general questions seem to underlie many more specific evaluative questions. These are: Is the discussion being evaluated a high-quality deliberation? What are the effects of this deliberation?

These seemingly innocuous questions readily spawn a vast array of more specific questions. For example, whether a discussion is a high-quality deliberation raises the question of what constitutes a deliberation, a subject of intensive consideration among political theorists. One key constituent of deliberation, agreed upon by many theorists, is equality or fairness. All participants and stakeholders should in principle have an equal chance to affect the topic, contents, and outcomes of the deliberation. This immediately leads to many questions about power that imply possible evaluative criteria: How deliberative is a discussion that has participants not representative of the general public or who contribute unequally? How deliberative is a discussion in which the topic has been imposed by stakeholders? Who should control what happens with decisions made deliberatively? And so forth. Thus, just one facet of the 'is this a deliberation' question raises evaluatively relevant questions that cover the inputs of deliberation (e.g., who shows), the deliberation process (who speaks), and deliberative outcomes (are decisions implemented).

Concerning the effects of deliberation, advocates and critics have long lists of potential benefits or harms, and these are properly of interest to those who evaluate deliberation. An important question within this core question is whether deliberation transforms people into better citizens. Does deliberation make people more informed, more community-

minded and concerned about others, more willing to work with others, more inquisitive, more conformist, or more disgruntled?

The potential questions that can be raised from the two core questions are enormous. Thus, again, we need to gain greater focus. I hope to accomplish this not by considering long lists of questions, but to ask what is most important. With respect to the 'is this a deliberation' question, the most important implied questions will be those about the key features of deliberation. I will, therefore, review a definition of deliberation that suggests what some of these key features might be. The reader will hopefully be left with a somewhat better grasp of what the important questions are. With respect to the consequences of deliberation, we need some model of how "mere communication" can affect people, organizations, and society. Ideally, this model would at least allow for the kinds of effects postulated by deliberation proponents as well as their critics. The model introduced below is called agency theory.

What is Deliberation?

As Ryfe observes, there is no general agreement on what deliberation is. Some practitioners, such as the researchers and practitioners who put on Deliberative Polls™ , do not seek to provide a specific definition of deliberation nor do they enforce some specific notion of deliberation in their group discussions. Instead, they seem more concerned with creating a good context for discussion with the background assumption that deliberation should occur under favorable conditions. The favorable conditions include a diverse group of discussants, provision of balanced information, and trained mediators that help provide some direction to discussion. Other practitioners, such as Ross, have developed highly elaborated methods meant to stimulate cognition and interaction in pursuit of a more specific notion of what constitutes deliberation. The "favorable conditions" approach to deliberation has something to recommend it to the extent that we are not yet certain what deliberation is and therefore exactly what to stimulate in pursuit of deliberation. On the other hand, some new evidence suggests that deliberation under favorable conditions may not provide many of the benefits that deliberation researchers and practitioners have imagined. Rosenberg finds that even well-educated people rarely engage each other's reasons during well arranged discussions. Muhlberger finds that "favorable condition" deliberations show little evidence of widely claimed benefits such as factual learning and attitude change—beyond the learning and attitude change effects of information materials made available to discussants. While three articles do not settle the issue, they do provide reason to experiment with more elaborated forms of deliberation built around definitions of deliberation. This section will briefly introduce a broad definition of deliberation that might be helpful to practitioners and researchers in thinking about how to approach deliberation and to suggest questions that might be raised regarding deliberative quality and possible outcomes. This is but one of many definitions that could be offered. I simply hope it provides some added value to this report and helps clarify the reasoning behind some of the measures suggested here.

In earlier papers , I offered a definition of deliberation I believe captures the essence of deliberation as defined by several important authors . The notion of deliberation stems from two common human experiences: first, the need to coordinate action among people and, second, the need to coordinate action within an individual—that is, the construction of coherent identity within a person. Deliberative theory, beginning with the assumption that individuals are inherently social, recognizes a role of politics in the coordination of action within an individual . From this perspective, the coordination of action within an individual is not altogether different than the coordination of action between individuals. Internal coordination is as much a negotiation of different identities, desires, and conceptions as is between-individual coordination. Political discourse can increase within-individual coordination by raising to consciousness and critical examination desires, habits, dispositions, beliefs, objectives, and assumptions people adopt without adequate reflection. Deliberation, then, serves the function of helping persons determine how to defensibly coordinate their action, with others or within themselves.

Such a defense must be verbal and conceptual—that is, reason giving. Reasons can incorporate and appeal to emotions and narratives. Emotions and narratives by themselves, however, are insufficient in the context of deliberation because they do not indicate what course of action to take. A sad story of a poor family might pull the heartstrings of everyone. Liberals, however, may take the story as evidence that government should provide better welfare benefits, while conservatives might take it as evidence that government needs to eliminate the welfare state they believe perpetuates poverty. The implications of feelings and narratives must often be fleshed out with reasons.

To these basic elements of deliberation—a verbally defensible resolution to a situation of uncoordinated action—many deliberative theorists add another key ingredient: that the defense must be based on grounds that *anyone* could accept. If the reasons offered in deliberation are meant to appeal to grounds anyone could accept, then it would be problematic if the discussion were limited to only certain individuals or if some participants did not have equal standing with others. A claim that a reason can be accepted by anyone cannot be validated in a situation in which only certain persons are allowed to hear or discuss the claim. Finally, by implying that anyone could accept their reasons as reasons, deliberative discussants also imply their sincerity in seeking to resolve conflict or find coordination exclusively through reason-giving. Deliberation does not involve coercion, strategic action, manipulation, unwillingness to listen to counterarguments, and unwillingness to accept better reasons.

DEFINING DELIBERATION:

Deliberation is discussion meant to address conflict or build coordination between or within individuals who sincerely seek to find the most universally defensible accommodation in a discussion among equals.

•Coordination: Deliberation addresses politically-relevant conflict or lack of coordination within or between people. This includes within-person lack of coordination with respect to values that affect political judgments and with respect to views that affect

the relationship between the individual and the community. Addressing these sources of lack of coordination results in self-development (self-transformation).

•Universality: The reasons offered attempt to appeal to anyone.

•Sincerity: Participants are sincere in seeking greater coordination through reason alone. This includes a willingness to listen to others and change perspectives in light of good reasons.

•Equality: All pertinent parties have equal standing in the discussion.

Deliberative quality, then, should be greater to the extent that a deliberation approximates the above definition. I developed a series of survey questions designed to specifically tap deliberative quality as defined here . Unfortunately, across a few studies, most of these measures did not fall into clear-cut factors (groups of variables measuring the same thing), as social scientists would hope to see. Perhaps people simply are not very aware of the deliberative quality of their conversations and consequently cannot report it when asked direct survey questions about this quality. I suspect, however, a different analytic approach might yield something useful with the existing data, but the jury is still out. Consequently, these deliberative quality measures were not tested for the current project, *except* in one case. That case was for two questions that did display good factor-like properties. These questions measure willingness to reveal and justify one's own position to those who disagree with it. This captures a basic but important aspect of deliberative sincerity.

Another question scale was provided to this project by my colleague Michael Morrell. The scale (a set of questions measuring the same underlying thing) measures reciprocity—participants' perceptions of whether others in their group were close-minded, argued for the sake of arguing, and so forth. These questions capture another facet of deliberative sincerity, particularly whether other participants made a sincere effort to achieve coordination.

A third question scale related to deliberative quality is social gregariousness (or "extraversion"), which is borrowed from the Big Five personality inventory. My colleague John Gastil found that groups with more gregarious participants showed appreciably more attitude change. This measure does not directly capture the notion of deliberation above, but it may indirectly capture participants' willingness to share their views and reasons, which are aspects of deliberative sincerity.

Agency Theory—Motivation

Deliberation research generally proceeds informed by one of three broad theoretical tapestries with crucially different understandings of human agency—psychological theory, liberal democratic political theory, and deliberative democratic political theory. Much psychological theory does not afford a space for human agency because it assumes

decision making is governed by deterministic and non-rational factors. Not surprisingly, standard psychological assessments of the value of deliberation prove rather grim . Such adverse conclusions are not simply a matter of assessing the facts, but at least in part due to the impossibility of even conceiving a positive role for deliberation in an approach that does not have the concept of reasonable decision makers.

Liberal democratic political theory and its social science offspring rational choice theory assume that people have predetermined preferences that control their behavior but are not themselves subject to rational reconsideration. These theories in effect assume that people are not agents with respect to their ends, but are agents, indeed expert strategists, with respect to choosing the means of achieving their ends. When it comes to community life, such "rational choice" agents interact with others not to determine the best collective goals of the community but instead to horse-trade to best achieve their predetermined preferences, which are often assumed to be self-interested. Communication serves only to provide information relevant to deciding how best to pursue these preferences. Standard rational choice theory does not take into account values or identities, beyond how these might manifest as behavioral preferences. Much political science research on deliberation is in a liberal democratic vein and focuses on how well deliberation conveys information and shifts opinions. Left out are the possible transformative effects of deliberation on individuals or society. Also, as mentioned above, recent research raises doubts about the effectiveness of deliberation, as opposed to information made available during the deliberative experience, to educate participants.

A crucial component of deliberative theory suggests that mere talk can alter people's ends, help them define their relationship to the community, and develop and pursue notions of the common good. Deliberative theory, then, charts a middling course. It suggests that people can approach being agents with respect to both means and ends in the course of deliberation. But, it also indicates that people, without deliberation, are likely far from approaching an ideal of full agency. If they were full agents, deliberation could not exert its transformative or emancipatory effect—helping individuals realize what is really in their interests, helping them realize how their interests overlap with that of their community, and clarifying when their genuine interests diverge from the community. Deliberative theory suggests people can develop their agency in the course of deliberation. Unfortunately, deliberative political theory does not have a well elaborated social science theory—as liberal democratic theory has in rational choice theory.

A SOCIAL SCIENCE OF DELIBERATION NEEDS TO EXPLAIN:

- How it is that people may not know what is in their interest.
- How people can make reasoned choices with respect to ends.
- What it means for people to develop their agency and autonomy.
- How it is that that individuals' interests can coincide with social ends.

- How mere talk proves crucial in this process.

Agency theory seeks to bring together a number of lesser-known social science theories that together may create a hospitable social science of deliberation, one that might answer the above questions. Bandura recommends an agency-oriented approach to psychology and believes the outlines of such an approach can be discerned from a number of existing research programs. Agency theory is indebted to Mead's philosophical psychology, Carver and Scheier's self-regulation theory, Vallacher and Wegner's action identification theory, Koestner's and Ryan's work on self-determination and internalization, and Rosenberg's developmental psychology. These inspirations of agency theory involve a number of tested research programs that could prove fruitful if applied to deliberation research. At this point, agency theory is more an amalgamation than a fully elaborated theory and research program, but nevertheless one that shows promise in directing deliberation research and suggesting possible answers to the difficult questions about deliberative theory listed above.

Agency Theory—Some Key Aspects

Agency theory contends that genuine agency, defined even weakly as a degree of self-awareness about the factors that influence decisions and actions, is difficult to create and maintain. Rather than the rational choice depiction of people as always rational calculators or standard psychological depictions of people as products of social and psychological forces, agency theory views people as "*burdened executives*"—struggling leaders of an often too complex mental life. Conscious mental resources are highly limited. To become an agent in a given domain, such as politics, a person must focus attention in that domain, making the content of that domain a target of willful reflection. For example, only some people may consider politics a pertinent domain for reflection. Those who do not, perhaps the majority of the public, are not genuine agents with respect to politics. Conscious attention furthermore builds both conscious and unconscious structures that help people process information in a given domain and that direct and motivate engagement. The highest level of mental structure regulating action in a given domain is identity—conceptions of who a person is and structures relevant to such conceptions. Persons with well developed identities in a given domain of action have fully internalized the goals of that domain and are more likely to spontaneously and energetically pursue these goals. For example, people can internalize a political identity, thereby becoming far more involved politically. Agency theory allows for people to be agents but suggests that such agency is not a given.

Most mental processes are parallel, unconscious, and "self-organizing" . For instance, when people learn to dance, they do not consciously learn which muscle groups to fire and when—something that could not be mastered by the slow, serial processes of consciousness. Rather, they practice until they have built a non-verbal, self-organized mental structure that can execute the necessary responses. Self-organizing processes do not, however, possess high-level unity of purpose or the capacity for reasoned correction. Conscious attention directs the dancer to practice, and it builds verbal structures that

model the dancing. These verbal structures are accessible to conscious, symbolic manipulation, which allows correcting problems. Correction involves consciously intervening at points in action execution, thereby slowly reprogramming the inaccessible self-organized structure. Similar processes affect political engagement and learning. When people focus attention on a political discussion or political information, they develop self-organized mental schema that may help improve their actions and understandings. Conscious intervention also reprograms these schemas through modeling and symbolic manipulation.

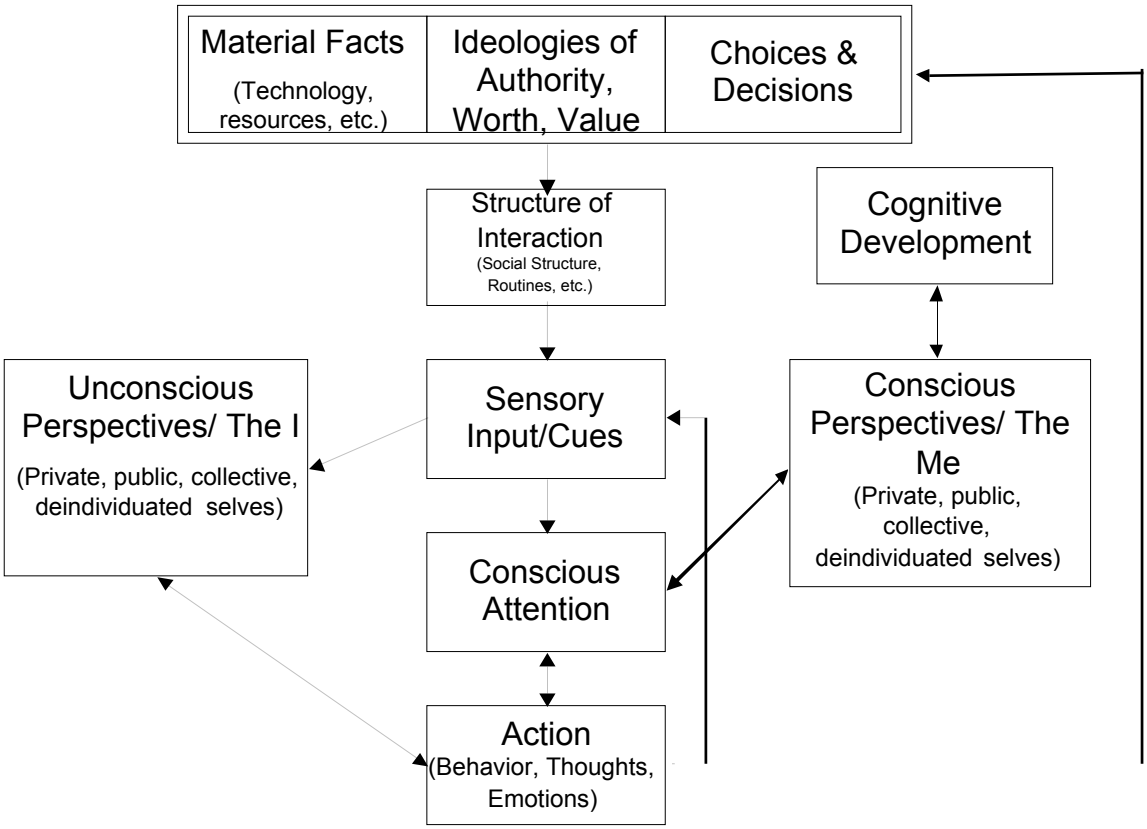
Objectives and identity play crucial roles in agency. A key way in which overburdened conscious attention can direct behavior is by posing objectives for behavior to meet and then activating pertinent non-verbal routines to meet these objectives. Objectives can be at varying levels of abstraction, such as: keep the car between those white lines on the road, drive to the Sierra Club meeting, and be an environmentalist. At the precipice of this nested hierarchy rest conceptions of identity that broadly steer a person's activity. The coherence of a person's activities will depend critically on the continuity and unity of the self—a composite of both conscious concepts and unconscious routines captured by the "I" and the "Me", respectively, in Figure 1. The self helps create coherent behavior despite varying activities and contexts. The self consists of a multitude of identities, unified to a greater degree in some people by more general self-concepts.

People find themselves enmeshed in structures of interaction—patterns of input, routines, rituals, and demands shaped by social structure—that can limit or enhance their agency. Environments that engage a person in routines or focus attention on some matters and not others "program" self-organized routines in the person, including values and beliefs that can hem in their choices. In contrast, rich social environments with conflicting demands can stimulate conscious reflection that challenges content passively absorbed from the social order . Democratic deliberation in particular may be a context in which people have an incentive to question the fundamental values and beliefs of others, stimulating critical thought and thereby self-development .

The notion of agency derived from this theory begins to meet the desiderata of a theory of agency that is both consistent with deliberative democratic theory and potentially useful to deliberative researchers. Broadly speaking, even the act of willfully moving an arm is an act of agency. But deliberation theorists have sought a notion of agency with a more critical edge, one that stresses real autonomy—conscious choice rather than uncritically absorbed routines. In agency theory, *agency is the capacity to choose and successfully execute actions consistent with a coherent and reflectively determined self.* This concept of agency helps make sense of the claim in deliberative theory that people can have agency over their preferences or values. It is only by reflexively considering their values and preferences that people exercise agency—that is, only by subjecting uncritically absorbed values and preferences to conscious and thoughtful reflection. Such reflection could, at a minimum, create greater coherence and consistency within a person's value system. It might also draw inferences about derivative values from more basic ones. Beyond this, some theory and research suggests that people can reason about moral issues and that some forms of reasoning about values and ethics are more developmentally adequate than others . I have elsewhere sketched a theory of how individuals'

conceptions of agency develop and how these can lead to differing value judgments about society and politics . The notion that people can develop their ethical and social thinking is similar to the view that deliberation can transform people in personally and socially beneficial ways. Given the gulf that lies between most people as they currently are and the kind of people necessary for a more deliberative society, developmental psychology offers hope for the realization of such a society and should therefore be of great interest to deliberative researchers and practitioners.

Figure 1: Agency Theory



Along with Mead, agency theory holds that people develop by internalizing the perspectives of others. Perspectives are mental models, often self-organized, of how others will react in a variety of contexts. Perspectives are separated from personal identities primarily in feelings of ownership and in making the perspective a habitual part of one's own routine responses. Internalizing external perspectives makes them part of the self, thereby constituting personal identity around the social. People internalize social perspectives in part because they need to understand themselves and their social functions—self-understanding is difficult and indeed very much like understanding others . From the perspective of the reflective child seeking self-understanding, the self may not occupy much of a privileged position relative to others—both are unknown territories that must be understood from a third-person perspective. As children, people

have little but social perspectives from which to do so. These perspectives give people the necessary external standpoint from which to evaluate and understand themselves. Mead goes too far by ignoring the importance of the non-social, self-interested perspective constituted by bodily needs. But this perspective does not provide people much assistance in integrating into existing social structures such as the family nor does it offer conceptual leverage toward self understanding. Social perspectives will generally dominate the nascent constitution of the self—people are more social than egocentric, though certain societies can encourage socially useful forms of egocentrism . On the other hand, Mead does recognize the agency of people in the face of their self-construction—people are not merely socially determined but can develop more general and adequate perspectives, particularly moral understandings, from which they can critique their own society and aspects of themselves that were shaped by society. Mere talk can stimulate self-transformation, particularly in a socially desirable direction, by pointing out inconsistencies in people's action and thinking that must be resolved with more general perspectives such as the moral one. It can also stimulate pro-social transformation by suggesting the conceptual categories and understandings necessary for more sophisticated social and political understandings . More broadly, talk can help people elaborate their already socially-inclined identities, thereby bringing these identities to bear in action.

SOME POTENTIAL ANSWERS TO THE KEY QUESTIONS ABOUT DELIBERATION, FROM AGENCY THEORY:

- People may not know what is in their interest because they develop in a structure of interaction that shapes their behavior, values, and beliefs without their conscious and reflective choice. These internalized behaviors, values, and beliefs may not be consistent with one another, may not be consistent with more general ethical norms, and may allow insufficient space for the needs of the individual.

- People can make reasoned choices with respect to ends by critically reflecting on the behavior, values, and beliefs they absorbed thoughtlessly from their structure of interaction. People can evaluate ends in several ways: overall coherence and consistency, inferences about derivative values from more basic ones, and development of more sophisticated social and political understandings, including ethical understandings and understandings of human agency.

- People develop their agency and autonomy through critical reflection on thoughtlessly absorbed behaviors, values, and beliefs. Such reflection helps create a coherent and reflectively determined self, without which a person could not be an agent.

- Individuals' interests can coincide with social ends because people are developmentally constituted as social creatures. People internalize social perspectives to achieve integration into society and to achieve self-understanding. They can, however, also critique society by developing more general perspectives, typically of a pro-social nature.

- Mere talk helps people develop their pro-social agency by pointing out inconsistencies within and between behavior and thought, by helping people develop more sophisticated social and political understandings, and by bringing socially-inclined identities to the fore and elaborating these identities.

Agency Theory—Stealth Democracy, the Parochial Citizen, and Sophistication of Socio-Political Understandings

Agency theory suggests a multiplicity of concepts and hypotheses for research in deliberation. Some of these are self-evident: Deliberation may increase the importance of identities such as "being a citizen" that stimulate political engagement. People who are more reflective with respect to politics or who have more active or deliberative conceptions of citizenship may learn more, show greater attitude change, and be more active in deliberation. Other hypotheses may have important terms that deserve more elaboration. For example, deliberation should help people develop more sophisticated understandings of human agency as well as society and politics. It will be important to specify what constitutes "more sophisticated understandings" of human agency, society, and politics. Transformative and developmental claims are among the most crucial for deliberative theory. There are many ways "sophisticated understandings" could be conceptualized and measured—for example, depth interviews and content analysis for Rosenberg's notion of cognitive development or a very long set of moral reasoning tasks for Rest's paper and pencil test of moral reasoning. These tests are too lengthy and involved for many practitioners or even researchers. In seeking more practical measures, I began with agency theory, Rosenberg's notion of linear reasoning, and Hibbing and Theiss-Morse's work on stealth democracy. I developed a hypothesis about the kinds of unsophisticated reasoning citizens would have about human and organizational agency and how such reasoning would manifest in political thinking. The resulting measures prove fruitful and prove to be affected by deliberation. They do not constitute direct measures of the developmental structure of reasoning, but instead indirectly measure such structure as manifested in the content of people's reasoning. Such a measure may not be fully accurate, because the same content might be arrived at in multiple ways, perhaps using different levels of sophistication. But given the nature of the content, I contend that most people who agree with these questions are less than fully sophisticated. The measures should be accurate enough for survey work. This section will explain the theory behind the measures and briefly introduce the measures, which proved important in this project.

In their widely-read book, *Stealth Democracy: Americans' Beliefs About How Government Should Work*, Hibbing and Theiss-Morse seek to show that much of the American public desires "stealth democracy"—a democracy run like a business by experts with little deliberation or public input. They find that 93.5% of a representative survey sample of the American public agree with one or more of three statements evoking "stealth democracy" beliefs. These statements express intense impatience with debate and compromise among political leaders and a desire to have government run by successful business leaders or unelected independent experts. The "stealth democracy"

thesis holds that much of the public is uninterested in politics, dislikes conflict, and believes that there is wide consensus on political goals, when in fact there is no consensus. Because the public believes there is wide consensus, it does not see the point of disagreement and conflict in politics. Hibbing and Theiss-Morse maintain that more deeply involving such a public in political life is a prescription for frustration and delegitimization of the political system. They provide a sustained argument against involving people in more deliberative forms of participation. The stealth democracy thesis has been well received by many political scientists.

I have counterposed a "parochial citizens thesis": that stealth democracy beliefs and belief in a non-existent political consensus are the product of unsophisticated understandings of human agency and society. I have shown that stealth democracy beliefs are strongly explained by reverence for authority, an incapacity to take other political perspectives, and certain cognitive oversimplifications, such as low need for cognition . These are, in turn, rooted in simplistic conceptions of human agency, particularly the agency involved in political leadership, that could be ameliorated through deliberation. Deliberation could both help clarify that reasonable people hold a diversity of views and expose discussants to complex processes of decision making that might undermine stealth democracy beliefs.

The idea of parochial citizens was inspired by the implications of linear reasoning, a particular type of causal reasoning, for understandings of human agency and the resulting implications for political reasoning. Linear reasoning is a concept from Rosenberg's cognitive developmental theory and research. The reader need not fully subscribe to this cognitive developmental theory, but only recognize that linear reasoning provides a coherent description of a type of reasoning that people might exhibit on certain topics, particularly political topics, about which they have limited understandings. In linear reasoning, people understand causality by focusing on an anchoring entity from which effects flow in a simple, direct manner. Linear reasoners conceptualize causal systems as simple linear chains involving single causes for any given effect. Unlike Rosenberg's systematic reasoners, linear reasoners do not adequately understand systems, which have multiple causes to an effect, feedback loops, and systemic properties such as goals and principles of operation.

Linear reasoning has implications for human agency, including the agency of political leadership, and these implications give rise to the parochial citizen worldview. Agency is not understood as the outcome of a complex system of give and take between action and various regulatory principles such as identities and values—as it is in agency theory (Figure 1). Instead, linear reasoners must understand agency as flowing from a single, undifferentiated anchoring entity. For most linear reasoners, that anchoring entity will be a monolithic, no-working-parts conception of a person's will. Likewise, linear thinkers will seek to understand political organization as operating under a single, monolithic will that simply and unconflictedly guides their actions—rather than the actuality of an interacting system of manifold actors regulated by often conflicting goals and principles. A linear thinker will, then, conceptualize government as under the control of a single strong leader. This parochial citizen worldview must further accommodate itself, in the West, to the knowledge that the political system is democratic. I propose it does so by

stipulating a monolithic public opinion that is interpreted by a strong leader with special knowledge of the public, such as the President, who in turn directs the government to carry out the wishes of "The Public." The government is democratic by virtue of its connection to this mythic, unconflicted public.

Linear reasoning also involves ethical judgments that evoke emotion and motivation. There will be a black or white tendency in ethical judgments of people because if people are controlled by an undifferentiated will, all decisions will reflect either the good or bad nature of that will. Similarly, the choices of an organization under the full control of a monolithic will are a direct indicator of the moral qualities of its leader. Given that an undifferentiated will directly manifests itself in the actions of government, good actions must indicate that the will is good and bad actions must indicate it is bad. The logic of the parochial citizen worldview leads to a morally totalizing comprehension of government—government is either all good or all bad.

The parochial cognitive model of government poorly reflects reality and must therefore be maintained in the face of contradictory information. Parochial citizens will be motivated to defend their cognitive model because of its normative content and their inability to see any conceptual alternative. For example, a challenge to the belief in the monolithic quality of the public will is also a challenge to the possibility of democracy, because no other kind of democracy can be conceived. To the extent that they become aware of conflicting views in the public, and surely they must be aware of conflict, linear reasoners may dismiss this conflict as representing "un-American" (or "un-British", "un-French", etc.) viewpoints. They redefine the "true" public to not include the dissenting views. Similarly, parochial citizens will be motivated to reject negative information on a government they view favorably.

The parochial citizen should be predisposed toward stealth democracy beliefs. To the extent that they view the political system as having any good effects, those with the parochial worldview are inclined to believe that all aspects of the political system are good. Dissent, then, goes against the single, all-good will that constitutes the political system. Elites are seen as essential interpreters of the one "true public will." Thus, parochial citizens should be inclined to prefer a political system without debate or compromise run by elites who interpret and implement a common public will—that is, stealth democracy.

Between the abstract logic of linear reasoning on the one hand and stealth democracy beliefs on the other are a range of intermediate attitudes that should be characteristic of parochial citizens—false beliefs in a public consensus, fear of conflict, reverence of authority, incapacity for social perspective taking, and passivity with respect to cognition. Linear reasoning inclines people toward these attitudes and these attitudes in turn stoke stealth democracy beliefs. Parochial citizens' belief in a monolithic public will naturally lead to a false belief in public consensus on policy. As already noted, however, parochial citizens may be somewhat conflicted between their desire to believe in a mythic consensus and awareness of dissent in the real public. Parochial citizens may be especially troubled by dissent precisely because it conflicts with their notion of

democracy. The parochial citizen may both believe in an abstract public consensus and fear concrete conflict.

The parochial citizen also embraces hierarchy in government, a hierarchy dominated by strong leaders. Parochial citizens do not understand systems of checks and balances, which are system principles and goals. Moreover, parochial citizens feel a strong normative call to defend or revile groups and organizations they understand in black and white terms. Thus, parochial citizens are drawn to positive views of social hierarchy and authority. Because they are apt to value a monolithic public will, parochial citizens should be disinclined toward political empathy—taking the political perspective of other racial and class groups and of those who disagree with themselves politically. The parochial citizen may also possess certain cognitive dispositions. The parochial worldview involves a serious oversimplification of reality, which means consistency is only possible by ignoring many facts, and it reinforces an unquestioning attitude by reviling dissent itself. Thus, parochial citizens should be inclined toward moderately low need for cognition (enjoyment of thinking) and toward high need for structure-order (a desire for certainty and order). By undermining the simplistic conception of agency that motivates these attitudes and orientations, deliberation may help to undermine them. The effects of deliberation on several of these attributes were tested during the course of this Toolbox Project, and the results will be discussed below.

POTENTIAL IMPLICATIONS OF AGENCY THEORY FOR STUDYING THE POLITICAL SOPHISTICATION EFFECTS OF DELIBERATION:

- A crucial implication of deliberative theory is that deliberation develops socio-political reasoning. The question is how to measure increases in the sophistication of such reasoning. Agency and developmental theory offer some insights via their implications for how people understand human agency.

- Linear understandings of causality give rise to inadequate understandings of human agency.

    - Linear reasoners cannot conceptualize agency in systemic terms—of goals and principles that interact with action.

    - Agency is instead understood as driven by a monolithic will.

    - The notion of a monolithic will gives rise to black and white ethical evaluations of individuals.

- Linear understandings of human agency can give rise to less sophisticated socio-political reasoning.

    - Linear reasoners do not conceive government as a complex, balanced system but as an extension of the will of a strong leader.

    - Democracy is construed as the outcome of a monolithic public will as interpreted by a strong and good leader.

        - A monolithic public will can only be imagined by redefining dissenting voices as not part of the "true" public.
        - While the "true" public is imagined to be without conflict, conflict in the real public is viewed as a threat.
    - As the product of the monolithic will of a single leader, governments are either all good or all bad.

- Less sophisticated socio-political reasoning might be detected in the form of:
    - Stealth democracy beliefs—a question scale measuring the belief that government should be run by experts or business leaders with little discussion or public input.
    - Measures indicating submissive attitudes toward authority.
    - Measures indicating unwillingness to take alternative socio-political perspectives.
    - Measures indicating low inclination toward cognitive engagement.
    - Direct measures of linear political attitudes—views associated with the parochial citizen.

Practice

This section will provide a little useful advice on how to go about evaluating deliberation and how to write better questions for such evaluation.

Improving Evaluation of Deliberation: Notes on Preferred Methods

When researchers or practitioners say that deliberation has positive consequences, they are making causal claims—namely that certain outcomes such as participants' trust in society change because people deliberated. Causal claims are best evaluated by rigorous experimental methods and standard practices of evaluation such as statistical methods and well-written survey instruments. To the extent that deliberative practitioners would like to prove to potential funders that their efforts have positive outcomes, they should embrace such methods, albeit within the limits of their resources. Certainly the results of the Toolbox research indicates that more rigorous methods can indeed discover clear benefits from deliberation.

Assessing a claim that deliberation caused changes in some variable, such as social trust, requires measuring the variable at two points in time (or to compare a control with an

experimental groups—a point I will take up in a moment). No one can see change by assessing a variable at only one point in time. Several practitioner evaluation surveys I have seen, however, seek to do just this. Typically, the survey was meant to be administered only after the deliberation, and participants were asked whether they thought that, for example, they had learned something or their views had changed. Such subjective impressions from participants need not be reliable, particularly given that participants know what the practitioners want to hear. Anyone who has not been alienated by the deliberation experience will likely report that they have experienced some positive changes, whether or not they have. The right way to determine whether participants have learned something would be to quiz them about their knowledge. To see if their views, social trust, or some other attribute has changed, practitioners might ask about these prior to deliberation and then after. The two responses can be compared to determine if there has been directional change. Simple statistical tests, such as the t-test, could also be applied to ascertain that the change is not simply a matter of random fluctuation but due to genuine changes.

Asking people before and after questions to detect change (the so-called "pre-post research design") would be a decided improvement over how evaluation has at times been conducted, but it is not perfect. Of course, participants can decide to artificially inflate responses in the post-questionnaire. This will always remain a possibility, though inflation should be less likely to occur than in the case of participants being directly asked whether they believe there has been change. There will be less clear-cut demand on participants to provide a socially desirable response. Also, participants seeking to make a convincing case that matters have improved will not simply report maximized values for the variable of interest in the post-deliberation survey. They will seek to give a somewhat better value than in the pre-deliberation survey. Doing this, however, would require that they remember their pre-deliberation survey response. If participants cannot remember that pre-deliberation survey response, they should be more likely to give an honest rather than artificially elevated response.

A number of approaches can be used to reduce the chances that participants will remember their pre-deliberation survey responses and thereby use these responses as a base from which to exaggerate the effects of deliberation. It will be most difficult for them to remember their pre-deliberation response on longer questionnaires, when much time passes between pre- and post- survey, and when the pre- and post-surveys present questions in different order—providing fewer contextual cues that aid recollection of earlier responses. Ideally, too, questions should have less than self-evident relations to how the deliberation is evaluated. If participants cannot see how a question will be used for evaluation, they will not have cause to inflate their responses. Also, the instructions for the survey can help insure participants do not try to "help" the practitioner by exaggerating effects. Participants asked to "Just give your gut reaction." and to "Interpret and answer each question for what it says. You don't need to worry about its relation to other questions." may be less likely to spend the time needed to inflate their responses. A more compelling evaluation, then, would attempt to insure such good conditions. The research for this Toolbox Project adopted a pre-post research design, a modestly long 10-15 minute survey, post-deliberation questions in a different order than the pre-deliberation questions, and many questions with non-obvious relationships to the

evaluation of the deliberation experience. In addition, the above instructions were provided. Ideally, more than a day should pass between the pre- and post-surveys, but this was not always practical. In one of the study sites for this project, participants deliberated over several days, so the pre- and post-surveys were separated by this number of days. In other sites, however, the deliberation was a one-day affair. It would have been too expensive to administer the survey at a later (or earlier) date by mail and there would have been lower response rates to a mail questionnaire than one given while participants were physically present. Ideally, however, the pre-survey for a one-day deliberation might be made obligatory for participants and sent by mail. Those who do not complete it in advance could be given the survey on the day of the deliberation, to eliminate non-response.

Even with the above approaches, however, a pre-post survey design is not immune to criticism. Technically, it is a quasi-experimental design, not a true experimental design. A number of difficulties might arise that would undermine the conclusion that observed pre- to post- deliberation changes in a variable of interest occurred because of deliberation. One difficulty is "historical" or "maturation" effects. For example, suppose a deliberation takes place over a period of weeks on some topic such as the U.S. response to terror. The practitioner can dutifully measure opinions before and after the deliberation and find considerable change. But observed change might be due to something else that happened during the intervening period, besides deliberation. A major terrorist event might have occurred during the period, shifting the entire public's attitudes. The events that cause changes need not be as evident as this. Another concern is that the pre-survey may be "reactive"—the pre-survey and not the deliberation caused observed changes from pre- to post-survey. For instance, quizzing participants with multiple choice factual questions prior to deliberation may get them to expect such questions after deliberation and thereby to look for answers to these questions, answers they might not seek without the pre-survey. An extended time period between the pre-survey and the deliberation might help substantially reduce such effects, by allowing participants to forget the exact questions. It may, however, be difficult to make the time period so long that participants would not remember that they might be quizzed about factual matters, something that itself may have an effect.

To address concerns about historical effects or pre-questionnaire reactivity, evaluators should consider using true experimental methods, provided they have the resources to do so. Such methods invariably involve a "control group"—a group of people who are not subject to the "experimental treatment," which in this case is deliberation. One basic and neat experimental method is the "post-test only" method. In this method, there is no pre-survey. Participants are assigned randomly into a group of deliberators and a non-deliberative control group. Both groups get just a post-survey. The mean value of the deliberators on some variable of interest (social trust, attitudes, etc.) is then compared with the mean value of the control group. If deliberation has an effect, that effect should be apparent from different mean values in the two groups. Given that participants were assigned to the groups at random, it is highly unlikely that there will be a statistically significant difference between them unless deliberation has an effect. Evaluators can have a high degree of certainty that any detected difference is indeed due to deliberation and not the result of some undetected historical effect or reactivity to the survey.

A shortcoming of the post-test only method is that it takes appreciably more people to detect an effect than in the pre-post design. Additional people are needed for a control group and the statistical test for comparing means cannot examine changes in means within each participant but only between two groups. Depending on the strength and reliability of the effects of deliberation being examined, it could take a large number of participants to detect the effect. I would certainly not attempt such a post-test only design unless I had at least 70 participants per group, and I would have reservations about attempting it with less than 100 participants per group unless I was convinced that the changes in the variable of interest will be strong and reliable. A variety of more complex designs might be helpful—such as a design in which there is a control group, a post-test only experimental group (which gets to deliberate), and a pre-post group. This combination could use the control group to help rule out historical effects and a comparison of the post-test only with the pre-post group to rule out reactivity to the survey. Assuming these checks work out, the pre-post group might provide greater power to detect subtle statistical changes in variables of interest. Nevertheless, given the large number of participants required and the use of a randomized control group, true experimental methods would be difficult for practitioners to use. Given the preliminary state of knowledge of much deliberation research, it may make the most sense for practitioners to use a pre-post design to help identify what changes deliberation likely brings about and how strong these changes are. Where greater certainty about a given effect is desirable, resources are available, and pre-post effects look large enough to be detected in a post-test only design, practitioners should consider the post-test only design or a more sophisticated design, such as those described in Campbell and Stanley . Also, such designs should be considered in special cases in which it seems likely that a historical effect or survey reactivity might be in play. A prolonged deliberation on a hot political issue may well be affected by new information in the media. A pre-test with knowledge questions will likely be reactive.

A final note about evaluating deliberation concerns the multi-faceted treatment which is deliberation. Typical deliberations involve not merely discussion but also information materials, chances to query experts, and so forth. The first concern of practitioners may be the whole ball of wax—whether the combination of these treatments has desirable effects. Nevertheless, with positive results practitioners may be inclined to conclude that discussion led to the favorable outcome. For example, a number of results from the Deliberative Poll indicate that these polls change attitudes and enhance the information of participants . Many observers have been too quick to conclude that discussion promotes these changes. More recent research designed to separate the effects of discussion from information finds little effect of discussion as opposed to information readings in similar deliberative settings . This research separated the effects by including a control group that received informative readings but was not allowed to deliberate. (This does not mean that discussion cannot affect attitudes or educate participants, but that no net effect above and beyond the effects of informative reading and individual contemplation were found in this study.)

SOME RECOMMENDATIONS TOWARD IMPROVING THE EVALUATION OF DELIBERATION:

- Practitioners should evaluate deliberation with a pre-post evaluation design. That is, they should evaluate a variable of interest both before and after deliberation. The two measures should then be tested to determine if they are statistically different from each other.

- Steps should be taken to reduce the likelihood that participants will seek to 'help' the evaluator by inflating the effects of deliberation.

    - Participants should not be asked whether they believe change has occurred. Change should be evaluated as differences in variables of interest between pre- and post-questionnaires.

    - Steps should be taken to reduce participants' recollection of their pre-deliberation questionnaire responses so they cannot use that recollection as a base to exaggerate post-deliberation responses. These steps include:

    - Give participants longer questionnaires. 10-15 minute questionnaires may be practical and long enough to reduce simple memory.

    - If resources permit, allow more than a day to pass between pre- and post-surveys. A pre- survey can be provided by mail and participants required to either bring the completed questionnaire with them to deliberation or, if they fail to do so, take the questionnaire just prior to deliberation.

    - The pre- and post- surveys should have questions that are mixed up and in differing orders from each other, so as to reduce contextual cues for memory.

    - Participants can be instructed to "Just give your gut reaction." and to "Interpret and answer each question for what it says. You don't need to worry about its relation to other questions."

    - You can have greater confidence in answers to questions for which the socially desirable response is not obvious—for which participants do not readily see what it is the evaluator wants to hear.

- The pre-post evaluation design is helpful and costs little. On the other hand, it is not an ideal experimental design and is subject to two weaknesses: historical / maturation effects and reactiveness to the pre-survey.

- Practitioners might utilize a true experimental method, such as the post-test only design. In this design, participants are randomly assigned to a group that deliberates and one that does not (a control group). The effects of deliberation can be measured by differences between the means of the deliberating and the control group. This design takes many more participants. It is recommended under certain conditions:

- Resources needed to conduct a true experimental design are available. If an effect is not strong and reliable, it may take large numbers of participants to detect it in a post-test only design. I would use a minimum of 70 participants each in the control and deliberating group for any experiment.

- A pre-post design has already established evidence of an effect of deliberation and an extra degree of certainty, via a true experiment, is desired. The strength of the effect found in the pre-post design can help indicate how large a sample of participants will be needed for an experiment.

- …OR There are good reasons to think that historical or survey reactiveness will affect the variable of interest. This might occur particularly if:

    - Participants are discussing a hot-button issue and there's a chance they could encounter news on the issue that might change their views independent of the deliberation.

    - Participants are alerted in a pre-test that they will be quizzed about something in the post-test, such as issue knowledge items.

- Be careful not to conclude that deliberation itself affected an outcome if it is possible that observed changes are due to something other than discussion, such as information readings.

Creating Your Own Survey Questions

Although this project suggests a number of well-written question scales, researchers and practitioners will be inclined to compose their own questions to meet their specific needs. Composing such questions is something of an art with which many are not familiar. In the course of this project, I evaluated a number of questionnaires put together by practitioners. These questionnaires fell much short of standards of questionnaire and question item design used by researchers. Badly written questions raise questions about any inferences that are drawn about them. To help people improve question wording, I would like to briefly mention here some principles I use when writing questions. This may provide some idea of what is involved in writing good questions. With your interest stimulated, you may want to consult more complete treatments of questionnaire design such as Converse and Presser or Dillman .

TIPS FOR WRITING BETTER SURVEY QUESTIONS:

- Keep it simple and clear

    - Use short, simple sentences, as much as possible.

- Use simple words.

- Avoid if…then clauses. Answers to if…then type questions are ambiguous. They could indicate respondent agreement or disagreement with either or both of the two clauses.

- Avoid compound questions. Ask only one question at a time.

- Avoid switching from first to third person, which can be confusing. A first person question item is phrased like this: "I think other discussants did not listen carefully to my comments" (followed by a scale with endpoints of 'Strongly Disagree' and 'Strongly Agree'). A third person item is phrased like this: "Did you find the moderator helpful?" I find first person questions more flexible and useful.

• Keep it manageable—people have limited memories, processing abilities, and attention spans

  - Ask yourself whether you could answer your own question and how accurately. For example, asking respondents how many times in the past year they discussed politics is an exceedingly difficult question to answer.

  - For difficult memory tasks, you can simplify the task, break it down, and ask questions that help respondents remember. For example, you could ask how long it has been since a person's last political discussion—which may serve as a good indicator of how often that person talks about politics. You could ask the person to indicate what kinds of places they discuss politics—which may help them remember how often they discuss politics. More specific questions like this could then be followed by the difficult memory question.

  - More specific questions are easier to answer than general ones. They are also less ambiguous to interpret. Naturally, practitioners want to have answers to such general questions as "How did you like the deliberation experience?" But if a person says they did not like the experience, this could mean a wide variety of things, such as: they had a personal conflict with someone, they may not have liked the participation incentive, they may have felt the discussion was too conflictual, and so forth.

  - Close-ended questions (questions with fixed response options as opposed to an open-ended verbal or written reply) can help jog participant memory. Close-ended questions tap recognition, not recall.

  - Do not make your questionnaire too long. Participants could lose their focus and give arbitrary answers. Ten to 15 minute questionnaires are good in most deliberation situations.

- Ask multiple questions for each thing you want to measure. For example, do not ask just one question about social trust, ask three or more. People can react quite differently than you might expect to a given question, and different people might react differently to differences in wording. Asking about the same thing multiple times lets you check to see if all the questions are well-correlated. If not, toss out the questions that do not fit. Also, if you average across your questions, you will have a much more reliable indicator than from any one question.

- Use close-ended questions when you are clear on what you want to know and think the close-ended question would not be too leading. Open-ended questions can be very time-consuming to analyze and can yield little firm information. Open-ended questions are good for exploring a topic about which little is known. They may also be helpful in revealing people's thought processes.

- Have as many people as you can take your survey to get their impressions about what the questions mean and whether they capture what they should. You may in particular want to seek out people like those in the community that will be taking your final questionnaire.

Measures

This section provides background on the research that was conducted and then introduces the recommended measures and the evidence for them.

Study Background

The Deliberative Democracy Consortium made available a small grant to run surveys at several deliberation "sites"—organizations that host deliberations. A number of sites indicated an interest in participating in this research, including the Virtual Agora Project (VAProject), the Canadian Policy Research Networks Inc. (CPRN), Public Agenda / Connecticut Community Conversations, AmericaSpeaks, Study Circles, and e-thePeople. A minimal objective was to do a pre- and post-deliberation survey at each of these sites. At this time, data is available for analysis from the VAProject, CPRN, Public Agenda / CCC, and AmericaSpeaks. The data from a Study Circles project is currently being prepared for analysis. This report will be updated as new information becomes available and as academic-quality analyses, which can take considerable time, are performed. While this report is preliminary, the results are encouraging and should prove helpful to practitioners as well as researchers. Before the measures and the supporting data for them are introduced, readers will need a little background on each of the study sites and what research was conducted at them.

The Virtual Agora Project (VAProject): The VAProject was a $2.1 million, three-year information technology and social research project funded by the National Science

Foundation that ended in 2005. The project was conducted at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, PA. Its goal was to determine the social and political effects of online and face-to-face political deliberation. I was a Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI) on this project and was the author of the project's research, though decisions about research resources were made by the Primary PI. The Primary PI on the project was Peter Shane, now at Ohio State University, and the other co-PI was Robert Cavalier of Carnegie Mellon University. Participants were a representative-sample of 568 Pittsburgh residents selected by random digit dialing. The response rate was 8.1% overall, reflecting the lengthiness of the project, a requirement to participate in an all-day on-campus portion of the study, a lack of up-front rewards, a late start to recruitment, and so forth. Nevertheless, respondents were highly similar to the Pittsburgh population in terms of ethnicity, gender, and age, but were somewhat more educated than the general population—the median education was "some college." The project consisted of two phases. Phase 1 involved a one-day on-campus deliberation in which participants were assigned to three groups: no deliberation, deliberation online, and deliberation face-to-face. All participants received informative readings and were given time to read them during the day of deliberation. The topic during Phase 1 was assigned and concerned whether Pittsburgh should close additional public schools given persistent population decline and several options for improving the quality of more densely populated schools. Closing schools has been a politically difficult issue in Pittsburgh for more than a decade. Participants were given a brief survey of their issue positions when they were initially recruited, typically weeks before their Phase 1 day of deliberation. They received extensive surveys both at the beginning and end of the day of deliberation. Phase 2 involved an eight-month follow-up in which people deliberated online and answered online surveys. Most data analyses reported here focus on the results of Phase 1, which was held in July 2004. The preponderance of these analyses follow a post-test only research design, while a few involve a pre-post design.

I used the VAProject as a "Step 1" of this Toolbox Project—a chance to screen a large number of possible question scales for an effect of deliberation and identify the few that showed clear signs of such an effect. Data from the VAProject collected over the span of the project include over 1400 survey questions and 75 scales (sets of questions seeking to tap the same underlying variable). These scales included a variety of community-relevant effects including social trust, social networks, political values, political efficacy and agency, conflict, consensus, community mindedness, inclusiveness, and perceived legitimacy. The variables also included effects on decisions, including attitude change, factual knowledge, sophistication of decision rationales, attitude strength, and the bias, breadth, and depth of information search. Deliberation quality was measured with a battery of questions about how the discussion groups performed, how individuals performed, and a variety of general evaluations of group outcomes. The online dialogues have now been examined for deliberative quality using a content analysis coding scheme by my colleague Jennifer Stromer-Galley of the State University of New York at Albany. Her results provide fascinating evidence about the effectiveness of the survey measures of deliberative quality and various agency variables.

Canadian Policy Research Networks Inc. (CPRN): CPRN (http://www.cprn.org) was founded by in 1994 by Judith Maxwell, the last Chair of the Economic Council of

Canada. CPRN seeks to "create knowledge and lead public dialogue and debate on social and economic issues important to the well-being of Canadians." It attempts to promote "a more just, prosperous, and caring society" through public dialogue and research. CPRN carried out a three-day National Dialogue and Summit starting November 24, 2005 in Ottawa, Canada. Participants were a representative sample of Canadian youth 18-25 selected by random digit dialing with some oversampling to insure representation of minority groups. Participants were flown to Ottawa and put up at the Marriott Hotel at CPRN expense, including meals, but did not receive a stipend or honorarium. Participants interacted with dozens of government officials and proceedings were covered by the media. More project details, including the information readings, can be found at the CPRN website.

At the three-day gathering, 145 young people had an intense dialogue, first with each other and then with 40 decision makers from the public, community and private sectors. One hundred nineteen of these participants answered the questionnaires included in this study. The broad theme of their conversation was: "What kind of Canada do we want? What do we and others have to do to make our vision a reality?" To make the discussion more concrete, the dialogue probed four broad issues young people identified as especially important: learning, work, environment and health. Two-hundred and fifty-five young adults were contacted and asked to participate, and about 98 completed most of both Toolbox surveys, for a response rate of 38%—an excellent response rate for deliberative practice and research which typically has response rates in the 15%-25% range. Participants in the dialogue very closely resemble the demographics of the original 255 randomly sampled contacts and of the youth population of Canada.

Public Agenda / Connecticut Community Conversations: Public Agenda (http://www.publicagenda.org) describes itself in these terms: "Public Agenda is a nonprofit opinion research and civic engagement organization. Founded in 1975 by former U.S. Secretary of State Cyrus Vance and Daniel Yankelovich, the social scientist and author, Public Agenda is well respected for its influential public opinion studies, balanced citizen education materials, and community-based public engagement initiatives. Its mission is to help citizens and communities engage issues of the day, and to help leaders better appreciate the public's concerns, values and thinking." Public Agenda's community conversation model has been adapted and applied in 81 communities across Connecticut since 1997 through an initiative called Conversations About Education (www.ctconversations.org) under the leadership of the League of Women Voters of Connecticut and the William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund. In particular, this study focuses on several of these Connecticut Community Conversations held in Connecticut towns from March to November 2005—including Killingly, Plymouth, W. Hartford, Torrington, Wethersfield, and Windham. In total, 124 persons at these meetings provided before and after questionnaires for this project. All but one of these deliberations examined the issue of government policies regarding child care. One deliberation examined school quality. Potential participants were recruited from school mailing lists and other community sources. Hard data was not kept regarding how many community members were contacted, but by the organizers' estimation the response rate was about 16%.

AmericaSpeaks: AmericaSpeaks (http://www.americaspeaks.org/) is well known for conducting large-scale public deliberations across the United States, having engaged over 65,000 people in more than 50 large-scale forums. AmericaSpeaks describes itself as committed to developing innovative deliberation methods and tools to counter the growth and power of special interest groups and to reduce the consequent alienation of citizens. It seeks "to reverse this dangerous trend and reinvigorate our democracy by engaging millions of Americans in discussions on critical policy issues."

The research reported here concerns a large public deliberation AmericaSpeaks organized in Memphis, Tennessee at the request of Shaping America's Youth and held in conjunction with local partner Healthy Memphis Common Table in January 2006. The goal of discussion was to "identify what individuals, families, businesses, government, schools, medical and health institutions and other sectors of the community can do to improve childhood physical activity and nutrition," particularly to curb childhood obesity. Unlike other deliberation methods, the AmericaSpeaks method involves bringing together large numbers of people in a common room. Discussion groups sit at a given table but communication occurs between the tables and a central stage. Question responses, questions, and thoughts can be communicated via a laptop and wireless devices to the central stage and from there broadcast to the entire room. Eight-hundred and eighty people, including parents, youth, educators, business people, government employees, and others participated. Because they were recruited via mass media appeals, a response rate cannot be ascertained. Participants were demographically diverse, though not identical to the broader public. In terms of age and ethnicity, they were similar to the broader public (http://shapingamericasyouth.org/memphis_preliminary_report_2006-01-21.pdf?cid=299), but participants were wealthier than the general public and contained more women. Not all participants completed both the pre-deliberation and post-deliberation surveys for the present report.

The data considered in this report comes from the reasonably complete pre- and post-deliberation surveys of 275 of the participants. In terms of age, ethnicity, and gender, survey respondents are highly similar to the deliberation participants generally. They could not be compared in terms of income because education rather than income was collected for the current study. Only about a third of study respondents had high school education or less, which is consistent with the higher income of participants generally.

The Deliberative Measurement Toolbox and Supporting Results

The sections below introduce the measures of the Deliberative Measurement Toolbox. Each section mentions some theoretical background for each measure. A full understanding of the measure may require a reading of the theory section above. Several of these measures are copyrighted by me, but you have my permission to use them for non-profit purposes. If you do plan to use the measures, I would appreciate your letting me know. Other measures are from academic research projects and are free to use. Except for analyses from the Virtual Agora Project for which there are academic papers, data analyses reported here may be refined in the future. Given the quantity and quality

of data collected by this project, it will take years to put results in final academic publications utilizing more advanced statistical techniques.

Deliberative Consequences

This sub-section presents and discusses measures of deliberative consequences: measures that are meant to capture attributes of participants that might change in positive or negative ways as a consequence of deliberation and dialogue. These measures can help practitioners and researchers measure the benefits (or, possibly, harms) of deliberative engagement.

SOCIAL TRUST

Theory Synopsis: Robert Putnam has popularized the idea of social capital—that social networks and social trust have manifold benefits for the community, including increasing civic engagement and improving the economy. Social trust can readily be incorporated into the agency theory framework as well. General social trust is an expectation that others will act consistently with positive social norms. Such expectations should affect people's behavior, making it more likely that they will engage in actions they believe will be collectively beneficial. Bandura indicates that people are more likely to act toward community ends if they believe that their group would be collectively efficacious—capable of addressing a problem. But even if a group might be efficacious if many group members were to act, there remains the question of whether sufficiently many will collaborate to achieve the goal. Someone with high social trust will be more likely to believe that others in the community can be counted on to act on community problems, and thereby feel an obligation to do their part. Together with collective efficacy, social trust promotes community engagement. Agency theory may help explain why people pay attention to collective efficacy rather than just their own individual efficacy. By internalizing collective identities, people expand their selves to include concerns of the community.

The Measures:

Q1. Most people can be trusted. (This statement is followed by a seven point scale with labels of Strongly Disagree / Neither / Strongly Agree, which is called a Likert scale. Participants are instructed to indicate how strongly they agree or disagree with each statement. All questions here are on Likert scales unless otherwise specified.)

Q2. You can't be too careful in dealing with people.

Q3. Most of the time people try to be helpful.

Q4. People are mostly just looking out for themselves.

The first two questions above are from the National Opinion Research Center, General Social Surveys, 1972-1994, Cumulative Codebook, November, 1994. The second two are from the Monitoring the Future project 1976-1995, as employed in Rahn and Transue. All questions have been adapted to a Likert format by me.

The Findings: I found highly significant increases in social trust from pre- to post-deliberation in the CPRN, Public Agenda / CCC, and AmericaSpeaks studies (p=.0001 for all, t-tests; note that the pre-post design implicitly controls for spuriousness effects of demographics or other variables because it examines within-person change). The Virtual Agora Project (VAProject) could not test this hypothesis because social trust was collected as a control in the first survey of Phase 1 and not the second. The VAProject did find a significant increase in a measure of politically-oriented social capital for online deliberations that reminded participants of their citizenship (p=.004, between-groups regression analysis). This is measured by a series of questions regarding expectations that people will collaborate together to solve community problems.

Discussion: In pre-post surveys at professional deliberation organizations, social trust does consistently rise. Price also finds that amount of participation in online political discussion increases social trust. Post-test only research would be desirable to insure that discussion, not some other aspect of the deliberative experience, increases social trust.

Implications: The effect on social trust is powerful and consistent. Practitioners should use these measures.

POLITICAL INTEREST

Theory Synopsis: Political scientists have long hypothesized and found that political interest increases political participation, civic engagement, and political knowledgeability . Political interest can be readily incorporated into an agency theory framework as cognitive structures that increase the propensity to focus attention on politics. These structures are likely related to political reflection (viewing politics as a pertinent object of consideration) and the internalization of a political identity.

The Measures:

Q1. I am interested in national politics and national affairs. (Local political interest.)

Q2. I am interested in local community politics and local community affairs. (National political interest.)

These questions adapted from the American Citizen Participation Study, 1990, ICPSR 6635 . They were changed to first person tense to be more consistent with other questions.

The Findings: Local political interest proved to significantly increase (p=.049, one-sided) in the CPRN study, while national political interest significantly increased in the

Public Agenda / CCC and AmericaSpeaks studies (p=.001 and p=.045, respectively, both one-sided). No evidence of a significant difference between discussants and non-discussants was found in the VAProject.

Discussion: There are several reasons political interest may not have increased in the VAProject. Participants were moderately well-educated and had high levels of political interest, at least by the end of the Phase 1 deliberations. They may not have had much room for growth. Also, the VAProject does not capture the overall effect of the deliberation experience but seeks to identify the effect of discussion versus non-discussion. Non-discussants came to campus and read and contemplated public policy issues. Perhaps political interest rises merely as a consequence of coming to a community institution and thinking about a social issue over several hours. This could explain why no effect was found on the post-test only VAProject, but was found in the three pre-post studies. On the other hand, the specific features of the VAProject may have prevented an effect on political interest. These features might include the community issue examined, the way participants were moderated, or the nature of the participants. Even if discussion does not play a direct role in the effects observed, I doubt many participants would come to an event involving their being sent to a room to read policy materials on their own. Thus, discussion at a minimum deserves credit for motivating reading.

It is odd that local political interest rose at CPRN, where the topics were more national issues, and national interest rose at Public Agenda / CCC, where the topic could have been taken to be more of local interest. The effect on political interest might depend heavily on the participants and how they construe the topic. The younger participants in CPRN may have transferred an interest in national topics to their local interests and vice versa for the Public Agenda / CCC participants.

Implications: Either national or local political interest increased in the pre-post surveys at all three professional deliberation organizations, though which changed was somewhat unexpected. These measures are of use to practitioners, but effects may depend on the nature of the deliberation and the participants. The effect at one organization was not strong. At least 100 participants would be best for detecting political interest effects. More specific measures of political reflectiveness may be desirable.

Political Identity

Theory Synopsis: In agency theory (see theory section above), identity sits at the top of a hierarchy of mental structures that regulate behavior. To the extent that an identity is central to a person's self-concept, it will affect behavior. If deliberation could alter the importance of a given identity, it could affect a wide variety of behaviors. Indeed, the VAProject shows a strong relationship between the following identity measures and self-reported political engagement.

The Measures:

Q1. Being politically conscious is important to who I am. (Political consciousness)

Q2. Being a citizen is important to who I am. (Citizen identity)

Q3. Being a member of my community is important to who I am. (Community identity)

I created these questions.

The Findings: The VAProject found that deliberation significant increased citizen identity, and that this identity significantly correlates with a variety of self-reported political participation actions, sense of political efficacy, political perspective taking, and humanitarianism . The study also found that political consciousness has a wider and stronger impact on political participation than citizen identity. Unfortunately, political consciousness was not affected by the deliberation during the study period. In the CPRN study, citizen identity also rose significantly, while political consciousness and community identity showed trend effects (p=.002, .06, and .08, respectively, two-sided). The Public Agenda / CCC study found that deliberation increased community identity and political consciousness (p=.003, .03).

Discussion: In each study, one or another collective political identity was enhanced through deliberation. If these changes last past the end of a deliberation, they may improve long-term political participation and improve other qualities of citizenship such as perspective taking and humanitarianism. More research on these hypothesized effects would be desirable.

Implications: While the specific political identity enhanced varies across the deliberations studied, at least one identity seems enhanced at every deliberation site. Given the important potential effects of such identity enhancement, these measures are recommended for deliberative practitioners.

DELIBERATIVE CITIZENSHIP

Theory Synopsis: While the political identity measures capture the salience of various political identities, another attribute that might change is the *content* of political identities. In particular, political identities may come to involve norms of greater engagement with political life. Agency theory views identity as a high-level regulatory factor in behavior.

The Measures:

Q1. A good citizen should seek political discussion. (These questions had True / False response options. It is possible that Likert scales would work as well or better. True / False responses were used because the questions were part of a reaction time experiment in the original VAProject.)

Q2. A good citizen should discuss politics with those who disagree with them.

Q3. A good citizen should be willing to justify their political views.

Q4. A good citizen should listen to people who disagree with them politically.

Q5. A good citizen should allow others to challenge their political beliefs.

The scale tested in the Public Agenda / CCC and CPRN studies included only questions 1 and 2 above. The VAProject tested a scale with questions 2, 3, 4, and 5.

I created these questions.

The Findings: In the VAProject data, I found that its variant of this scale had good scale properties that differentiated the scale from other identity constructs (confirmatory factor analysis with polychoric correlations). I also found that deliberative citizenship increased ability to answer post-deliberation factual questions about the policy issues discussed, but only among those who deliberated. This indicates that people who subscribe to deliberative citizenship learn more from discussion than those who do not. Deliberative citizenship also correlates significantly with a variety of participation behaviors, including: news consumption, voting, attempts to persuade others, donation, letter writing, and general political knowledge. In the CPRN and Public Agenda / CCC studies, the tested deliberative citizenship scale significantly increased from the pre- to post-discussion questionnaires ($p=.001$, $p=.02$, respectively). In the AmericaSpeaks study, one of the two component variables shows a trend increase ($p=.08$).

Discussion: Deliberation significantly increased deliberative citizenship in two of four studies, though more in one than another. The measure does not have perfectly consistent effects. Deliberative citizenship also proves to significantly increase an objective measure of policy knowledge post-deliberation and has significant relationships to a range of participatory behaviors. Deliberative citizenship might be part of a virtuous circle: deliberation enhances deliberative citizenship which in turn increases interest in seeking out thoughtful political engagement and the capacity to benefit from such engagement.

Implications: The scale is recommended for deliberative practitioners. I am inclined toward the longer version of the scale because it passed confirmatory factor analysis, though that scale has not yet been tested outside the VAProject.

Authoritarian Citizenship

Theory Synopsis: As with deliberative citizenship (above), authoritarian citizenship reflects the content of political identity. People who subscribe to authoritarian citizenship believe that good citizens must obey authorities and pay intense respect to collective symbols such as flags or the nation. Authoritarian citizenship is a notion of citizenship that may discourage active and thoughtful engagement in political life. By demonstrating the possibility and perhaps value of more active engagement, deliberation may reduce

authoritarian conceptions of citizenship and thereby raise the likelihood that participants may be more actively and thoughtfully engaged in the future.

The Measures:

Q1. A good citizen should always obey the law. (These questions had True / False response options. It is possible that Likert scales would work as well or better.)

Q2. A good citizen should respect the President.

Q3. A good citizen should stick up for America.

I created these questions.

The Findings: The VAProject found that authoritarian citizenship significantly increases voting, but decreases attempts to persuade others on political issues, campaign work, going to rallies, donation, contacting national representatives, writing letters to the editor, collaborating with others to address community problems, participating in the creation of political groups, and reading national news. The scale is strongly correlated with Right-Wing Authoritarianism. A significant decrease in authoritarian citizenship was found in the Public Agenda / CCC study ($p=.009$, one-sided) but not the VAProject, the CPRN study, or the AmericaSpeaks study.

Discussion: Perhaps the authoritarian citizenship measure would have fared better if the questions had not been asked in dichotomous format rather than Likert format. In any event, there is evidence that authoritarian citizenship can be reduced by deliberation, though what the exact conditions are for this to happen are not clear.

Implications: This measure may hold some promise, but the evidence for its value to deliberation research more generally is limited at this point. It may prove valuable to determine what types or content of deliberations help ameliorate authoritarian citizenship.

Political Reflectiveness

Theory Synopsis: Attention plays a central role in agency theory. Viewing political matters as a pertinent target of reflection, rather than absorbing political views passively, indicates that political matters are central to a person's identity, that mental structures for attending to politics are in place, and that a person is an agent with respect to political matters. A highly politically reflective person should be politically engaged and active. In general, the expectation is that political reflectiveness will have similar effects as political interest, except it should be a better measure.

The Measures:

Q1. It is ultimately up to me to make up my mind about political issues. (This is on a 7-point scale with labels Not True / Moderately True / Very True.)

Q2. I feel personally responsible for my own political views.

I created these questions.

The Findings: So far, political reflectiveness has only been tested on the VAProject. In the VAProject, political reflectiveness significantly explains several political variables, even after controlling for political interest, political efficacy, and education. These include voting at various levels of government, contacting representatives, and general political knowledge. Importantly, political reflectiveness significantly explains objectively measured learning of policy facts, while political interest does not. No significant between-group change in political reflectiveness was found on the VAProject.

Discussion: While the VAProject found no significant change in political reflectiveness, neither did it find a significant change in political interest, while two other studies did find such a change. This may be due to several factors discussed earlier.

Implications: The evidence for political reflectiveness as a useful scale for practitioners or researchers is weak at this point. Nevertheless, the significant impact of deliberation on the closely related measure of political interest and the impact of political reflectiveness on factual knowledge suggest political reflectiveness may eventually prove valuable. It may also prove to contribute to the virtuous circle described above.

Stealth Democracy Beliefs

Theory Synopsis: Stealth democracy beliefs are beliefs that the government should be run by expert with little or no discussion or compromise (see theory section above for details and references). The creators of the measure believe it indicates that the public prefers a largely non-participatory political system, in particular one excluding deliberative democracy. As explained in the theory section of the report earlier, I believe that stealth democracy beliefs capture a "parochial citizen" mentality—a point of view with inadequately developed socio-political understandings. Deliberation may help ameliorate stealth democracy beliefs by helping people achieve more sophisticated understandings. In particular, it may demonstrate for them the feasibility and value of discussion and compromise on policy issues.

The Measures:

Q1. Elected officials would help the country more if they would stop talking and just take action on important problems.

Q2. What people call "compromise" in politics is really just selling out on one's principles.

These questions were introduced by Hibbing and Theiss-Morse . The original scale had four questions, but confirmatory factor analysis on the VAProject indicated that the scale captures two interrelated factors. The two questions above correspond to one of these

factors, a factor capturing a belief that compromise and discussion are not desirable. The other factor was a desire for expert government.

The Findings: The VAProject data show that stealth democracy beliefs are strongly related to authoritarianism, poor socio-political perspective taking, and low cognitive effort . In the same paper, I also found long-term reductions in stealth democracy beliefs (p=.04, one-sided, N=229) as well as other attitudes feeding into these beliefs, such as vertical collectivism—a type of authoritarian attitude. Stealth democracy beliefs also significantly declined in the CPRN study (p=.003, one-sided) and the AmericaSpeaks study (p=.01, one-sided). The scale was not included in the Public Agenda / CCC study.

Discussion: Stealth democracy beliefs appear to consistently decline after deliberation. Remarkably, these beliefs showed long-term declines in the VAProject, from the first to the second phase of research, spanning more than two months.

Implications: Stealth democracy beliefs may be a valuable addition to the repertoire of questions asked by practitioners and researchers. Changes in these beliefs may indicate an important shift in attitudes about government.

Confidence in Government

Theory Synopsis: In their discussion of stealth democracy, Hibbing and Theiss-Morse suggest that deliberation could delegitimize the political system. They stipulate that such political engagement raises expectations and creates new demands that the political system cannot address. People are already inclined to believe in a false public consensus on political issues, so they may not understand when political leaders fail to respond to the demands of a relatively small group of deliberators who have come to some consensus on an issue. In the end, deliberation should reduce confidence in government. According to the parochial citizen hypothesis, in contrast, deliberation might increase the sophistication of socio-political reasoning. Participants may become more understanding of disagreement and compromise and more appreciative of the difficulty of governing. This could increase confidence in government, assuming the deliberation itself does not reveal malfeasance or incompetence on the part of government.

The Measures:

Q1. I approve of the way my community / municipal government has been handling its job lately. ("community" was used in the Public Agenda / CCC study, "municipal" was used in the CPRN study, and "local government" was used in the AmericaSpeaks study.)

Q2. I approve of the way my state / provincial / territorial government overall has been handling its job lately. ("state " was used in the Public Agenda / CCC study, while "provincial / territorial " was used in the CPRN study)

Q3. The VAProject used the same question format but asked about how well the mayor did his job and, in a second question, how well the school board did theirs.

These questions are closely based on questions from Hibbing and Theiss-Morse .

The Findings: The VAProject found a significant improvement in confidence in the mayor (p=.045, one-sided) and no change in perceptions of the school board. The Public Agenda / CCC study found significant improvement in confidence in local government (p=.03) and no change in confidence in state government. The CPRN study found highly significant improvements in the confidence in both community and provincial or territorial government (p=.001, .002, respectively). The AmericaSpeaks study found highly significant improvements in local and state government (p=.0001, .002, respectively)

Discussion: The findings indicate a consistent improvement in government confidence in all three studies, though not every indicator is significant every time. The more dialogue-focused CPRN and AmericaSpeaks deliberations had the clearest effect in improving confidence.

Implications: Confidence in government may be a valuable indicator for practitioners and researchers seeking to show a positive effect of deliberation on governance. An effect may be more likely to be observed in deliberations lasting more than a day or in those involving broader dialogue.

Perceived Conflict

Theory Synopsis: Hibbing and Theiss-Morse find that people embrace stealth democracy beliefs out of a dislike of conflict. Many deliberative practitioners, however, believe that deliberations typically develop very positive atmospheres with little unpleasant tension. Perhaps, then, deliberation could actually ameliorate perceptions of conflict and thereby reduce stealth democracy beliefs and perhaps increase future political and, in particular, deliberative engagement.

The Measures:

Q1. Overall, what portion of discussion in your discussion group do you anticipate will involve unproductive conflict? (11-point scale from 0 to 10 with labels of None of the Discussion / Half of the Discussion / All of the Discussion. Pre-discussion survey.)

Q2. Overall, what portion of discussion in your discussion group involved unproductive conflict? (Post-discussion survey.)

I created these questions.

The Findings: Perceived unproductive conflict was not available for analysis in the VAProject, but a similar measure of perceived conflict (no specification of "unproductive") shows a significant reduction in discussion groups relative to the control group in the post-deliberation survey (p=.001 for all groups). Anticipated versus

perceived unproductive conflict shows strong declines in the CPRN, Public Agenda / CCC, and AmericaSpeaks studies (p=.001 for all).

Discussion: People anticipate far more unproductive conflict than they experience in actual deliberations. Deliberation consistently and strongly reduces perceptions of such conflict. This is one of the most robust findings of this research.

Implications: Practitioners and researchers can readily show an effect of deliberation in reducing perceptions of unproductive conflict.

MOTIVATION

Theory Synopsis: Given that deliberation may enhance political reflectiveness and does enhance deliberative citizenship, it may have the effect of raising motivation to participate in future deliberative activities. If so, the effect of deliberation on motivation may be part of a virtuous circle with deliberation stoking motivation, which in turn stokes further deliberation. Of course, motivation would have to reach a high enough level to be self-sustaining, and this may not be readily achieved.

The Measures:

Q1. I am motivated to participate in future discussions like the one today.

Q2. I want to participate in future discussions like the one today.

I created these questions.

The Findings: In the VAProject, face-to-face deliberation significantly increases motivation above that of the control condition (p=.02, one-sided). No effect was observed for online deliberation. Also, deliberative citizenship, political reflectiveness, political interest, and political effectiveness do not explain this change. Something about face-to-face deliberation quite directly improves motivation. On the CPRN study, motivation showed a strong trend toward change (p=.07, one-sided), while on the Public Agenda / CCC study motivation significantly improved (p=.001). Motivation significantly improves among youth in the AmericaSpeaks study (p=.02, one-sided), but shows only a trend improvement in the entire body of participants (p=.10).

Discussion: Motivation may have failed to improve significantly in the CPRN study because 64% of participants already had the highest level of motivation when they came to the deliberation. There was little room for growth in these scores. Overall, however, motivation grew significantly or nearly so in all four studies. Motivation may also be a helpful variable in clarifying whether other changes, such as increases in political interest, ultimately affect behavior.

Implications: Motivation is a recommended measure for practitioners and researchers.

POLICY ATTITUDES

Theory Synopsis: Deliberation provides information about policies and their effects on the community, including other participants, and may enable participants to examine their values and priorities. All of these effects may change policy attitudes. More negatively, deliberation may cause convergence of opinions due to conformity processes in groups. The latter possibility is less likely to the extent that policy views are queried with a guarantee of confidentiality, which is the case in many deliberation assessments.

The Measures:

These measures will be unique to the policy issues being examined in a given deliberation. Use the earlier section on how to write your own questions to construct better policy views questions. Below are a few sample questions from the current studies.

Q1. Besides the schools to be closed this year, the Pittsburgh Public School District should close additional schools to eliminate four thousand five hundred seats in the next three years. (Virtual Agora Project)

Q2. Low-performance schools should be improved by increasing parent and community involvement. (Public Agenda)

Q3. Consumers and business would take voluntary action to reduce pollution, consumption and waste and protect natural spaces. The best way to effect change is at the individual level - it doesn't matter how many regulations are in place - if consumers and businesses don't take the necessary actions, the objectives won't be achieved. (CPRN)

Q4. Below, indicate how much responsibility for addressing the problem of adolescent obesity you believe lies with Social Institutions and how much with Family / Individuals. (Social Institutions Fully Responsible / Both Equally Responsible Family / Individual Fully Responsible) (AmericaSpeaks)

I created the first two of these questions. The third question was created by personnel at one study site. The first question is a relatively good one: it is specific and deals with one topic. The specificity is bought at the price of a longer and more complex question, and the introductory clause could confuse some participants. The second question is less specific but brief and simple. The third question is a compound question, and this should be avoided.

The Findings: Researchers have repeatedly found evidence of policy and attitude changes when people emerge from the deliberation experience . Luskin, for example, estimates that two out of three deliberations result in attitude change (personal communication). In general, however, these researchers have not sought to separate the effects of discussion during the deliberation experience from other sources of information

during that experience, including readings and question and answer periods with experts. My VAProject research found little evidence that the attitude change experienced during deliberation comes from discussion. Whatever the exact source of the attitude change, discussion might be credited with bringing people to participate in the first place. Practitioners can take credit for attitude change.

The VAProject found highly significant change in five of five policy attitudes ($p<.01$ for all; pre-post deliberation test, with the pre-test occurring weeks before the deliberation experience). In one of the test sites, a trend toward significant change was found in one of three policy attitudes ($p=.068$). In the other test site, seven of 18 policy attitudes showed significant change ($p<.05$), and two more showed a trend toward significance ($p<.10$). In all, significant or nearly significant values occurred at a rate far higher than chance.

The AmericaSpeaks study found a highly significant increase ($p=.0002$, one-sided) in the belief that social institutions bear some responsibility for addressing adolescent obesity, as opposed to this being purely an individual or family matter. In a country in which the public tends to not attribute institutional responsibility in matters of personal well-being, this change is important.

Discussion: While policy attitude changes do not occur in all deliberations, there is a growing body of evidence that they occur in most.

Implications: Policy attitude measures are a valuable addition to the measures used by deliberation practitioners and researchers. Caution must be taken, however, in interpreting whether the changes are due to discussion or some other feature of the deliberative experience, such as readings.

Deliberative Quality

Introduction and Methodology: The goal of deliberative quality measures is to capture factors that make for good deliberations. Generally, such factors are conceived as operating at the group level—for example, if a group has high levels of reciprocity during discussion, then the discussion as a whole should be of higher quality and this should benefit individual participants in some way. In particular, perhaps high quality deliberations will show stronger changes in the deliberative consequence variables described above or in summary measures of participants' satisfaction with their deliberative experience. To complicate matters somewhat, however, it is necessary to test for group-level changes controlling for individual-level perceptions. The notion of deliberative quality contains within it the notion of objectivity—that there really is some objective quality of the discussion in a group that affects individual benefits from that discussion, not that merely individual perceptions of that discussion quality mediate the effect. It is, however, possible that individuals may experience and benefit from group discussions in an individually idiosyncratic way. In the following analyses, I test each deliberative quality measure at both the individual and group level. For the group

indicator, I average all the perceptions of deliberative quality in a given group *other than* those of the person whose outcome variable is being explained. For the individual indicator, I use simply that person's perceptions of deliberative quality.

In addition to the complexity of individual versus group perceptions of deliberative quality, deliberative quality measures may have something other than simple linear relationships to deliberative consequences. For example, a certain level of a particular measure of deliberative quality might be helpful, but there may be diminishing returns to higher levels of this measure of quality. Alternatively, there might be accelerating effects of a given measure of quality, with little difference at low levels, but strong effects at very high levels. It is possible to imagine, for instance, that reciprocity in discussion may have an effect only at high levels, or that there may be diminishing returns to high levels of reciprocity. I will test for non-linear effects of deliberative quality measures below by examining parabolic forms: the effect of squared terms and of interactions between individual and group-level measures. I am allowing the individual and group-level variables to form a three-dimensional parabolic surface, with the deliberative consequence as the third dimension. Where no evidence is found for the more complex functional forms, these are discarded and more linear relationships are examined.

QUALITATIVE CODING OF DELIBERATIVE QUALITY

Theory Synopsis: Discourse and deliberative theory suggests that various qualities of a discussion can make it deliberative, in particular if participants offer each other reasons for their positions.

The Measures: My colleague Jennifer Stromer-Galley developed a qualitative coding scheme based on discourse analysis. This coding scheme was applied to transcripts of online discussions in the VAProject. If you are interested in this coding scheme, you should contact Prof. Stromer-Galley directly at jstromer at albany dot edu. A more detailed theoretical and practical introduction to the coding scheme can be found at http://services.bepress.com/jpd/vol3/iss1/art12/. The following is only a perfunctory description of her coding scheme. Prof. Stromer-Galley describes her measures as follows:

Abbreviated Qualitative Codebook

by Jennifer Stromer-Galley, Univ. of Albany, Dept. of Communication

Problem:

Opinion - An opinion is as an expression of the individual's belief about how the world is. Opinions are expressed judgments the speaker has made on a person, an event, a social problem, a state of affairs, a crisis, values, and the like.

Agreement – A signal of support with something a prior speaker said, including the moderator.

Disagreement – A statement that signals opposition with something a prior speaker said, including the moderator.

Fact - A fact is a statement that a condition has, does, or will exist. “Facts” stand alone and do not have an opinion statement directly connected to them in the same thought.

Question – a genuine question directed to another speaker that is trying to seek information or an opinion from others.

Metatalk:

Metatalk is talk about the talk. Instead of advancing an opinion claim, this is talk that attempts to step back and observe what the participant thinks has happened or is happening and why it’s happening.

Consensus – Consensus metatalk is talk about the speaker’s sense of consensus of the group, including an explanation for the collective’s opinions or the collective’s behavior.

Conflict – highlighting some disagreement or conflict in the group.

Clarify self - clarify the speaker’s own opinion or fact statement.

Clarify other - clarify someone else’s argument/opinion or fact statement.

Process:

Technical Problems – a question or statement about problems with the technical features of the system, statements of confusion about the system, the software.

Technical Benefits – a statement about the positive aspects of the technical features of the system.

Deliberation Process – a question or a statement about the process of the deliberation to moderator or other discussants (without any valence), questions about the moderator (such as his or her absence) or to the moderator about what they are supposed to be doing, or statements about the surveys before or after the discussion or about any element of the process before or after their conversation.

Deliberation Problems - frustration about the process of what they are supposed to be doing, expressions or questions of confusion about the task or the procedure, suggestions that the participants have strayed off the topic and the participant is trying to get them back on the topic (but the talk needs to look more like meta-talk than opinion talk).

Deliberation Positive– a statement about the participants’ belief that the discussion has been good for them, good for the group, or potentially good for Pittsburgh, the school board, the mayor, the students, the parents, and the like.

Social: Salutations, Apologies, Praise, Blame, ChitChat

Topic: All thought type: problem and metatalk require a topic code.

For – arguing for the choice or offering a for argument without explicitly stating for

For-but - arguing for a choice but offering some quibble or hesitation with the choice or how the choice would be enacted.

Against – arguing against the choice or offering an argument against the choice without explicitly stating against.

Against-but - arguing against a choice but offering some positive of the choice or how the choice would be enacted, or a counterargument to their against argument (i.e. making a pro/con argument).

Unsure--/None/Both equally – expressing hesitancy with the option (I read that there's a problem, but I'm not sure whether it's true or not; need more information).

Is there elaboration of the problem or metatalk thought?

An elaboration is a statement (a claim) with some additional elaboration. Elaboration can be in the form of further justification (as simple as: I'm for k-8, because I think it solves the problems we face), a definition, a reason for holding the opinion, an example, a story, a statistic, or fact, a hypothetical example, a solution to the problem, further explanation for why the problem is a problem, a definition, an analogy, a consequence to the problem or solution, a sign that something exists or doesn't exist, or any further attempt to say what they mean or why they have taken the position that they have.

If Elaboration –

Personal experience? – if their elaboration includes personal experience (personal stories, first hand accounts, accounts from close friends or family members) select yes.

Briefing documents? – if their elaboration includes references to the briefing documents (implicit or explicit), including statements of absence of or problems with facts in briefing documents, select yes

Mass media? – if their elaboration includes explicit references to the mass media (including the Internet), then check yes. If they mention advertising, such as "you can see that the district isn't running any advertising," then code as media.

Other Participants? – if their elaboration includes referring back to the reasons from other participants or prior comments in the discussion, then check yes.

The Findings: Preliminary results are available for a few of the indicators above, particularly the agreement and disagreement indicators and elaboration. These track well with reported outcomes of deliberation including recommending deliberation, confidence in decisions, satisfaction with the likely group recommendation, feeling empowered, and willingness to work with the group in the future. The relationships between the measures

above and outcomes generally is of a parabolic form, with many significant and highly significant coefficients. For example, in some cases it is the balance of agreement and disagreement that matters, with unequal levels of both creating the best outcomes. Some of these results are discussed in an academic paper (Stromer-Galley and Muhlberger, 2007). In general, these relationships make interpretive sense. Strong relationships also exist with participant perceptions of the process of deliberation including perceived discussion quality, willingness of the group to listen to self, willingness of the group to act on choices, and capacity to follow the conversation. The qualitative measures also significantly relate to factual learning, political reflection, and political identity.

Discussion: These qualitative measures are quite promising, but much work remains to be done to clarify and interpret the nonlinear relationships involved.

Implications: Researchers should certainly be interested in these qualitative measures. Practitioners may wish to wait till future publications clarify how best to use them. The nonlinear relationships involved may make interpretation of results difficult for practitioners without further guidance from research.

RECIPROCITY

Theory Synopsis: Gutmann and Thompson suggest that a key feature of deliberation is reciprocity—a multifaceted concept that includes seeking "fair terms of cooperation" for their own sake and mutual respect, which includes respect for the others' position even if it seems wrong and respect for the opponents as moral agents. Reciprocity as measured here seems to capture participants' perceptions that other group members displayed a capacity to achieve cooperation through their discussion. Groups with low levels of reciprocity may find it more difficult to achieve the positive changes in deliberative consequences variables introduced earlier.

The Measures:

Q1. The other discussion group members were close-minded. They wouldn't fully consider all points of view.

Q2. I felt that there were people in my discussion group who had no idea what they were talking about.

Q3. The other discussion group members seemed to argue a point just for the sake of argument.

Q4. I found myself annoyed with other discussion group members.

The variable created is the *negative* of replies to the above questions, thus indicating reciprocity rather than the lack of reciprocity. These questions were created by Michael Morrell at the Univ. of Connecticut, Dept. of Political Science.

The Findings: Morrell found that these four questions captured a single underlying factor (exploratory factor analysis, multiple other questions). In the DDC Toolbox Project, only the data from the Public Agenda / CCC study has so far been examined (a group-indicator was not initially available for the CPRN study and the VAProject did not include the reciprocity measure). Higher levels of individual perceptions of reciprocity are associated with greater improvement in perceptions of unproductive conflict (p=.002, two-sided), but also with less improvement in deliberative citizenship (p=.009). The latter might mean that in groups perceived to have high reciprocity, the observer may have experienced less argumentative discussion and such argumentation enhances deliberative citizenship. Moving to nonlinear effects, the interaction of individual and group-level reciprocity increases political interest (p=.03). Perhaps there is some multiplicative value in individual and group (objective) perceptions of reciprocity being aligned. Group-level reciprocity also shows a non-linear relationship with pre- to post-change in the importance of being a citizen (citizen political identity). Change in importance of being a citizen declines with higher levels of reciprocity, but the negative effect decreases to almost zero as reciprocity reaches very high levels. A similar relationship exists for deliberative citizenship.

Discussion: The findings here are complex. Reciprocity may be beneficial in some ways but not in others. It is not clear that the significant findings regarding non-linear effects are real or simply an accident of searching over a substantial number of regressions with different functional forms.

Implications: This scale may be of interest to researchers, but until more firm research results are available it may be premature for practitioners to adopt the scale. The nonlinear relationships involved may make interpretation of results difficult for practitioners without further guidance from research.

EXTRAVERSION

Theory Synopsis: The "Big Five" personality inventory reliably captures key personality differences between people. While personality does not explain the preponderance of variation in behavior, because people often adjust their behavior to context, it does explain some variation. Extraversion-introversion is one important dimension of personality. A discussion group with more extroverted participants may be more likely to fully discuss the issues. A more deliberative conversation should have more benefits. There may, however, be diminishing or negative returns, with highly extraverted groups veering off-topic or falling into conflict.

The Measures:

Q1. The measure used consists of seven scales from -3 to 3 with a series of terms labeling the endpoints of these scales. Participants were instructed: "Where would you place yourself on the following scales?" The first pair of labels were "Loner" and "Joiner." The remainder are as below.

Q2. Retiring / Sociable

Q3. Reserved / Affectionate

Q4. Passive / Active

Q5. Submissive / Dominant

Q6. Sober / Fun loving

Q7. Quiet / Talkative

These scales were taken from Gastil , who in turn borrowed them from the Big Five Inventory.

The Findings: Gastil found that group extraversion (not leaving out the extraversion of the respondent) significantly increased policy attitude change in a research deliberation he hosted. In the Public Agenda / CCC study, I found no simple linear relationships between extraversion and the deliberative consequences discussed here. A number of more complex relationships proved significant. The interaction of individual-level and group-level extraversion significantly changes one of three policy attitudes. Oddly, it also significantly and negatively affects local political interest. Group-level extraversion significantly and negatively affects change in perceived unproductive conflict, though with decreasing effect for high levels of extraversion. Confidence in local government initially decreases with higher levels of extraversion, but then begins to increase with extraversion for very high levels.

Discussion: Again, the findings are complex. Extraversion may be beneficial in some respects but not in others. Further research may be needed to separate findings that may have occurred by chance over a large number of regressions and those that replicate to other settings. The finding that extraversion does change one of the policy views, which echoes Gastil's finding, may be somewhat more definitive than the rest.

Implications: This scale should be of interest to researchers, but until more firm research results are available it may be premature for practitioners to adopt the scale. The nonlinear relationships involved may make interpretation of results difficult for practitioners without further guidance from research.

OTHER LITERATURE

Jane Mansbridge (personal communication) recommended that this report also mention several other recent efforts to come to grips with the quality of deliberation. She says, "...it would be good to mention the work of Andre Bechtiger and his colleagues on measuring the quality of deliberation in European and US legislatures (the book is Jurg Steiner et al., but there are also a lot of neat papers), Elizabeth's Holzinger's work in Germany on a government sponsored mediation (re: siting an incinerating plant) and a legislative deliberation on stem cells (in the Acta Politica 2005 volume on empirical work

on deliberation), and Chris Karpowitz's work on the quality of deliberation in the public hearings on Walmart across the country (APSA paper this fall)."

Prof. Mansbridge provided citations for these papers:

Holzinger, Katharina. 2004. "Bargaining Through Arguing: An Empirical Analysis Based on Speech Act Theory." Political Communication 21: 195-222.

Holzinger, Katharina. 2005. "Context or Conflict Types: Which Determines the Selection of Communication Mode." Acta Politica 40: 239-254.

Steiner, Jürg et al. 2004. Deliberative Politics in Action: Analyzing Parliamentary Discourse. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Conclusion

This report has introduced a theoretical framework, agency theory and the related parochial citizens' thesis, for approaching deliberation research and understanding its practice. It has introduced suggestions for how practitioners could improve their efforts to demonstrate the value and efficacy of deliberation, both in terms of how they design such efforts and in how they should write questions for surveys contributing to these efforts. Finally, it presented a variety of measures, many of which show promise for researchers and practitioners. It is my hope that these measures will with time gain wide use. If researchers and practitioners could consistently use a fairly common set of indicators for deliberative consequences and quality and report their experiences, this would contribute greatly to the accumulation of knowledge of deliberation. A repository of results from different deliberations using the same measures would help researchers and practitioners identify what features of deliberation contribute to given outcomes. I encourage readers who use the scales suggested here to contact me so I can begin to create a repository of experiences with these scales.

End[Peter Muh3]

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