Deepening Democracy: Innovations in Empowered Participatory Governance

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As the tasks of the state have become more complex and the size of polities larger and more heterogeneous, the institutional forms of liberal democracy developed in the nineteenth century—representative democracy plus techno-bureaucratic administration—seem increasingly ill suited to the novel problems we face in the twenty-first century. "Democracy" as a way of organizing the state has come to be narrowly identified with territorially based competitive elections of political leadership for legislative and executive offices. Yet, increasingly, this mechanism of political representation seems ineffective in accomplishing the central ideals of democratic politics: facilitating active political involvement of the citizenry, forging political consensus through dialogue, devising and implementing public policies that ground a productive economy and healthy society, and, in more radical egalitarian versions of the democratic ideal, ensuring that all citizens benefit from the nation's wealth.

The Right of the political spectrum has taken advantage of this apparent decline in the effectiveness of democratic institutions to escalate its attack on the very idea of the affirmative state. The only way the state can play a competent and constructive role, the Right typically argues, is to dramatically reduce the scope and depth of its activities. In addition to the traditional moral opposition of libertarians to the activist state on the grounds that it infringes on property rights and

individual autonomy, it is now widely argued that the affirmative state has simply become too costly and inefficient. The benefits supposedly provided by the state are myths; the costs—both in terms of the resources directly absorbed by the state and of indirect negative effects on economic growth and efficiency—are real and increasing. Rather than seeking to deepen the democratic character of politics in response to these concerns, the thrust of much political energy in the developed industrial democracies in recent years has been to reduce the role of politics altogether. Deregulation, privatization, reduction of social services, and curtailments of state spending have been the watchwords, rather than participation, greater responsiveness, and more creative and effective forms of democratic state intervention. As the slogan goes, "The state is the problem, not the solution."

In the past, the political Left in capitalist democracies vigorously defended the affirmative state against these kinds of arguments. In its most radical form, revolutionary socialists argued that public ownership of the principle means of production combined with centralized state planning offered the best hope for a just, humane, and egalitarian society. But even those on the Left who rejected revolutionary visions of ruptures with capitalism insisted that an activist state was essential to counteract a host of negative effects generated by the dynamics of capitalist economies—poverty, unemployment, increasing inequality, underprovision of public goods like training and public health. In the absence of such state interventions, the capitalist market becomes a "Satanic Mill," in Karl Polanyi's metaphor, that erodes the social foundations of its own existence.[1] These defenses of the affirmative state have become noticeably weaker in recent years, both in their rhetorical force and in their practical political capacity to mobilize. Although the Left has not come to accept unregulated markets and a minimal state as morally desirable or economically efficient, it is much less certain that the institutions it defended in the past can achieve social justice and economic well-being in the present.

Perhaps this erosion of democratic vitality is an inevitable result of complexity and size. Perhaps the most we can hope for is to have some kind of limited popular constraint on the activities of government through regular, weakly competitive elections. Perhaps the era of the "affirmative democratic state"—the state that plays a creative and active role in solving problems in response to popular demands—is over, and a retreat to privatism and political passivity is the unavoidable price of "progress." But perhaps the problem has more to do with the specific design of our institutions than with the tasks they face as such. If so, then a fundamental challenge for the Left is to develop transformative democratic strategies that can advance our traditional values—egalitarian social justice, individual liberty combined with popular control over collective decisions, community and solidarity, and the flourishing of individuals in ways that enable them to realize their potentials.

This article explores a range of empirical responses to this challenge. They constitute real-world experiments in the redesign of democratic institutions, inno-

vations that elicit the energy and influence of ordinary people, often drawn from the lowest strata of society in the solution of problems that plague them. In this article we will examine briefly five such experiments.

- Neighborhood governance councils in Chicago address the fears and hopes of inner-city Chicago residents by turning an urban bureaucracy on its head and devolving substantial power over policing and public schools.
- The Wisconsin Regional Training Partnership (WRTP) brings together organized labor, large firm management, and government to provide training and increase the transparency in employment transitions in order to help workers assemble jobs into meaningful careers in volatile economic times.
- Habitat Conservation Planning under the Endangered Species Act convenes stakeholders and empowers them to develop ecosystem governance arrangements that will satisfy the double imperatives of human development and the protection of jeopardized species.
- The participatory budget of Porto Alegre, Brazil enables residents of that city to participate directly in forging the city budget and thus use public monies previously diverted to patronage pay-offs to pave their roads and electrify their neighborhoods.
- Panchayat reforms in West Bengal and Kerala, India have created both direct and representative democratic channels that devolve substantial administrative and fiscal development power to individual villages.

Although these five reforms differ dramatically in the details of their design, issue areas, and scope, they all aspire to deepen the ways in which ordinary people can effectively participate in and influence policies that directly affect their lives. From their common features, we call this reform family *Empowered Deliberative Democracy* (EDD). They have the potential to be radically democratic in their reliance on the participation and capacities of ordinary people, deliberative because they institute reason-based decision making, and empowered since they attempt to tie action to discussion.

The exploration of empowered deliberation as a progressive institutional reform strategy advances the conceptual and empirical understanding of democratic practice. Conceptually, EDD presses the values of participation, deliberation, and empowerment to the apparent limits of prudence and feasibility. Taking participatory democracy seriously in this way throws both its vulnerabilities and advantages into sharp relief. We also hope that injecting empirically centered examination into current debates about deliberative democracy will paradoxically expand the imaginative horizons of that discussion at the same time that it injects a bit of realism. Much of that work has been quite conceptually focused, and so has failed to detail or evaluate institutional designs to advance these values. By contrast, large- and medium-scale reforms like those mentioned above offer an array of real alternative political and administrative designs for deepening democracy.

As we shall see, many of these ambitious designs are not just workable, but may surpass conventional democratic institutional forms on the quite practical aims of enhancing the responsiveness and effectiveness of the state while at the same time making it more fair, participatory, deliberative, and accountable. These benefits, however, may be offset by costs such as their alleged dependence on fragile political and cultural conditions, tendencies to compound background social and economic inequalities, and weak protection of minority interests.

We begin by briefly sketching five reform experiments.[2] Three of these—policing and educational governance in Chicago, habitat conservation planning, and participatory budgeting in Brazil—will be considered in more detail by other authors in this issues. We then lay out an abstract model of EDD that distills the distinctive features of these experiments into three central principles and three institutional design features. The next section explains why, in principle, such arrangements will generate a range of desirable social effects. We conclude this introduction with an agenda of questions to interrogate cases of actually existing EDD.

I. FIVE EXPERIMENTS IN PARTICIPATORY DELIBERATIVE GOVERNANCE

These institutional reforms vary widely on many dimensions, and none perfectly realizes the democratic values of citizen participation, deliberation, and empowerment. In its own way and quite imperfectly, however, each strives to advance these values and to an extent succeeds.

These cases can be usefully grouped into two general categories: first, reforms that primarily address failures of specific administrative and regulatory agencies, and second, reforms that attempt a more general restructuring democratic decision making. Three of the cases we will examine fall under the first rubric. They attempt to remedy failures of state agencies by deploying participation and deliberation as tools to enhance effectiveness. One consists of two functionally specific administrative reforms geared to improve the performance of the police and public education systems in the city of Chicago. Another connects workers and employers in an attempt to develop internationally competitive human capital in the rust belt city of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The third case attempts to balance human development and the protection of endangered species through stakeholder governance under reforms to the U.S. Endangered Species Act. The other two cases concern more broadly scoped reforms in which left-wing political parties have captured state power and employed EDD forms to advance their social justice agenda. These aim explicitly at the problems of inequality and lack of democratic accountability. Participation and devolution are instruments toward those ends. One of these cases is an urban budgeting experiment in the city of Porto Alegre, Brazil. In the other, left-wing parties in two Indian states—West Bengal and Kerala—have created popular, participatory village governance bodies.

1. Functionally Specific Neighborhood Councils in Chicago, United States

Our first experiment concerns public education and policing in a city characterized by great poverty and inequality: Chicago, Illinois, whose 2.5 million residents make it the third largest city in the United States. In the late 1980s, the Chicago Public School system suffered attacks from all sides—parents, community members, and area businessmen charged that the centralized school bureaucracy was failing to educate the city's children on a massive scale. These individuals and groups formed a small but vocal social movement that managed to turn the top-heavy, hierarchical school system on its head. In 1988, the Illinois legislature passed a law that decentralized and opened the governance of Chicago schools to direct forms of neighborhood participation.[3] The reform law shifted power and control from a centralized citywide headquarters to the individual schools themselves. For each of some 560 elementary (grades kindergarten through eighth) and high schools (grades nine through twelve), the law established a Local School Council. Each council is composed of six parents, two community members, two teachers, and the principal of the school, and its members (other than the principal) are elected every two years. The councils of high schools add to these eleven members one nonvoting student representative. These councils are empowered, and required by law, to select principals; write principal performance contracts that they monitor and review every three years; develop annual School Improvement Plans that address staff, program, infrastructure issues; monitor the implementation of those plans; and approve school budgets. These bodies typically meet monthly during the school year, and less frequently in the summer. This reform created the most formally direct democratic system of school governance by far in the United States. Every year, more than 5,000 parents, neighborhood residents, and schoolteachers are elected to run their schools. By a wide margin, the majority of elected Illinois public officials who are minorities serve on these councils.

The weaknesses of their decentralization soon became apparent. While many schools used their new powers to flourish, others foundered due to lack of capacity, knowledge, internal conflict, or bad luck. New regulations and departments within the Chicago Public Schools were refashioned to address these problems. For example, 1995 legislation requires each Local School Council member to undergo some twenty hours of training, provided by the central school administration, on topics such as budgeting, school improvement planning, principal selection, group process, and council responsibilities. The same law also created accountability provisions to identify the worst performing schools in the city. These schools receive additional management supervision, resources, and, in some cases, disciplinary punishment.

The Chicago Police Department restructured itself in the mid-1990s along deeply decentralized and democratic lines that resemble (but were conceived and

implemented quite independently from) that city's school reform. In response to the perception that conventional policing practices had proved largely ineffective in stemming the rise of crime or in maintaining safety in many Chicago neighborhoods, the mayor's office, several community organizations, and officials inside the police department began to explore "community policing" ideas in 1993. By 1995, reformers from these groups had implemented a wide-ranging program called the Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy that shifted the burden of maintaining public safety from police professionals to hundreds of joint-partnerships between police and neighborhood residents.

This program divides the city into some 280 neighborhood "beats," the administrative atom of policing. The Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy's first major plank opens up beat-level public safety operations to the observation, participation, and direction of neighborhood residents. Interested residents and the police officers serving the area attend "community beat meetings" held monthly in each of the city's beats. The Strategy's second major reform redefines the "how" of policing. In these meetings, neighborhood residents and police discuss the neighborhood's public safety problems in order to establish, through deliberation, which problems should be counted as priorities that merit the concentrated attention of police and residents. They then develop strategies to address these problems; responsibility for implementing some of these strategies is assigned to police (e.g., obtaining and executing search warrants) while other strategies are assigned to groups of residents (e.g., meeting with landlords to discuss building dilapidation). At successive meetings, participants assess the quality of implementation and effectiveness of their strategies, revise strategies if necessary, and raise new priorities.

As with the school reform experiment, the police department has joined with other public agencies and nonprofit organizations to support and manage these de- centralized problem-solving efforts on a citywide basis. In the areas of citizen capacity and community mobilization, the city has hired community organizers and trainers to rove throughout the neighborhoods to teach group problem-solving skills. The strategies and plans developed in community beat meetings have been incorporated into ordinary reporting, evaluation, and management routines.

2. Labor Market Transparency and Skill Formation in Milwaukee, Wisconsin

The next experiment moves away from the reconstruction of municipal government to new economic institutions that bring together workers and managers for the common cause of managing industrial labor markets. The WRTP is a consortium of some forty firms employing more than 60,000 workers in the Milwaukee, Wisconsin area. WRTP, jointly governed by representatives from organized labor, managers of member firms, and public sector institutions such as area Technical Colleges and the Wisconsin State Department of Labor, aims to improve the

health of area industry by joining labor and management to provide services that isolated firms would be unlikely to provide for themselves.[4] Although the WRTP is also active in firm modernization and school-to-industrial work transitions, its most distinctive and developed efforts lie in the provision of incumbent and entry-level worker training.[5]

Against a competitive background that has demanded continuous modernization of fixed and human capital since the late 1970s and 1980s, many Milwaukee area industrial firms responded to the failure of public and private training systems to keep pace with technological change by attempting to impose compensatory wage reductions or by moving productive facilities to areas of higher skill or lower labor cost. Beginning with an early prototype in 1988, the WRTP answered this deindustrialization by creating Worker Education Centers that attempted to im- prove area skill training. These centers are miniature schools located within firms that train workers in the most urgently needed basic or advanced skills. By early 1998, the WRTP had established more than forty education centers in the facilities of its member firms and others who requested technical assistance. Each center is jointly designed and operated by a labor-management committee that selects skill priorities, designs classes, markets those classes to the incumbent workforce, renegotiates labor contract terms that may be incompatible with such skill training (such as seniority rules, job classifications, and work rules), and administers the center. These centers sometimes receive their funding through public sources, but most often through firm-side contributions. They frequently employ instructors from area technical colleges to teach classes on-site.

The direct participation of workers in the design and management of these centers may enable them to succeed where previous attempts have failed. The centers take advantage of worker cooperation first by developing classes and training priorities-based, shop-floor experiences and perceptions of need. Neither technical college nor management-led training efforts can access this level of high-quality, frontline information about which skill areas deserve immediate investment and whether training routines are effectively imparting skills and knowledge to workers. The centers also use "peer networks" to market this training to other workers and thus build a degree of worker acceptance that management acting alone could not. Furthermore, the mutual confidence that comes from this cooperative effort gains management support in the form of resource investment in training and labor support that is manifest in less adversarial bargaining positions. These education centers embody the deliberative-democratic principles by shifting the power of design and implementation of incumbent-worker training from a state-centered technical college system to decentralized, firm-based learning centers. Finally, many of these centers brought together managers and workers accustomed to operating on opposite sides of a bargaining table in a deliberative effort to solve training problems.

3. Stakeholder Ecosystem Governance
under the U.S. Endangered Species Act

For most the time since its establishment in 1973, the U.S. Endangered Species Act has been the antithesis of deliberative action. Section 9 of that Act prohibits the "taking"—killing or injuring—of any wildlife listed as an endangered species through either direct means or indirect action such as modification of its habitat. In practice, this often imposed a strict bar on any development or resource extraction activities in or near the habitats of endangered species. This law had two main defects.[6] First, it stopped productive development projects that may have had marginal impact on the ultimate viability of endangered species. Less obviously, the law protected only those species that are listed and receive administrative priority,[7] and so created a listing process that frequently amounted to a high stakes political battle between developers and conservationists. As a result, too few species receive protection and some are nearly decimated by the time they do qualify.

In 1982, Congress created an option to escape these deep deadlocks called an "incidental take permit." Under this provision, an applicant can obtain a waiver from strict enforcement by producing a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) that allows human activity in the habitat of an endangered species so long as "take" occurs only incidentally, the plan includes measures to mitigate take, and the human activity does not impair the chances of the species' survival and recovery. Until recently, this relief option was little used because permitting procedures were unclear and plan production costs high. Only 14 HCPs were produced between 1982 and 1992. Since 1993, however, these plans and their associated permits have proliferated. By April 1999, 254 plans covering more than 11 million acres had been approved and 200 more were in various stages of development. This explosion in HCP activity grew out of an effort by Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt and several associates to use incidental take permit provision to avoid the lose-lose outcomes generated by strict application of the Endangered Species Act's section 9. Under the process, developers, environmentalists, and other stakeholders could potentially work together to construct large-scale, ecosystem conservation plans.

The most advanced HCPs have served this ambition by incorporating significant elements of the design of EDD. For example, large acreage, multispecies Conservation Plans in Southern California were developed by stakeholder committees that include officials from local and national environmental agencies, developers, environmental activists, and community organizations. Through deliberative processes, these stakeholders have developed sophisticated management plans that set out explicit numerical goals, measures to achieve those goals, monitoring regimes that assess plan effectiveness through time, and adaptive management provisions to incorporate new scientific information and respond to unforeseen events.

Beyond devolving responsibility and power for endangered species protection to local stakeholders, recent improvements to the national HCP regime proposed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service attempt to create centralized learning and accountability devices to mitigate the defects of excessive localism.[8] It has been widely recognized that high-quality HCPs possess common features such as quantitative biological goals, adaptive management plans, and careful monitoring regimes. Yet, a study[9] of more than 200 plans revealed that less than half of all plans incorporate these basic features. In a proposed guidance, the Fish and Wildlife Service would instruct field agents to require these plan features in the development of HCPs and a condition of permit approval. To make HCP provisions and performance a matter of transparent public accountability and enable stakeholders of different HCPs to assess and learn from each other, this same Fish and Wildlife Service guidance will establish an HCP information infrastructure that tracks the details of HCP permits as well as plan performance.

4. Participatory City Budgeting in Porto Alegre, Brazil

Porto Alegre is the capital of the state of Rio Grande do Sul in Brazil and home to some 1.3 million inhabitants. Like many other local and national states in Latin America, a clientelistic government has ruled the city in recent decades through the time-tested machinery of political patronage. This system allocated public funds not according to public needs, but rather to mobilize support for political personages. As a result, "the budget becomes a fiction, shocking evidence of the discrepancy between the formal institutional framework and the actual state practices."[10] Under similar arrangements elsewhere in Brazil, investigators revealed that the patronage-based "irregular allocation of social expenditures amounted to 64 percent of the total [budget]."[11]

In 1988, a coalition of Left parties led by the Workers' Party, or Partido dos Trabalhadores (PT), gained control of the municipal government of Porto Alegre and went on to win successive elections in 1992 and 1996. Their most substantial reform measure, called "Participatory Budgeting" (PB), attempts to transform the clientelistic, vote-for-money budgeting reality into a fully accountable, bottom-up, deliberative system driven by the needs of city residents. This multitiered interest articulation and administrative arrangement begins with the sixteen administrative regions that compose the city. Within each region, a Regional Plenary Assembly meets twice per year to settle budgetary issues. City executives, administrators, representatives of community entities such as neighborhood associations, youth and health clubs, and any interested inhabitant of the city attends these assemblies, but only residents of the region can vote in them. They are jointly coordinated by members of municipal government and by community delegates.

At the first of these annual plenary meetings, held in March, a report reviewing and discussing the implementation of the prior year's budget is presented by representatives of the city government, and delegates are elected from those present at the assembly to participate in more or less weekly meetings over the following three months to work out the region's spending priorities for the following year. These delegate meetings are held in neighborhoods throughout the region and discuss a wide range of possible projects that the city might fund in the region, including issues such as transportation, sewage, land regulation, day care centers, and health care. At the end of three months, these delegates report back to the second regional plenary assembly with a set of regional budget proposals. At this second plenary, this proposal is voted on and two delegates and substitutes are elected to represent the region at in a citywide body called the Participatory Budgeting Council, which meets over the following five months to formulate a citywide budget out of these regional agendas.

The city-level budget council is composed of two elected delegates from each of the regional assemblies, two elected delegates each from each of five "thematic plenaries" representing the city as a whole, a delegate from the municipal workers' union, one from the union of neighborhood associations, and two delegates from central municipal agencies. The group meets intensively, at least once per week from July to September, to discuss and establish a municipal budget that conforms to priorities established at the regional level while still coordinating spending for the city as a whole. Since citizen representatives are in most cases nonprofessionals, city agencies offer courses and seminars on budgeting for Council delegates as well as for interested participants from the regional assemblies. On 30 September of each year, the Council submits a proposed budget to the Mayor, who can either accept the budget or through veto remand it back to the Council for revision. The budget council responds by either amending the budget, or by overriding the veto through a supermajoritian vote of two-thirds. City officials estimate that some 100,000 people, or 8 percent of the adult population, participated in the 1996 round of Regional Assemblies and intermediate meetings.

5. Village Governance in India: West Bengal and Kerala

Like the participatory budgeting reforms in Porto Alegre, Brazil, left-wing parties, revitalized substantive local governance in West Bengal[12] and Kerala, India, as a central part of their political program. Although Indian states have enjoyed many formal arrangements for local self-government since independence, these institutions have been doubly constrained. Externally, larger state bureaucracies enjoyed the lion's share of financing and formal authority over most areas of administration and development over this period. Internally, traditional elites used social and economic power to dominate formally democratic local structures. Until 1957, the franchise was restricted on status grounds.[13] But even after universal suffrage, traditional leaders managed to control these bodies

and their resources. Corruption was rampant, many locally administered services were simply not performed, and development resources squandered.

In a number of Indian states, significant reforms have attempted to solve these problems of local governance by deepening their democratic character. The earliest of these began in the late 1970s in the state of West Bengal.[14] The Left Front Government, which took power there in 1977 and has enjoyed a growing base of support ever since, saw the Panchayat village governance system as a opportunity for popular mobilization and empowerment.[15] In addition to instituting one of the most radical programs of land reform in India in order to break the hold of traditional power at the village level, the Left Front Government has, in several distinct stages from 1977 to the present, transformed the West Begali Panchayats in order to increase opportunities for members of disadvantaged classes to wield public power.

The first important step in Panchayat empowerment came in 1988, when the state government shifted responsibility for implementing many development programs from state ministries directly to Panchayats. Simultaneous with this expansion in function, their budgets more than doubled to approximately 2 million rupees per Panchayat. Then, in 1993, a series of Constitutional and state statutory amendments dramatically enhanced the potential for further expansion of Panchayat democracy. Three changes were particularly important. First, these reforms increased the financing capacity of the lowest level Panchayat authorities—the Gram Panchayats—by imposing a revenue-sharing scheme with the Districts and gave the Gram Panchayats their own taxing power. Second, these measures stipulated that one-third of the seats in Panchayat assemblies and leadership positions would be occupied by women and that lower caste—Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe (SC/ST)—persons would occupy leadership positions in all of these bodies in proportion to their population in the District. Finally, and most important for our purposes, the 1993 reforms established two kinds of directly deliberative bodies, called Gram Sabhas, to increase the popular accountability of Gram Panchayat representatives. The Gram Sabha consists of all of the persons within a Gram Panchayat area (typically around 10,000) and meets once per year in the month of December. At this meeting, elected Gram Panchayat representatives review the proposed budget for the following year and review the accomplishment (or lack thereof) of the previous year's budget and action items. Similar meetings occur twice a year at an even more disaggregated level of Panchayat governance.

Officials in the southwestern state of Kerala watched these democratic developments closely and then embarked on a bold initiative to adopt and extend them in 1996. There, the ruling Communist Party of India (CPI) pursued a devolutionary program of village-level participatory planning as a strategy to both shore-up its waning electoral base and enhance administrative effectiveness. Under the program, some 40 percent of the state's public budget would be taken from tradition-

ally powerful line departments in the bureaucracy and devolved to some 900 individual Panchayat village planning councils.[16] In order to spend these monies, however, each village would have to produce detailed development plans that detailed assessments of need, development reports, specific projects, supplemental financing, arrangements for deciding and documenting plan beneficiaries, and monitoring arrangements. These plans, in principle, are then approved or rejected by direct vote in popular village assemblies. In addition to these procedural requirements, there are some categorical limitations: some 40 to 50 percent of each Panchayat's funds were to be invested in economic development, 40 percent was earmarked for social spending including slum improvement, a maximum of 30 percent could be spent on roads, and 10 percent of funds were to be targeted to programs for women.[17] Outside of these general requirements, village planning bodies were left to their own devices.

A large-scale political and administrative mobilization effort has been organized to support this basic reform of devolution-for-accountability.[18] One component of this effort has been to build village capacity to conduct rural assessment and formulate development plans. In 1997-98, some 300,000 participants attended these training "development seminars" where they learned basic self-governance skills. Actual planning processes involve more than 100,000 volunteers to develop village projects and more than 25,000 to combine these projects into village-level plans. This sheer increase in village planning and project formulation far outstripped the central state government's ability to assess the quality of the plans or reject poor ones, much less provide feedback to improve them. To remedy this dearth, some 5,000 volunteers, many of them retired professionals, were enlisted into "Volunteer Technical Committees" to perform this review and feedback.

Given the newness of the reform, its scale, and the paucity of resources available to evaluate it, it is unsurprising that we have only limited knowledge of its outcomes. In terms of both participatory process and technical effectiveness, the results so far are promising but indicate that much work remains. While some villages produced what appear to be thoughtful plans with high levels of direct popular participation, many others failed to produce any plans at all. For those plans that were submitted, many were poorly integrated, had poor credit and financing schemes, and the projects within them were sometimes ill conceived or simply mimicked bureaucratic boilerplate. On dimensions of democratic process, participation in existing village governance structures increased dramatically after the 1996 reform, but still only amounts to some 10 percent of the population. More optimistically, village-level empowerment has spawned the creation of grassroots neighborhood-level groups in hundreds of villages. Similar to the dynamic in Porto Alegre's participatory budgeting program, these groups articulate very local needs and interests to village bodies and in turn hold those units accountable from below.

II. THE PRINCIPLES AND INSTITUTIONAL DESIGN
OF EMPOWERED DELIBERATIVE DEMOCRACY

Although each of these experiments differs from the others in its ambition, scope, and concrete aims, they all share surprising similarities in their motivating principles and institutional design features. They may have enough in common to warrant describing them as instances of a novel, but broadly applicable, model of deliberative democratic practice that can be expanded both horizontally—into other policy areas and other regions—and vertically—into higher and lower levels of institutional and social life. We assert that they do, and name that model EDD.

EDD attempts to advance three currents in social science and democratic theory. First, EDD takes many of its normative commitments from analyses of practices and values of communication, public justification, and deliberation.[19] It extends the application of deliberation from abstract questions over value conflicts and principles of justice to very concrete matters such as street paving, school improvement, and habitat management. It also locates deliberation empirically, in specific organizations and practices, in order to marshal social experience to deepen understandings of practical deliberation and directions for its improvement. Second, the recent body of work on civic engagement and secondary associations offers another point of departure for EDD.[20] This family of scholarship attempts to understand, and by doing so demonstrate, the importance of civic life and nongovernmental organization to vigorous and effective democracy. EDD builds upon this insight by exploring whether the reorganization of formal state institutions can stimulate democratic engagement in civil society and so form a virtuous circle of reciprocal reinforcement. Finally, EDD is part of a broader collaboration to discover and imagine democratic institutions that are at once more participatory and effective than the familiar configuration of political representation and bureaucratic administration.[21] EDD adds considerable understanding of the institutions, practices, and effects of citizen participation to that investigation.

We thus begin, tentatively and abstractly, to sketch EDD by laying out three general principles that are fundamental to all these experiments: (1) a focus on specific, tangible problems, (2) involvement of ordinary people affected by these problems and officials close to them, and (3) the deliberative development of solutions to these problems. In the reform contexts examined here, three institutional design features seem to stabilize and deepen the practice of these basic principles: (1) the devolution of public decision authority to empowered local units; (2) the creation of formal linkages of responsibility, resource distribution, and communication that connect these units to each other and to superordinate, more centralized authorities; and (3) the use and generation of new state institutions to support and guide these decentered problem solving efforts rather than leaving them as informal or voluntary affairs. Finally, we discuss some crucial background conditions necessary for these institutional designs to contribute to the realization of democratic values.

1. Three Principles of Empowered Deliberative Democracy

First Principle: Practical Orientation

The first distinctive characteristic of our experiments is that they all develop governance structures geared to quite concrete concerns. These experiments, although often linked to social movements and political parties, differ from both in that they focus on practical problems such as providing public safety, training workers, caring for ecosystems, or constructing sensible municipal budgets. If these experiments make headway on these issues, then they offer a potential retort to widespread doubts about the efficacy of state action. More important, they would deliver goods to sectors of society that are often most grievously denied them. This practical focus also creates situations in which actors accustomed to competing with one another for power or resources might begin to cooperate and build more congenial relations. This practical focus, however, may distract agents from more important, broader conflicts (e.g., redistributive taxation or property rights) by concentrating their attention on a constrained set of relatively narrow issues.

Second Principle: Bottom-Up Participation

All of the reforms mentioned establish new channels for those most directly affected by targeted problems—typically ordinary citizens and officials in the field—to apply their knowledge, intelligence, and interest to the formulation of solutions. We offer two general justifications for this turn away from the commitment that complex technical problems are best solved by experts trained to the task. First, effective solutions to certain kinds of novel and fluid public problems may require the variety of experience and knowledge offered more by diverse, relatively more open-minded citizens and field operatives than by distant and narrowly trained experts. In Chicago school governance and policing, for example, we will see that bottom-up neighborhood councils invented effective solutions that police officials acting autonomously would never have developed. Second, direct participation of grassroots operators increases accountability and reduces the length of the chain of agency that accompanies political parties and their bureaucratic apparatus. In developing areas like Porto Alegre, Brazil, and Kerala, India, one of the main accomplishments of enlarged participation has been to plug fiscal leaks from patronage payoffs and loosen the grip of traditional political elites.

This is not to say that technical experts are irrelevant to EDD. Experts do play important roles in decision making, but do not enjoy exclusive power to make important decisions. Their task, in different ways in the various cases, is to facilitate popular deliberative decision making and to leverage synergies between professional and citizen insights rather than to preempt citizen input. Whether these gains from popular participation outweigh the potential costs of reduced expert power is an empirical matter that other contributions in this issue treat extensively.

Third Principle: Deliberative Solution Generation

Deliberation is the third distinctive value of EDD. In deliberative decision making, participants listen to each other's positions and generate group choices after due consideration.[22] In contemplating and arguing for what the group should do, participants ought to persuade one another by offering reasons that others can accept. Such reasons might have forms like we should do X because it is the "right thing to do," "it is the fair way to go forward," "we did Y last time and it didn't work," or "it is the best thing for the group as a whole." This ideal does not require participants to be altruistic or to converge upon a consensus of value, strategy, or perspective. Real-world deliberations are often characterized by heated conflict, winners, and losers. The important feature of genuine deliberation is that participants find reasons that they can accept in collective actions, not necessarily that they completely endorse the action or find it maximally advantageous.

A deliberative decision process such as the formulation of school improvement plans in Chicago or village plans in Kerala might proceed first with the construction of an agenda; parties offer proposals about what the group's priorities should be. They might then justify these proposals in terms of their capacity to advance common interests (e.g., building an effective school) or deliver social justice under severe resource constraints (e.g., beneficiary selection in rural development projects). After a full vetting of various proposals and the considerations backing them, participants might then, if remaining disputes made it necessary, vote to select a group choice. In casting an authentic deliberative ballot, however, each participant does not vote for the option that best advances his own self-interest but rather for the choice that seems most reasonable. Choices will be fair if groups adopt reasonable proposals rather than those that garner the greatest self-interested support or political influence. Similarly, participants then reason about the strategies that will best advance that group agenda and should adopt that set which seems prospectively most promising. These results, of course, depend upon participants following the procedures and norms of deliberation. The extent to which they do so depends upon both individual motives and institutional designs.

One danger of ostensibly deliberative processes is that some participants will use their power to manipulate and enhance the legitimacy positions motivated by particularistic interests. In deliberative decision-making processes, by contrast, earnest arguments constitute the central kind of reasoning through which problem solving actually takes place. While it may sometimes be difficult for a casual outside observer to distinguish between genuine deliberation and disingenuous posturing, the difference is nevertheless fundamental and generally apparent to participants

While EDD shares this focus on persuasion and reason giving with nearly all accounts of deliberation, its practical focus departs from many treatments that depict discourse as the proffering of reasons to advance pregiven principles, pro-

posals, values, or policies. In these experiments, deliberation almost always involves continuous joint planning, problem solving, and strategizing. Participants in EDD usually enter these discursive arenas to formulate together such means and even ends. They participate not exclusively to press preformed agendas or visions, but rather they expect that strategies and solutions will be articulated and forged through *deliberation* and *planning* with the other participants. Although they often have little in common, indeed often have histories of animosity, participants in these settings are united in their ignorance of how best to improve the general situation that brings them together. In the village planning efforts of Kerala or the HCP, for example, the initial steps of decision often involve assaying existing circumstances. It is no surprise that participants often form or transform their preferences and opinions in light of that undertaking. If they entered such processes confident in a particular course of action, some other strategy (such as management decree or partisan attempts to ascend to the commanding heights) might be more attractive than deliberative engagement.[23]

Empowered deliberative decision making can be contrasted with three more familiar methods of social choice: *command and control* by experts, *aggregative voting*, and *strategic negotiation*. In the first familiar mode, power is vested in managers, bureaucrats, or other specialists who are charged to act in the common weal and are capable of acting effectively by dint of their training, knowledge, and normative commitments. While such experts may engage in deliberative practices among themselves, their discussions are insulated from popular participation. By contrast, in EDD, experts and bureaucrats are engaged in deliberation directly with citizens.

Aggregation is a second familiar method of social decision making in which a group's choice results from combining the preferences of the individual participants that make it up. Voting—over issues, proposals, or candidates—is perhaps the most common procedure of aggregative social choice. In voting, participants begin by ranking alternatives according to their desires. Then an algorithm such as majority rule selects a single option for the whole group. Again, a main difference between aggregative and deliberative voting is that in the former, individuals simply vote according to their own self-interest, without needing to consider the reasonableness, fairness, or acceptability of that option to others. Without delving into the familiar merits or problems[24] with aggregative voting, the shift to deliberative decision in some of the EDD experiments responded to failings in aggregative mechanisms that preceded them. Sometimes, as in Porto Alegre, these shortcomings lay in the failure of electoral mechanisms to effectively respect electors' desires due to problems like patronage and corruption. In other instances, for example the formulation of school improvement or habitat conservation plans, complexity and uncertainty often prevents participants from forming clear preferences that can be easily aggregated.

Strategic bargaining and negotiation[25] is a third contrasting method of social choice. As with aggregation but distinct from deliberation or most varieties of command, parties in strategic bargaining use decision-making procedures to advance their own unfettered self-interest backed by resources and power they bring to the table. By comparison, voting procedures typically attempt to equalize such power differentials through provisions like "one person one vote." Collective bargaining between large unions and employers captures this difference; each brings different sources of authority and force to the encounter, and each uses them to secure the best (not necessarily the fairest) deal that it can for its side. Unlike purely deliberative interactions, parties typically do so through the use of threats, differential power, misrepresentation, and "strategic talk."[26]

These four modes of decision—deliberation, command, aggregation, and strategic negotiation—are ideal types. Actual processes, not least those involving principles of EDD, often contain elements of each. We privilege deliberation in EDD, however, as a value and norm that motivates parties and informs institutional design because of its distinctive benefits for these political and policy contexts. The case study articles in the rest of this issue of *Politics & Society* explore the extent to which the reality of decision practices vindicates this commitment.

2. Three Design Properties

Since these principles are in themselves quite attractive, the pressing question is whether feasible institutional configurations or realistic social conditions would measurably advance them in practice. The cases explored in this issue suggest that reforms advancing these principles in deep and sustainable ways often exhibit three institutional design properties. Since the empirical study of alternative institutional designs is too immature to reveal whether these features are necessary (they are certainly not sufficient) to deliberative democratic arrangements, we offer them as observations and hypotheses about institutional features that contribute to advancing, stabilizing, and deepening democratic values.

First Design Property: Devolution

Since EDD targets problems and solicits participation localized in both issue and geographic space, its institutional reality requires the commensurate reorganization of the state apparatus. It entails the administrative and political devolution of power to local action units—such as neighborhood councils, personnel in individual workplaces, and delineated ecosystem habitats—charged with devising and implementing solutions and held accountable to performance criteria. The bodies in the reforms below are not merely advisory, but rather creatures of a transformed state endowed with substantial public authority.

This devolution departs profoundly from centralizing progressive strategies, and for that reason many on the Left may find it problematic. Just as the participatory dimensions of these reforms constitute a turn away from authorized expertise, delegating to local units the power of task conception as well as execution stems from skepticism about the possibility that democratic centralism can consistently generate effective solutions in these targeted issue areas. So, for example, the Chicago cases offer neighborhood governance of policing and public education as supple alternatives to conventional centralized solutions such as more stringent penalties and more police on the street for public safety issues, national testing, school finance reform, implementing the one best curriculum, racial desegregation, vouchers, and privatization for educational problems. HCP gives up the centralized and uniform standard of development prohibition under the Endangered Species Act in favor of a regime in which local stakeholders produce highly tailored ecosystem management plans that advance both development and species protection. Rather than allocating funds and staff to pave, electrify, and build sewers according to uniform standards or centralized judgment, Porto Alegre's participatory budgeting system invites neighborhood residents and associations into the direct, repeated process of establishing, implementing, and monitoring these priorities.

Second Design Property: Centralized Supervision and Coordination

Although they enjoy substantial power and discretion, local units do not operate as autonomous, atomized sites of decision making in EDD. Instead, each of the cases features linkages of accountability and communication that connect local units to superordinate bodies. These central offices can reinforce the quality of local democratic deliberation and problem solving in variety of ways: coordinating and distributing resources, solving problems that local units cannot address by themselves, rectifying pathological or incompetent decision making in failing groups, and diffusing innovations and learning across boundaries. The Indian Panchayat systems and participatory budgeting in Porto Alegre feed relevant village and neighborhood decisions to higher levels of government. Both of the Chicago neighborhood governance reforms establish centralized capacities for benchmarking the performance of comparable units (schools, police beats) against one another and for holding them accountable to minimum procedural and substantive requirements. And, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service coordinates the activities of some 250 HCP through centralized monitoring, information pooling, and permit and performance tracking.

Unlike New Left political models in which concerns for liberation lead to demands for *autonomous* decentralization, EDD suggests new forms of *coordinated* decentralization. Driven by the pragmatic imperative to find solutions that work, these new models reject both democratic centralism and strict decentralization as unworkable. The rigidity of the former leads it too often to disrespect local

circumstance and intelligence and as a result it has a hard time learning from experience. Uncoordinated decentralization, on the other hand, isolates citizens into small units, surely a foolhardy measure for those who don't know how to solve a problem but suspect that others, somewhere else, do. Thus these reforms attempt to construct connections that spread information between local units and hold them accountable.

Third Design Property: State Centered, Not Voluntaristic

A third design characteristic of these experiments is that they colonize state power and transform formal governance institutions. Many spontaneous activist efforts in areas like neighborhood revitalization,[27] environmental activism,[28] local economic development, and worker health and safety seek to influence state outcomes through outside pressure. In doing so, the most successful of these efforts do advance EDD's principles of practicality, participation, and perhaps even deliberation in civic or political organizations. But they leave intact the basic institutions of state governance. By contrast, EDD reforms attempt to remake official institutions along these principles. This formal route potentially harnesses the power and resources of the state to deliberation and popular participation and thus to make these practices more durable and widely accessible.

These experiments generally seek to transform the mechanisms of state power into permanently mobilized deliberative-democratic, grassroots forms. Such transformations happen as often as not in close cooperation with state agents. These experiments are thus *less* "radical" than most varieties of activist self-help in that their central activity is not "fighting the power." But they are *more* radical in that they have larger reform scopes, are authorized by state or corporate bodies to make substantial decisions, and, most crucially, try to change the central procedures of power rather than merely attempting occasionally to shift the vector of its exercise. Whereas parties, social movement organizations, and interest groups often set their goals through internal deliberative processes and then fight for corporate or political power to implement those goals, these experiments reconstitute decision processes within the state and firm. When this reorganization is successful, participants have the luxury of taking some exercise of power for granted, they need not spend the bulk of their energy fighting for power (or against it).

By implication, these transformations attempt to institutionalize the ongoing participation of ordinary citizens, most often in their role as consumers of public goods, in the direct determination of what those goods are and how they should be best provided. This perpetual participation stands in contrast, for example, to the relatively brief democratic moments in both outcome-oriented, campaign-based social movements and electoral competitions in ordinary politics in which leaders/elites mobilize popular participation for a specific outcome or series of outcomes. If popular pressure becomes sufficient to implement some favored policy or elected candidate, the moment of broad participation usually ends and the

implementation of a policy or legislative activity of an official takes place in the largely isolated state sphere.

3. Enabling Conditions

A host of background conditions can facilitate or impede the progress of EDD. Literacy is an obvious example. Kerala's high literacy rates compared with other Indian states, and in particular female literacy, certainly facilitate the participatory democratic experiment there. Most fundamentally, perhaps, the likelihood that these institutional designs will generate desired effects depends significantly upon the balance of power between actors engaged in EDD, and in particular the configurations of nondeliberative power, that constitute the terrain upon which structured deliberation inside EDD occurs. Participants will be much more likely to engage in earnest deliberation when alternatives to it—such as strategic domination or exit from the process altogether—are made less attractive by roughly balanced power. When individuals lack the power to easily dominate others and secure their first-best preference, they are often more willing to deliberate. It is important to note that this background condition does not require absolute equality. The participants in the experiments below enjoy vastly different resources, levels of expertise, education, status, and numerical support. Sometimes, however, they are on a par sufficient for deliberative cooperation to be attractive.[29]

At least three paths lead to power balances sufficient for deliberation. The first comes from self-conscious institutional design efforts. When administrators or legislators endow parents with the power to fire school principals or popular councils with authority for reviewing village budgets, they put citizens and local experts on a more equal footing. Historical accidents, not intended to establish deliberation or participation at all, sometimes also perform this equalization function. The Endangered Species Act in the United States, for example, imposes costs on private property owners that are sometimes so severe that they would rather cooperate with environmentalists rather than bear them. Finally, groups such as community organizations, labor unions, and advocacy groups often check the tendencies of both officials and groups of citizens to commandeer ostensibly deliberative processes to advance their own narrow ends.

To recap, our experiments seem to share three political principles, three design characteristics, and one primary background condition:

- First, each experiment addresses a specific area of public problems.
- Second, this deliberation relies upon the empowered involvement of ordinary citizens and officials in the field.
- Third, each experiment attempts to solve those problems through processes of reasoned deliberation.

In terms of their institutional properties,

- These experiments devolve decision and implementation power to local action units.
- Local action units are not autonomous, but rather recombinant and linked to each other and to supervening levels of the state in order to allocate resources, solve common and cross-border problems, and diffuse innovations and learning.
- The experiments colonize and transform existing state and corporate institutions in such a way that the administrative bureaucracies charged with solving these problems are restructured into these deliberative groups. The power of these groups to implement the outcomes of their deliberations, therefore, comes from the authorization of these state and corporate bodies.

And finally, in terms of background enabling conditions,

- There is a rough equality of power, for the purposes of deliberative decision, between participants.

III. INSTITUTIONAL OBJECTIVES: CONSEQUENCES FOR EFFECTIVENESS, EQUITY, AND PARTICIPATION

The procedural features of institutions designed according to the principles specified above may be desirable in themselves; we often consider deliberation and participation as important independent values. However, scholars, practitioners, and casual observers will judge these experiments by their consequences as much as by the quality of their processes. In this section, we describe how institutions following the design principles above might advance three especially important democratic values: state action that is (1) effective, (2) equitable, and (3) invites broad, deep, and sustained participation. Whether properly designed institutions can advance these values or will instead yield a host of negative and unintended consequences must be settled primarily through empirical examinations, and we offer here a set of optimistic expectations that might guide those investigations.

1. Effective Problem Solving

The first, perhaps most important, institutional objective of these deliberative democratic experiments is to advance public ends—such as worker skill upgrading, good schools, safe neighborhoods, protecting endangered species, and sensible urban budget allocations—more effectively than alternative institutional arrangements. If they cannot produce such outcomes, then they are not very attractive reform projects. If they perform well, on the other hand, then this flavor of radical democracy has the potential to gain widespread popular and even elite support. Why, then, might we expect these deliberative democratic institutions to produce effective outcomes?

Several features of decentralized deliberation may enhance the effectiveness of this organizational form. First, these experiments convene and empower individuals close to the points of action who possess intimate knowledge about relevant situations. Second, in many problem contexts, these individuals, whether they are citizens or officials at the street level, may also know how best to improve the situation. Third, the deliberative process that regulates these groups' decision making is likely to generate superior solutions than hierarchical or less reflective aggregation procedures (such as voting) because all participants have opportunities to offer useful information and to consider alternative solutions more deeply. Beyond this, deliberation heightens participants' commitment to implement decisions because they are not imposed from above. Fourth, these experiments shorten the feedback loop—the distance and time between decisions, action, effect, observation, and reconsideration—in public action and so create a nimble style of collective action that can quickly recognize and respond to erroneous or ineffective strategies. Finally, each of these experiments creates hundreds of such component groups, each operating with substantial autonomy but not in isolation. This proliferation of command points allows multiple strategies, techniques, and priorities to be pursued simultaneously in order to more rapidly discover and diffuse those that prove themselves to be most effective. The learning capacity of the system as a whole, therefore, may be enhanced by the combination of decentralized empowered deliberation and centralized coordination and feedback.

2. Equity

In addition to making public action more effective, three features may enhance the capacity of these experiments to generate fair and equitable outcomes. First, these goals are well served by these experiments if they deliver effective public action to those who do not generally enjoy this good. Since most of the experiments concentrate on problems of disadvantaged people—ghetto residents in Chicago and Milwaukee; those from poor neighborhoods in Porto Alegre, Brazil; low status villagers in India; and industrial workers in Wisconsin facing technological displacement—sheer effectiveness is an important component of social justice.

A second source of equity and fairness stems from the inclusion of disadvantaged individuals—residents and workers—who are often excluded from public decisions. A classic justification for democratic rule over paternalist or otherwise exclusive modes is that a decision is more likely to treat those affected by it fairly when they exercise input. These experiments push this notion quite far by attempting to devise procedures whereby those most affected by these decisions exercise unmediated input while avoiding the paralysis or foolishness that so often results from such efforts.

These experiments' deliberative procedures offer a third way to advance equity and fairness. Unlike strategic bargaining (in which outcomes are determined by

the powers that parties bring to negotiations), hierarchical command (in which outcomes are determined according to the judgment of the highly placed), markets (in which money mediates outcomes), or aggregative voting (in which outcomes are determined according to the quantity of mobilized supporters), they establish groups that ostensibly make decisions according to the rules of deliberation. Parties make proposals and then justify them with reasons that the other parties in the group can support. A procedural norm of these groups is that they generate and adopt proposals that enjoy broad consensus support, although strict consensus is never a requirement. Groups select measures that upon reflection win the deepest and widest appeal. In the ideal, such procedures are regulated according to the lights of reason rather than money, power, numbers, or status. Since the idea of fairness is infused in the practice of reasonable discussion, truly deliberative decision making should tend toward more equitable outcomes than those regulated by power, status, money, or numbers. There will no doubt be some distance between this lofty deliberative ideal and the actual practices of these experiments. The other articles in this issue will explore the character and extent of that distance.

3. Broad and Deep Participation

Beyond achieving effective and fair public outcomes, these experiments also attempt to advance the venerable democratic value of engaging ordinary citizens in sustained and meaningful participation. They rely upon popular engagement as a central productive resource. Such engagement can provide local information on the prospective wisdom of various policies, retrospective data on their effects that in turn drives feedback learning, and additional energy for strategy execution. The experiments invite and attempt to sustain high levels of lay engagement in two main ways. First, they establish additional channels of voice over issues about which potential participants care deeply, such as the quality of their schools and of their lived spaces, their ability to acquire skills on which their employment security rests, and the disposition of public resources devoted to local public goods. The experiments increase participation, then, by adding important channels for participation to the conventional avenues of political voice such as voting, joining pressure groups, and contacting officials. They also offer a distinct inducement to participation: the real prospect of exercising state power.[30] With most other forms of political participation, the relationship between, say, one's vote or letter to a representative and a public decision is tenuous at best. In these experiments, however, participants exercise influence over state strategies. This input often yields quite palpable responses. Often, the priorities and proposals of lay participants are adopted immediately or in some modified form. Even in cases where one's proposals are rejected through deliberative processes, one at least knows why.

The quality of participation—as gauged by the degree to which participants' opinions and proposals are informed and the quality of their interactions with one

another—might also be higher under these experiments in deliberative public action than under more conventional political forms such as voting, interest group competition, or social movements. Following John Stuart Mill's comment that the success of democratic arrangements can be measured in two ways—by the quality of its decisions and the quality of citizens it produces[31]—we say that the character of participation, quite apart from its level (as measured by voting turnout, for example) is an independent desideratum of democratic politics. Modern critics from both the Left and the Right seem to be unified in their low opinion of the political capacities of mass publics. Explanations from the Left include the rise of the "culture industry" and the concomitant decline of autonomous "public spheres" in civil societies where a competent public opinion might be formed. The political Right agrees with this diagnosis, but recommends elite democracy and techno-bureaucratic administration as a solution that does not require healing the public body. Against the background of this alarming diagnosis and even more alarming cure, concern for the public wisdom of private individuals is even more urgent than in Mill's time.

Individuals' capacities to deliberate and make public decisions atrophy when left unused, and participation in these experiments exercises those capacities more intensely than conventional democratic channels. In national or local elections, for example, the massive amounts of information sold to them from many vantage points tempts even engaged, well-educated citizens to throw their hands up in frustrated confusion or to focus on more easily understood dimensions of character, personality, or party identity. These experiments reduce these expertise-based barriers to engaged participation and thus encourage participants to develop and deploy their pragmatic political capabilities. First, they allow casual, nonprofessional, participants to master specific areas of knowledge necessary to make good decisions by shrinking—through decentralization—decision scopes to narrow functional and geographic areas. Some of our experiments doubly focus decisions—training at a single firm, safety in a neighborhood, the effectiveness of a particular firm—and so participants may master materials necessary to make high-quality decisions. Other cases, such as deliberative planning bodies in Kerlea and Porto Alegre's participatory budget have broader scope, but nevertheless retain the pragmatic, problem-centered concerns that enables ordinary citizens to engage the decision-making process. Furthermore, citizens have incentives to develop the capacities and master the information necessary to make good decisions because they must live with the consequences of poor ones—these experiments institute "direct democracy" in the sense that these groups' decisions are often directly implemented by relevant state agencies. Again, this contrasts with most forms of political voice such as voting or letter writing, where the consequences of one's decisions are statistically negligible.

Beyond the proximate scope and effect of participation, these experiments also encourage the development of political wisdom in ordinary citizens by grounding competency upon everyday, situated, experiences rather than simply data mediated through popular press, television, or "book learning." Following Dewey and contemporary theorists of education and cognition, we expect that many, perhaps most, individuals develop skills and competencies more easily when those skills are integrated with actual experiences and observable effects. Since these experiments rely upon practical knowledge of, say, skill training or school operation, and provide opportunities for its repeated application and correction, individuals develop political capacities in intimate relation to other regions of their professional and private lives. Many participants will find it easier (not to mention more useful) to acquire this kind of "situated" political wisdom and capacity compared with the more free-standing varieties of political knowledge required for, say, voting. Finally, each of these experiments contributes to the political development of individuals by providing specialized, paraprofessional training. Leading reformers in each of our experiments realized, or learned through disappointment, that most nonprofessionals lack the capacities to participate effectively in functionally specific and empowered groups. Rather than retrenching into technocratic professionalization, however, some have established procedures to impart the necessary foundational capacities to participants who lack them. For example, the Chicago local school governance reform requires parents and community participants to receive training in democratic process, school budgeting and finance, strategic planning, principal hiring, and other specific skills. Each of these experiments not only consists of fora for honing and practicing deliberative-democratic skills, but most also literally establishes schools of democracy to develop participants' political capacities.

IV. AN AGENDA FOR EXPLORING EMPOWERED PARTICIPATION

Thus far, we have sketched the outlines of a model of radical democracy that aims to solve anticipated practical public problems through deliberative action, laid out the practical and ethical advantages of institutions built along that model, and offered brief sketches of real-world examples that embody these principles. Other articles in this issue explore several actually existing cases in some detail, inquiring whether these abstract principles accurately characterize them, whether the experiments in fact yield the benefits that we have attributed to deliberative democracy, and whether these advantages must be purchased at some as yet unspecified price. Before we move to that very concrete discussion, however, we conclude this introduction by laying out three sets of critical questions that might guide these investigations. First, to what extent do these experiments conform to the theoretical model we have elaborated for the institutional design and effects of EDD? Second, what are the most damning flaws in our model of EDD? Finally,

what is the scope of EDD—is it limited to the few idiosyncratic cases that we have laid out, or are the principles and design features more broadly applicable?

1. The Relationship of the Cases to the Model

Even if the normative principles of this proposed model offer an attractive guide for feasible institutional innovation, the specific experiments we have described may not in fact conform to it. Six critical dimensions of fit are as follows:

i.   How genuinely *deliberative* are the actual decision-making processes?
ii.   How effectively are the decisions made through this process translated into real action?
iii. To what extent are the deliberative bodies able to effectively monitor the implementation of their decisions?
iv.   To what extent do these reforms incorporate recombinant measures that coordinate the actions of local units and diffuse innovations among them?
v.   To what extent do the deliberative processes constitute real "schools for democracy"?
vi.   Are the actual outcomes of the entire process more desirable than those of prior institutional arrangements?

i. Deliberation

Because many supposed benefits of our model rest on the notion of deliberation, the first question goes to the degree to which decision-making processes within these experiments are genuinely deliberative. Equitable decisions depend upon parties agreeing to that which is fair rather than pushing for as much as they can get. Effectiveness relies upon individuals remaining open to new information and proposals rather than doggedly advancing preformulated ones. And learning at individual and group levels depends on people being able to alter their opinions and even their preferences. Although deliberation is seldom deployed as a descriptive characteristic of organizations in social science, its practice is completely familiar in public and private life—where we often discuss issues and resolve conflict not by pushing for as much as we can get, but rather by doing what seems reasonable and fair. Does this generous characterization of individual and group behavior accurately describe how participants make decisions in real-world cases, or is their interaction better characterized by the more familiar mechanisms of rational interest aggregation—command, bargaining, logrolling, and threatening? In situations characterized by substantial differences of interest or opinion, particularly from ideological sources, deliberation may break down into either gridlock or power-based conflict resolution. Is the model's scope therefore limited to environments of low conflict or minimal inequality? In more contentious situations, do deliberative efforts generally lead to co-optation as one side softens

its demands to get along or adapts to unjust conditions? If so, then the symbiotic relationship between deliberation and empowerment suggested in section II above can become a trade-off.

ii. Action

The fact that collective decisions are made in a deliberative, egalitarian, and democratic manner is no guarantee that those decisions will be effectively translated into action. In some cases, the implementation depends upon the capacities and will of the members themselves. For example, Chicago community policing groups often ask patrol officers to perform various tasks. In such cases, weak accountability mechanisms of publicity and deliberation may be insufficient for the group to compel the action of its own members. In other cases, implementation may depend upon the obedience of others over whom the group has formal authority—such as the staff under a Local School Council. Such situations encounter familiar principal-agent dilemmas. In still other instances, implementation may rely upon bodies whose relations with primary deliberative groups are even less structured. In Porto Alegre's participatory budgeting system, for example, the deliberations of regional assemblies are passed onto a citywide body whose budget must then be approved by the mayor. These budgetary decisions must then filter back down the municipal apparatus before, say, a sewer main gets built or a street paved. It is therefore important to know the extent to which decisions from deliberative processes are effectively translated into real social action.

iii. Monitoring

Implementation requires more than turning an initial decision into action; it also demands mechanisms of ongoing monitoring and accountability. To what extent are these deliberative groups capable of monitoring the implementation of their decisions and holding responsible parties accountable? Most democratic processes are front-loaded in the sense that popular participation focuses on deciding a policy question (as in a referendum) or selecting a candidate (as in an election) rather than on monitoring implementation of the decision or the platform. These democratic experiments, by contrast, aim for more sustained levels of participation over time. Democracy here means participation beyond the point of decision, to popular implementation, monitoring of that implementation, and disciplined review of its effects. Popular participation throughout the entire cycle of public action, it is hoped, will increase the accountability of public power and the public's capacity to learn from past successes and failures. It remains to be seen, however, whether participants in these experiments can sustain involvement over time with sufficient intensity to become effective monitors of the decisions they make; as in conventional democratic processes, moments leading up to decision are no doubt more exciting and visible than the long periods of execution that follow.

iv. Alleged Benefits of Centralized Coordination and Power

While it is fairly clear that all of the experimental reforms decentralize power, the coordinating centralized mechanisms of accountability and learning theorized as the second design principle of EDD are less obvious. Under the pragmatic devolution of EDD, local units are by themselves unable to solve coordination and cross-border problems and would thus benefit from information-sharing connections to other units in the system. The fashion and degree to which the experiments reviewed above construct institutions to execute these functions varies widely. The empirical studies will, in more exploratory fashion, examine the extent to which these reforms construct recombinant linkages and establish how well those mechanisms work in practice.

v. Schools of Democracy

For deliberative democracy to succeed in real-world settings, it must engage individuals with little experience and few skills of participation. The fifth question asks whether these experiments actually function as schools of democracy by increasing the deliberative capacities and dispositions of those who participate in them. While many standard treatments of political institutions take the preferences and capacities of individuals who act with them as fixed, these democratic experiments treat both of these dimensions of their participation as objects of transformation. By exercising capacities of argument, planning, and evaluation, through practice individuals might become better deliberators. By seeing that cooperation mediated through reasonable deliberation yields benefits not accessible through adversarial methods, participants might increase their disposition to be reasonable, and to transform narrowly self-interested preferences accordingly. Both of these hypotheses about the development of individuals as citizens in these democratic experiments are, of course, highly speculative pending much closer examination of actors' actual behavior.

vi. Outcomes

For many potential critics and supporters, the most important question will be one of outcomes. Do these deliberative institutions produce strategies or effects more desirable than those of the institutions they supplant? One prime justification for reallocating public power to these decentralized and deliberative groups is that they devise public action strategies and solutions that are superior to those of, say, command-and-control bureaucracies, by virtue of superior knowledge of local conditions, greater learning capacities, and improved accountability. A central topic of empirical investigation, then, is whether these experiments have in practice managed to generate more innovative solutions.

2. Criticisms of the Model

Beyond these questions that address whether the principles of our model of deliberative democracy accurately describe the experiments we examine, a second set of questions focuses pointedly upon criticisms that have been raised against ostensibly similar proposals for associative, deliberative governance. The empirical materials can illuminate six critical concerns about EDD:

i.   The democratic character of processes and outcomes may be vulnerable to serious problems of power and domination *inside* deliberative arenas by powerful factions or elites.
ii. *External actors* and *institutional contexts* may impose severe limitations on the scope of deliberative decision and action. In particular, powerful participants may engage in "forum shopping" strategies in which they use deliberative institutions only when it suits them.
iii. These special-purpose political institutions may fall prey to rent seeking and capture by especially well-informed or interested parties.
iv. The devolutionary elements of EDD may balkanize the polity and political decision making.
v.   Empowered deliberation may demand unrealistically high levels of popular participation, especially in contemporary climates of civic and political disengagement.
vi. Finally, these experiments may enjoy initial successes but may be difficult to sustain over the long term.

i. Deliberation into Domination

Perhaps the most serious potential weakness of these experiments is that they may pay insufficient attention to the fact that participants in these processes usually face each other from unequal positions of power. These inequalities can stem from material differences and the class backgrounds of participants, from the knowledge and information gulfs that separate experts from laypersons, or from personal capacities for deliberation and persuasion associated with educational and occupational advantages.

When deliberation aims to generate positive sum solutions in which nearly all participants reap benefits from cooperation (outcome points that lie closer to pareto frontiers), such power differentials may not result in unfair decisions. However, serious projects that seek to enhance social justice and equity cannot limit themselves to just these "win-win" situations. Therefore, our model would not be a very interesting one, it might be argued, if it did not apply to contested areas of public action or if its application to those areas systematically disadvantaged weaker participants. Perhaps too optimistically, deliberation requires the strong as well as the weak to submit to its norms; they ought to refrain from opportunistically pressing their interests even when power allows them to do so.[32] One

set of questions that must be answered, then, concerns whether deliberative arenas enable the powerful to dominate the weak. Consider four mechanisms that might transform fair deliberation into domination.

One lamentable fact of all contemporary democracies is that citizens who are advantaged in terms of their wealth, education, income, or membership in dominant racial and ethnic groups participate more frequently and effectively than those who are less well-off. These experiments demand intensive forms of political engagement that may further aggravate these status and wealth participation biases. If those who participate are generally better-off citizens, then resulting public action is unlikely to be fair. As in other channels of popular voice, the question of "who participates" remains a vital one in deliberative democracy.

Second, even if both strong and weak are well represented, the strong may nevertheless use tools at their disposal—material resources, information asymmetries, rhetorical capacities—to advance collective decisions that unreasonably favor their interests. While many other models of public decision making such as electoral and interest group politics expect such behavior, empowered deliberation is more normatively demanding, and so perhaps more empirically suspect.

Third, beyond unfair representation and direct force, powerful participants may seek to improperly and unreasonably exclude issues that threaten their interests from the scope of deliberative action. By limiting discussion to narrow areas of either mutual gain or inconsequence, the powerful may protect their status quo advantages without resorting to blatantly nondeliberative maneuvers. Nevertheless, thus constraining the agenda obviously violates the norms of open deliberation and, if found to be a common phenomena in the cases, would indicate a failure of the model.[33]

Finally, and ultimately perhaps most seriously, deliberative democracy may disarm secondary associations by obliging them to "behave responsibly" and discouraging radicalism and militancy.[34] After all, deliberation requires reasonableness, and so commitment to deliberative processes might be thought to require abstinence from vigorous methods of challenging power. That is, not only will the practices internal to the association bracket challenges to privilege, but in order to maintain their credibility to "the powers that be" the associations will strive to marginalize such challenges from the political arena altogether. If the popular associations engaged in these experiments fail to enforce these political parameters—if the deliberative apparatuses become sites of genuine challenge to the power and privileges of dominant classes and elites—then this criticism predicts that the deliberative bodies would be dismantled.

ii. Forum Shopping and External Power

Even if deliberative norms prevail and diverse participants cooperate to develop and implement fair collective actions, the powerful (or the weak) may turn to measures *outside* of these new democratic institutions to defend and advance their interests. The institutions of EDD operate in a complex web of more conventional

arrangements that includes interests groups and politicians contesting one another in agencies, legislatures, and courts. When participants cannot get what they want in deliberative settings—perhaps because what they want is unreasonable—they may press their interests in more hospitable venues. In the context of public education, for example, a parent who cannot secure special privileges for his child in the Local School Council may try to use the central school system office to overrule local deliberations. Real estate development interests in the city of Porto Alegre have bypassed the participatory budgeting system in favor of more friendly planning agencies when they anticipated neighborhood opposition. Engaging in such forum shopping to overturn or avoid unfavorable deliberative decisions clearly violates deliberative norms that ground the experiments discussed above and, if widespread, will certainly poison the mutual confidence necessary for open discussion and cooperative collective action among diverse parties.

Aside from the possibility of the defection, parties constituted outside of these deliberative bodies may not recognize their authority and resist their decisions. Driven by understandable jealousies, we might expect officials firmly ensconced in preexisting power structures—elected politicians, senior bureaucrats, those controlling traditional interest groups—to use their substantial authority and resources to overrule unfavorable deliberative decisions. At the extreme, they might try to cut the lives of these experiments short or at least contain them to some seedling form. So, for example, environmental groups have sometimes viewed cooperative ecosystem management efforts as ceding too much ground to development or agricultural interests and fought locally deliberative decisions through litigious and legislative methods.[35] The Chicago school reforms empowered local governance councils by authorizing them to hire and fire their principals, and thereby removed the job tenure privileges that had been enjoyed by these school leaders. The association of principals fought back litigiously by arguing that the school reform's functional electoral structure violated the Constitutional mandate of one vote per adult citizen. Locally dominant left-wing political parties sustain both the Indian village governance reforms and Porto Alegre's participatory budget. Officials there have claimed credit for the success of these experiments and subsequently based their political fortunes upon the continuation of these experiments. Conventional politicians and bureaucrats thus became the handmaiden of deliberative-democratic transformation by mobilizing elite and popular support for the expansion and reproduction of these experiments. Without such political foundations, it is easy to imagine that these systems of popular deliberative action would be quickly overturned by social and political elites that they often act against.

iii. Rent Seeking versus Public Goods

We have hypothesized that these experiments produce public goods that benefit even those who choose not to participate directly. Sound urban budgeting would benefit all of Porto Alegre's residents, not just those who take part in the

formal institutions of participatory budgeting. Similarly, most neighborhood residents enjoy the good of public safety, all students and their parents benefit from effective schools, and many workers at a firm gain from the establishment of a skill-upgrading center. Potentially, however, rent-seeking participants might reverse this flow of benefits by capturing these deliberative apparatuses to advance private or factional agendas. Members of the training consortium, for example, might attempt to make it exclusive and use public training monies as a weapon against local competitors. Similarly, the system of participatory budgeting could be reabsorbed into old-school clientelist politics in which party bosses control discussion and resulting budget recommendations. Small factions of neighborhood residents or parents might use public powers created by the community policing and school governance reforms to benefit themselves by, for example, protecting just a few blocks or establishing special school programs for the sake of just their own children.

Some of these new institutions attempt to stem rent seeking through centralized transparency and accountability measures. They link decentralized local bodies to one another and to centralized authorities in order to make the varied performance of deliberative action widely known and therefore more accountable. All HCPs, for example, must be reviewed by U.S. Department of Interior authorities in Washington, D.C., and the actual performance of those plans will soon be made publicly available in a centralized data warehouse. Similarly, the decentralized plans of police beats and schools in Chicago are reviewed and aggregated by higher bodies, as are the neighborhood budget priorities of Porto Alegre and Panchayat decisions in India. In most of these cases, the capacity of accountability and transparency mechanisms to check self-interested behavior is simply not known. Accordingly, one critical question is the extent to which its institutions can be perverted into rent-seeking vehicles and the efficacy efforts to check this tendency.

iv. Balkanization of Politics

In a further pitfall, these experiments may exacerbate the balkanization of a polity that should be unified. Prominent democratic theorists such as Rousseau and Madison worried that the division of the body politic into contending groups would weaken the body as a whole because individuals would advance their factional interests rather than common good. In the extreme, such factionalism might create conditions in which one faction dominates the rest. Or, fragmented political institutions and social factions might each be quite capable of solving its own particular problems, yet the system as a whole would be incapable of addressing large-scale concerns or formulating greater agendas. From this critical perspective, these experiments might aggravate the problem of faction by constituting and empowering hundreds of groups, each focused on a narrow issue within cramped geographic boundaries. A proponent might respond that these channels of partici-

pation add some public component to lives that would otherwise be fully domi-
nated by private, or even more particular concerns, and that therefore the net effect
of these institutions is to broaden the horizons of citizens, not to narrow them.
Both of these contending perspectives remain hypothetical; however, absent
accounts of particular individuals and the relationship of these experiments to the
political institutions that supposedly foster greater political commonality.

v. Apathy

While these four pathologies result from energetic but ill-constrained political
engagement, a fifth criticism begins with the common observation that the mass
of citizens is politically disengaged and ignorant, not fervid. From this perspec-
tive, empowered deliberation demands far too much in terms of the depth and
level of participation from ordinary citizens, and the knowledge, patience, and
wisdom that they are expected to possess or, in short order, acquire. It may be that
the citizens in late capitalist societies are generally too consumed with private life
to put forth the time, energy, and commitment that these deliberative experiments
require. Or, symptoms of apathy may result from institutional design rather than
individual preference. These deliberative channels ask citizens to generate public
goods that are broadly shared, and so many will be tempted to free ride on the
efforts of others. The cases below will offer some evidence that begins to adjudi-
cate these questions about citizen apathy by examining the quantity and character
of participation.

vi. Stability and Sustainability

Another concern focuses upon the stability of these experiments through time.
They may begin in a burst of popular enthusiasm and good will but then succumb
to forces that prevent these auspicious beginnings from taking root and growing
into stable forms of sustained participation. For example, one might expect that
practical demands on these institutions might press participants eventually to
abandon time-consuming deliberative decision making in favor of oligarchic or
technocratic forms. Even if one concedes that empowered deliberation generates
innovations not available to hierarchical organizations, the returns from these
gains may diminish over time. After participants have plucked the "low-hanging
fruit," these forms might again ossify into the very bureaucracies that they sought
to replace. Or, ordinary citizens may find the reality of participation increasingly
burdensome and less rewarding than they had imagined, and engagement may
consequently dim from exhaustion and disillusionment. Although most of the
reforms considered here are young institutions, some of them have a history suffi-
cient to begin to ask whether their initial successes have given way to
antideliberative tendencies. In his article, Patrick Heller compares experiences of
decentralized democracy in Kerala, Brazil, and South Africa and argues that two

keys to the durability of these reforms are the support of popular political parties on one hand and integrated social movements on the other.

3. Is EDD Generalizable?

A final and crucial question about this endeavor goes to its scope. Are the democratic principles and design features of EDD of quite general applicability? Or, is it limited to just a few settings such as those already mentioned? Since answering that question requires much more empirical research than is presently available, we can only offer a few speculative remarks.

The diversity of cases—across policy areas, levels of economic development, and political cultures—discussed in this issue suggests that EDD would usefully contribute to a large class of problem-solving situations. In the most general terms, those contexts are ones in which current arrangements—whether organized according to expert command, market exchange, or perhaps informally—are failing and in which popular engagement would improve matters by increasing accountability, capacity, or by bringing more information to bear. Arguably, this is a large class indeed, and recent work has documented the emergence and operation of similar reforms in areas such as the treatment of addiction[36] and environmental regulation.[37]

In a variety of institutional settings, however, EDD may not be helpful. It is not a universal reform strategy. In many areas of public life, conventional systems of guardianship, delegation, and political representation work well, or could be improved so as to be optimal. To take one small example, injecting more parental power and participation in already well-functioning wealthy suburban school systems might lead to conflict and wasted energy that serves neither parents, students, nor educators in the long term. EDD would also be inappropriate where current institutions perform unsatisfactorily, but where direct participation would add little to problem-solving efforts. Sometimes, public policy might be naturally centralized, and so not admit of broad participation. At other times, policy areas may be so technically complex that they preclude constructive lay engagement. But perhaps the burden of proof lies on those who would oppose more participatory measures. After all, many of the areas of public life already subject to EDD reforms might have seemed, quite recently, too daunting for ordinary citizens to contemplate: the formulation of municipal budgets, management of schools, habitat conservation, and rural development.

NOTES

1. Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation* (New York: Rinehart & Co., 1944). The phrase appears originally in William Blake's *Jerusalem: The Emanation of the Giant Albion* (1804).

2. These five cases were presented at a conference in the Real Utopias Project held at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, in January 2000. Preliminary reports on the two case

studies that are not included as articles in this volume of *Politics & Society*—the case study on the Wisconsin Regional Training Partnership (WRTP) and the one of village governance in Kerala, India—can be found at http://www.sss.wisc.edu/~wright/RealUtopias.htm

3. The Chicago School Reform Act, P.A. 85-1418, affects only schools in the city of Chicago, which is its own school district.

4. Either because they are public goods or because existing arrangements within firms do not meet these challenges for lack of know-how, inventiveness, or simple resources.

5. See Laura Dresser, Joel Rogers, and Scott Zdrazil, "The Wisconsin Regional Training Partnership" (manuscript, January 2000).

6. Hunter Lovins and Amory Lovins, foreword to *Beyond Backyard Environmentalism* by Charles Sabel, Archon Fung, and Brad Karkkainen (Boston: Beacon Press, 2000).

7. In 1999, almost 1,200 species were on the federal endangered species list, but only 120 of those had a designated "critical area" of habitat necessary to trigger strict protection. See Thomas F. Darin, "Designating Critical Habitat under the Endangered Species Act: Habitat Protection versus Agency Discretion," *The Harvard Environmental Law Review* 24, no. 1 (2000): 209-35.

8. *Federal Register* 64, no. 45 (9 March 1999): 11485-90.

9. Peter Kareiva et al., *Using Science in Habitat Conservation Plans* (Santa Barbara: University of California, Santa Barbara, National Center for Ecological Analysis and Synthesis, 1998).

10. See Boaventura de Sousa Santos, "Participatory Budgeting in Porto Allegre: Toward a Redistributive Democracy," *Politics & Society* 26, no. 4 (December 1998), 461-510.

11. Ibid.

12. Much in the account that follows has been drawn from G. K. Lieten, *Development, Devolution, and Democracy: Village Discourse in West Bengal* (New Dehli, India: Sage, 1996).

13. Ibid., 50.

14. Maitreesh Ghatak and Maitreya Ghatak, "Grassroots Democracy: A Case Study of the Operation of the Panchayat System in West Bengal, India" (manuscript, 2000).

15. The Panchayat system consists of three aggregated layers. The lowest level is an elected body called the Gram Panchayat, which typically covers some 10 to 12 villages totaling 10,000 residents. The responsibilities of these bodies have changed through time, but typically now include the administration of public health, drainage, and sanitation; supply of safe drinking water; maintenance of public utilities, primary education, agricultural development, irrigation, land reform, poverty alleviation, rural industrialization, electrification, and housing provision. The second tier, called the Panchayat Samity, governs a unit of area that usually consists of ten GPs. Above this still is a district governance body called the Zilla Parishad, which aggregates and coordinates the Panchayat Samity level plans.

16. See T. M. Thomas Isaac with Richard Franke, *Local Democracy and Development: People's Campaign for Decentralized Planning in Kerala* (New Delhi, India: Left World Press, 2000).

17. Figures here from ibid.

18. Ibid.

19. Two especially relevant theorists of deliberation for the purposes here are Jurgen Habermas and Joshua Cohen.

20. See, for example, Robert Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000); Theda Skocpol and Morris P. Fiorina, eds., *Civic Engagement in American Democracy* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1999), 1-23; Joshua Cohen and Joel Rogers, "Secondary Associations and

Democratic Governances," in Erik Olin Wright, ed., *Associations and Democracy* (London: Verso, 1995).

21. See Joshua and Charles Sabel Cohen, "Directly-Deliberative Polyarchy," *European Law Journal* 3, no. 4 (December 1997): 313-42; Michael C. Dorf and Charles Sabel, "Drug Treatment Courts and Emergent Experimentalist Government," *Vanderbilt Law Review* 53, no. 3, (April 2000: 829-83); Archon Fung, "Street Level Democracy: A Theory of Popular Pragmatic Deliberation and Its Practice in Chicago School Reform and Community Policing, 1988-1997." Ph.D. diss., MIT Department of Political Science, 1999.

22. This account of deliberation as reason giving draws recent treatments in democratic theory, especially various works of Joshua Cohen. See, for example, his "Procedure and Substance in Deliberative Democracy," in Selya Benhabib, ed., *Democracy and Difference: Contesting the Boundaries of the Political* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996), 95-109.

23. Deliberative processes can affect the understanding individuals have both of their interests and of the optimal strategies for satisfying those interests. In general, it would be expected that when people enter such deliberative processes they have a better sense of their basic goals than they do of the best means for accomplishing their goals, and thus much of the deliberative process concerns problem-solving discussions over alternative courses of action. Still, because interests are complex and often quite vague, and because individuals often define their interests over variable sets of other actors, deliberative practices can also affect how people understand the interests themselves. For a discussion of modes of interest transformation through deliberation, see Jane Mansbridge, "A Deliberative Theory of Interest Transformation," in Mark Petracca, ed., *The Politics of Interests: Interest Groups Transformed* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1992), 32-57.

24. The most famous of these is of course the problem of incoherence. See William Riker, *Liberalism Against Populism: A Confrontation between the Theory of Democracy and the Theory of Social Choice* (Prospect, IL: Waveland Press, 1982).

25. For the limited purposes of this discussion, we use negotiation and strategic bargaining interchangeably. Negotiations and strategic bargaining can, of course, also involve deliberation among the parties involved. The issue here, then, is the difference between such deliberative bargaining and strategic bargaining that is intended to give maximum advantage to one's own interests.

26. See, for example, David Austen-Smith, "Strategic Models of Talk in Political Decision Making," *International Political Science Review* 13, no. 1 (1992): 45-58.

27. See, for instance, Harry Boyte's *Backyard Revolution: Understanding the New Citizen's Movement* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1980) and Peter Medoff and Holly Sklar's *Streets of Hope: The Fall and Rise of an Urban Neighborhood* (Boston: South End Press, 1994). For one prominent concrete example discussed from the perspective of its leader, see Ernesto Cortes, Jr., "Reweaving the Social Fabric," *The Boston Review* 19, nos. 3 and 4 (June-September 1994): 12-14, on the activities of the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF) group Communities Organized for Public Service (COPS) in San Antonio, Texas.

28. Andrew Szasz, *Ecopopulism: Toxic Waste and the Movement for Environmental Justice* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994).

29. The range of equality here is perhaps akin to Rousseau's when he claims that laws of democracy should create circumstances such that "no citizen shall ever be wealthy enough to buy another, and none poor enough to be forced to sell himself." J. J. Rousseau, *Social Contract*, trans. Donald A. Cress (Cambridge: Hackett, 1987), book II, chap. 11.

30. One classic problem of political science is explaining why people vote at all, given the complete absence of effect associated with a single vote. For an attempt to explain this

apparently irrational behavior from the rational choice perspective, see William Riker and Peter Ordeshook, "A Theory of the Calculus of Voting," *American Political Science Review* 62 (March 1968): 25-42.

31. John Stuart Mill, chap. 2 in *Considerations on Representative Government* (New York: Prometheus Books, 1991).

32. For a variation on this critique, see Lynn M. Sanders, "Against Deliberation," *Political Theory* 25, no. 3 (June 1997): 347-76.

33. For a classic statement of this dynamic, see Peter Bachrach and Morton Baratz, "Two Faces of Power," *American Political Science Review* 56, (December 1962): 947-52.

34. See Szasz.

35. See Mark Sagoff, "The View from Quincy Library: Civic Engagement in Environmental Problem Solving," (manuscript, 1998) and Louis Jacobson, "Local Timber Collaboration Stalls in National Arena," *Planning* 61, no. 11 (November 1998): 22-23.

36. See Dorf and Sabel.

37. See Sabel, Fung, and Karkkainen (1999).