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Taking Deliberation to the Streets : Reflections on Deliberative Walks

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Abstract

The focus of this article, a model that we call the *Deliberative Walk*, builds on the principles of Citizens' Juries and Development Walks. Two case studies are used to explore the potential of uniting the two different participatory models, one that is based on discussion and the other that is more observation oriented. Both case studies were implemented in Finland during autumn 2014. Reviewing these case studies is important, because the issue of 'taking deliberation to the streets' has rarely been addressed in the academic literature on CJs and other deliberative mini-publics. Based on the case studies, our suggestion is that in place-specific deliberations, a Deliberative Walk is a suitable method when the issue that is being tackled has highly intertwined social and physical dimensions, while in more situation-specific deliberations, a Deliberative Walk adds value when the issue is such that it needs a more complete and direct learning experience.

Introduction

It is more than 40 years since the American Ned Crosby invented the *Citizens' Jury* (CJ), that is, a mechanism of deliberative democracy with the goals of inclusivity, deliberativeness and influence (see Ryan & Smith, 2014). At the time, Crosby considered the existing models of public participation to be inadequate and tried to find more efficient and effective ways to develop public participation (see Crosby & Nethercut, 2005)¹. One of the central principles of the CJ was to form a target population in miniature. A further parameter was that a CJ should not be too large, and a focus on small group deliberations led to the establishment of a general rule that a CJ should have no more than 24 participants. The originators of the CJ also emphasized that the information conveyed to the jurors and the resulting deliberative discussions should be of high quality, and that facilitators would be required to safeguard that quality, to forestall any attempts at manipulation and to ensure that the overall process was governed by the principles of equality and fairness. Finally, the pioneers of the CJ process were determined that there should be sufficient time for deliberation, and considered three to five days would generally be appropriate. The differences to the prevailing traditional models of public participation such as public hearings were then, and remain, significant (Fung, 2015; Leighninger, 2014). Since their inception, several hundred CJs have been convened worldwide (Crosby & Hottinger, 2011). The issues on which CJs have deliberated encompass a range spanning health

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policy decision-making (see Street, Duszynski, Krawczyk, & Braunack-Mayer, 2014) to environmental decision-making (e.g., Kenyon, Nevin, & Hanley, 2003). There have also been some advances in the institutionalisation of CJ practice. The *Citizens' Initiative Review*², based closely on the ideals of the CJ, was enshrined in law in the State of Oregon in the United States, in 2011 (see Gastil, Richards, & Knobloch, 2014)³. Moreover, in 2015 CJs became part of Finnish law when they were incorporated into the Finnish Local Government Act⁴ (Ministry of Finance, 2015).

Naturally, the CJ method has also developed over time (see, Street et al., 2014). For example, in Finland there have been a number of CJs comprising participants exclusively from different sectors, such as Citizens' Juries for young people (Raisio, Ollila & Vartiainen, 2012), elderly people (Raisio & Carson, 2014) and people with disabilities (Raisio, Valkama & Peltola, 2014). One particularly interesting new model is to combine the CJ method with a *Development Walk*. In brief, the idea of a Development Walk is to give citizens an opportunity to develop their local environment. Facilitated by the leaders of the walk, participants in the Development Walk progress along a pre-defined route, discussing their surroundings and developing proposals for development, which are later conveyed to the relevant parties in the municipal administration (Ehrström & Katajamäki 2013).

The focus of this article, a model that we call the *Deliberative Walk*, builds on the principles of Citizens' Juries and Development Walks. The Deliberative Walk, introduced by Ehrström and Raisio (2014), can be understood as an *instructive concept* that serves to operationalise the emergent whole. The current research uses two case studies to explore the potential of uniting the two different participatory models, one that is based on discussion and the other that is more observation-oriented. Both case studies were implemented in Finland during autumn 2014. The first case study is of a CJ that took place as part of regional emergency preparedness exercise. This CJ lasted for three days with jurors observing an accident simulation in the field on one of the days. The second case study is a Campus Forum where students and faculty from several universities participated alongside local inhabitants and other stakeholders. This forum also ran for three days and one of the days was reserved for a Development Walk. The assumption is that Deliberative Walks may be arranged for deliberations that are either situation-specific or place-specific. While both case studies have their shortcomings in relation to the hypothesized ideal of a Deliberative Walk, when viewed together they are informative and trigger the drawing of preliminary conclusions.

Reviewing the aforementioned case studies is important, because the issue of 'taking deliberation to the streets' has rarely been addressed in the academic literature on CJs and other deliberative mini-publics. There are examples reporting CJ participants taking field trips (e.g., Niemeyer, 2004; Niemeyer & Russell, 2005), but usually in these cases research has not been specifically focused on this particular aspect of participation. There is also a notable scarcity of academic research on Development Walks and similar methods, and the current research

therefore adds to both streams of literature. In addition, this research is inspired by *outdoor and place-responsive pedagogies*, which, in the context of deliberative democracy, is an interesting new viewpoint.

The priority for this research is to analyse the role of off-site participation, such as Development Walks, within the wider field of deliberative mini-publics. The analysis is based on the *participants' subjective experiences*, particularly how they assessed the off-site components. We begin the article with a preliminary definition of a Deliberative Walk, after which we examine both CJs and Development Walks in more detail. The following section presents and analyses the two case studies individually. The conclusions combine the theoretical and empirical parts of the article. We also describe the limitations of the current research and suggest avenues for future research on Deliberative Walks.

Defining Deliberative Walks

In 2011, an innovative method of public deliberation, labelled *Deliberative Theater*, was piloted in Pittsburgh by Carnegie Mellon University in collaboration with several other organizations. Deliberative Theater is defined as a process that “integrates dramatic and visual arts with public policy debate in order to engage many different kinds of people in important decisions affecting the quality of life in their communities” (Crowley, 2011: 2). Deliberative Theater participants deliberate in small groups and receive information from a so-called playbill and a panel of experts. However, what makes the process special is its opener, a theatrical performance that dramatizes the issue under deliberation, ideally making it easier to understand the various perspectives related to it (Clark & Teachout, 2012).⁵

In a similar manner, a Deliberative Walk, which integrates different ways of learning and doing, makes it possible to grasp the issue at hand more holistically. Acknowledging the critique on different learning styles⁶ (see e.g. Newton 2015), we suggest that such a holistic approach makes it possible for participants to obtain direct experience of the issue they are deliberating upon. As a whole, the process is then more than the individual parts of CJs and Development Walks. Our working definition of the Deliberative Walk⁷ is as follows: *A participatory process in which the participants, by deliberating in small groups and joining facilitated walks, tackle a complex policy issue that has highly intertwined social and physical dimensions.*

The idea to combine CJs and Development Walks is heavily influenced by outdoor and place-responsive pedagogy. Such pedagogy needs “a felt, embodied encounter with a place and an engagement with knowing the place through various cultural knowledge systems, such as history, ecology, geography, and so on” (Wattchow & Brown, 2011)⁸. For example, Dahlgren and Szczepanski (2004) argue that outdoor pedagogics is a necessary complement to traditional (indoor) pedagogics. Accordingly, Szczepanski (2013) notes that *where* education takes place is a vital pedagogical and didactic question, which emphasizes the meaning of *place* in the learning process. The same study suggests the sense of land-

scape increases and strengthens feelings, and emphasizes that education is not only about seeing and hearing, but also about perceiving smells and flavours, feelings, and the senses of taste and touch. These are the types of added values that one can only acquire at the location, and through first-hand experience and observation.

The inspiration for combining practical observations with theoretical knowledge content can be found in the work of Sharp (1943: 363–364): “That which ought and can be taught inside the schoolrooms should there be taught, and that which can best be learned through experience dealing directly with native materials and life situations outside the school should there be learned.” More recently, Szczepanski and Andersson (2015: 144) analysed 15 professors’ views on the meaning of place in education and learning and concluded:

It is in the context, in the understanding, familiarity, sense making, that knowledge grows and is transformed to deeper insights or to something completely new. It is in the body-related place-meeting in time and space that understanding is transformed and given new dimensions, that in turn may open new perspectives on the seemingly self-evident (free translation from Swedish)

The importance of physical space in learning has also been emphasized by Alerby, Bengtsson, Bjurström, Hörnqvist, and Kroksmark (2006) who studied school architecture, and noted that in a transforming world, the spatial shapes and the styles of learning are continuously transforming, and that a building’s spatial shape may embody both restrictions and opportunities. They argue that all rooms in a school building have a pedagogical significance, whether or not that is intentional. Thus, in the context of deliberative democracy it is also important to pay attention to *where* indoor and outdoor learning actually takes place; the places chosen may influence deliberations in unexpected ways.

Citizens’ juries as deliberative mini-publics

Even though the CJ model was developed before the so-called *deliberative turn* occurred in the early 1990s (see Dryzek 2010), today it can be understood as being one of the deliberative mini-publics that are part of the micro-deliberation tradition of deliberative democratic theory⁹. These mini-publics include practices such as Consensus Conferences, Deliberative Polls, 21st Century Town Meetings, and Citizens’ Parliaments (see e.g., Gastil & Levine, 2005). There are various definitions of deliberative mini-publics (Ryan & Smith, 2014), but generally they are understood as practices where diverse groups of ordinary citizens deliberate on topical public issues (e.g., Fung, 2003). Blacksher, Diebel, Forest, Goold, and Abelson (2012: 16) have presented a minimum definition of such public deliberation that emphasizes three elements that should be present:

1. The provision of balanced, factual information that improves participants' knowledge of the issue.
2. The inclusion of diverse perspectives to counter the well-documented tendency of better educated and wealthier citizens to participate disproportionately in deliberative opportunities and to identify points of view and conflicting interests that might otherwise go untapped.
3. The opportunity to reflect on and discuss freely a wide spectrum of viewpoints and to challenge and test competing moral claims.

He (2015: 40) describes the actual deliberation as including three distinct *ladders*. The first ladder stresses the participants' ability to truly voice their opinions. On the second ladder participants are not only seen to express their views, but also to listen to each other's opinions with an open mind and, ideally, as beginning to understand the issues from the points of view of other participants (Fishkin, 2009). Then on the third ladder, an attempt is made to systemically synthesize all the different competing and converging perspectives to form a general view, if possible, based on the common good (Cohen, 2009). The outcome of such deliberation, however, is unlikely to be consensus, but is more likely to resemble a *meta-consensus*, something that Niemeyer and Dryzek (2007: 500) define as, "an agreement about the nature of the issue at hand, not necessarily on the actual outcome." The facilitators of the deliberation should therefore not be too consensus oriented, as that could lead to many conflicting opinions being neglected, and thus compromise the legitimacy of the process (see e.g., Karpowitz & Mansbridge, 2005).

Johnson (2015: 120–121) recently emphasized the importance of focusing on the contextual factors of public deliberation, concluding that including the aforementioned procedural factors does not reveal the whole picture. She stated that contextual factors such as "economic and strategic interests and aims" and "ethos of and habituation to hierarchical decision-making processes" can contribute to public deliberation being non-empowering. So even though participants often feel empowered during the deliberation—a positive experience of deliberation ideally creating a feeling that the citizen has exercised his or her citizenship (Lindell, 2015)—the lack of actual influence over policy-making would make this sense of empowerment short-lived (see also, Segall, 2005). CJs and other deliberative mini-publics then risk offering mere trivial participation, depicted by Fung (2015: 9) as "the park bench problem"¹⁰ or, worse, "academic toys that delight rather than political devices that 'bite'" (Bächtiger, Setälä, & Grönlund, 2014: 226). Johnson and Gastil (2015) tackle this particular dilemma by defining *formally empowered deliberation*, meaning deliberative mini-publics that, having secured the commitment of public officials at an early stage, properly influence policy outcomes. Such processes are still, however, a rarity.

Given that deliberative mini-publics can be resource-intensive—in terms of both time and money—it is important to determine the kind of issues such prac-

tices should be applied to. For example, Solomon and Abelson (2012) name four kinds of policy issues particularly suited to public deliberation, those that: (1) involve conflicting values about the public good, such as health care priority setting; (2) are highly controversial and divisive, such as, building nuclear power facilities; (3) combine both technical and real-world knowledge, such as urban planning; and (4) enjoy low levels of public trust, such as, some immunization programs. CJs and other deliberative mini-publics encourage citizens to consider a range of policy directions related to these issues and deliberate on the values and priorities of the relevant consequences and trade-offs (Yankelovich, 2011; Raisio & Vartiainen, 2015). The policy-making process can then incorporate knowledge based on technocratic evidence and important social value judgments, based on the values and norms of the people themselves (see Rawlins, 2005).

Development Walks and similar methods

The origins of Development Walks can be traced back to *women's safety audits*, developed in Canada in the late 1980s as a response to increasing concerns over public safety and specifically violence against women (Lambrick & Travers, 2008). The audits were explained as follows: "Using a checklist, a group of women users of a particular urban or community space walk around that space, noting factors that make those users feel unsafe or safe in that space" (Whitzman, Shaw, Andrew, & Travers, 2009: 206). The checklists included questions on issues such as lightning, entrapment spots, and maintenance. The observations made during the walks were compiled into reports and then presented to relevant local decision-makers. Various forms of women's safety audits have been undertaken in locations around the world, including Tanzania, South Africa, India, Russia, and the UK (see also, Whitzman & Perkovic, 2010).

Positive outcomes reported for women's safety audits include changes in the physical environment, and increased public awareness of violence against women, and the participants reporting an increased interest in local affairs. Most importantly, there is evidence that these audits have empowered and vindicated women "as experts of experience in their local environments" (Whitzman et al, 2009: 214). The challenges related to women's safety audits are very similar to those around deliberative mini-publics. Proponents of both face challenges in gathering resources and support, and in ensuring participants are sufficiently representative, and also in coping with failures in the implementation of the recommendations arising from the audits (Lambrick & Travers, 2008).

Safety and security walks, developed in Sweden in the early 2000s, share many similarities with women's safety audits¹¹. However, while the audits were developed to be more or less gender-specific, safety and security walks strive to be more representative for the wider local community. The Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention defines the method in the following way: "Safety and security walks involve a group of people going through an area and carrying out a systematic inventory from the point of view of safety and security" (Brå, 2009: 1). The focus of safety and security walks is on both the physical and

social dimensions of the localities, the underlying idea being that the people who have the best knowledge of the local environment are those who actually live there.

For safety and security walks, the maximum recommended number of participants is 20 (Tryggare och Mänskligare Göteborg, 2007). The group should include local residents of various ages, genders, and backgrounds, but also other actors such as landowners, representatives of residents' associations, and public officials. Each walk begins with a short introduction to outline the route and procedure and some background information about the area. The walk itself is generally a few kilometres long, with several stops. During the walk someone takes minutes and it is also common to take photographs to supplement the notes. The walk should be followed by a brief meeting to elicit different perspectives and communicate them to the relevant stakeholders. Ideally there will be follow-ups to inform the participants of the outcomes of the walk.

A Development Walk builds on the two aforementioned participatory methods. Although the underlying mechanisms are the same, Development Walks strive to be more representative than women's safety audits and embrace a wider perspective than safety and security walks. Representing a locality in miniature, the people on a Development Walk focus on the local community as a whole. Doing so involves looking beyond just safety and security issues to consider all the various issues related to wellbeing in the local community (see also, Honkanummi, 2015), such issues would include health, comfort, and even aesthetics. In Finland, the New Locality project—administered by the Finnish Federation of Settlement—has been piloting the method (see Ehrström & Katajamäki, 2013). The hypothesis is that the learning process is strengthened by in situ observations of specific situations and places. At the same time, complex planning issues, for example, may be concretized (Ehrström, 2015).

The pilot schemes have shown that given the opportunity, local residents are interested in developing their local community. The Development Walk, as a facilitated communal walk, provides an opportunity to chat, to reminisce about the area, and to develop new ideas. A notable additional benefit is that a walk in the fresh air sharpens ideas, and improves physical condition and mental alertness (see Ehrström & Katajamäki, 2013; Ehrström, 2015).

Summary

When the two participatory methods, CJs and Development Walks, are united and examined through the instructive concept of the Deliberative Walk, the following two wide-ranging prospects emerge. The first is *the expanding knowledge and experiential base for deliberation*. In the case of CJs, the information is generally received through a prepared information booklet or by listening to and questioning expert witnesses. This kind of information emphasizes an auditory aspect of learning. Development Walks in contrast emphasize more visual and kinaesthetic aspects of learning. By combining these different aspects of learning and doing, those participating in Deliberative Walks can then feel and imagine in a more complete and direct manner. Instead of treating the issues

deliberated upon as abstract entities that are only brought to life via the speeches of expert witnesses¹², Deliberative Walks encourage a real-world immersion in the issues, which reduces the risk that “[l]earning becomes something gained through reading texts, listening to lectures, or viewing videos rather than through experiencing full-bodied encounters with the world” (Smith 2002: 586).

Making issues more real makes it possible to better empathize with them, the alternative being issues being left entirely abstract, unexperienced, and without any emotional connection. This can be seen to be consistent with the expanded strand of deliberative democratic theory, which, for example highlights the role of affect in public deliberation (Morrell, 2010)¹³, and advocates the acceptance of many different forms of verbal communication, such as storytelling and the use of metaphors, but also many different ways of embodied communication, such as dance and varied body expressions (see e.g., Clifford, 2012; Mansbridge et al., 2010; Raisio, Valkama & Peltola, 2014). Just as different forms of verbal communication are accepted, also various ways of learning, experiencing, and feeling should be encouraged, as is the case with Deliberative Walks.

The second prospect is *the diversifying focus of deliberation*. While Development Walks concentrate on tangible issues within the urban environment, CJs emphasize more abstract policy issues in the social environment. The Deliberative Walk, in embracing both sets of issues helps to improve the environment though specific development proposals based on the observations made in the local environment, but also encourages citizens to grasp issues affecting the broader society, such as sustainability, resilience, and environmental action. The deliberation aspect helps to process the values and priorities of the consequences and trade-offs, decreasing the risk that suggestions made on the walk represent only a particular perspective, and of people not being aware of the consequences for other groups in society, for example, people living with disabilities (Raisio, Valkama & Peltola, 2014), or focusing only on physical changes and neglecting wider policy changes (see also, Lambrick & Travers, 2008). Below, the hypothesized ideal of the Deliberative Walk is examined in greater detail through two case studies.

Case I: The Pirkka14 Citizen’s Jury

Background

The Pirkka14 emergency preparedness exercise and Wanaja14 defence training took place in Finland in October 2014. Pirkka14 was implemented by the Regional State Administrative Agency for Western and Inland Finland and the Emergency Services College. The fictional scenario for the exercise was an increasingly tense international situation and subsequent cyber-attacks with broad ramifications. Wanaja14 was implemented by the Finnish Defence Forces in accordance with a new local defence concept. The two exercises were imple-

mented simultaneously so as to test the concept of the joint training of civil authorities and armed forces.

The Pirkka14 exercise involved a broad group of stakeholders that included representatives of non-governmental organizations and local business, and in a new development, also the general public. The hope was that engaging citizens would open the traditionally rather closed area of security governance. The processes governing citizen engagement were planned with input from academics, who had broad experience of various kinds of deliberative mini-publics. Positive previous experience gained from the Finnish CJs (see e.g. Raisio & Carson, 2014) led to that particular method of citizen engagement being chosen. The CJ implemented was no mere scientific experiment, but an official part of the Pirkka14 emergency preparedness exercise.

Description of the CJ process and the research methodology

The CJ was carried out at the same time as the Pirkka14 and Wanaja14, 7–10 October 2014. Its parameters were delimited by the abovementioned scenario, but because the method was new to the civil authorities and armed forces, it was hoped that the jurors could deliberate both on the issues of societal security and on the new local defence concept. This aim involved the theme expanding its original focus on cyber security. More specifically, the issues deliberated upon included citizens' preparedness for an emergency, community resilience, major disruption to the supply of electricity, and the improvement of emergency and disaster communications. In addition, broader issues, such as membership of NATO were briefly addressed.

The CJ was regional (as was Pirkka14) and citizens from 22 municipalities could enrol for the CJ. It was promoted in one regional newspaper and through social media and the various stakeholders. Despite the low-key promotion, it reached an adequate number of people and 25 inhabitants enrolled to express their interest in participating. The participants were chosen from those who enrolled and the selection was guided by the desire for the jury to be as heterogeneous as possible. The number of participants was eventually set at 16, a somewhat lower number than usual for a CJ. As this particular CJ process included an off-site component, having a larger CJ was seen as problematic due to the sensitivity of the situation. No compensation was paid to the jurors, other than a discretionary award of travel expenses. Demographic information on the 16 chosen jurors is presented in Table 1, and reveals that the overall composition of the CJ was rather heterogeneous. However, citizens aged under 35 are clearly underrepresented, as are people residing away from the provincial centre. Considering the significance of including marginalized groups, it is important to note that the jury also included two people living with disabilities.

Table 1: The composition of the Pirkka14 Citizens' Jury.

	Total	Percent
<i>Gender</i>		
Woman	8	50 %
Man	8	50 %
<i>Age</i>		
<20	1	6 %
20–34	1	6 %
35–49	7	44 %
50–64	5	31 %
65+	2	13 %
<i>Socioeconomic status</i>		
Student	1	6 %
Entrepreneur	3	19 %
Upper-level employee	3	19 %
Lower-level employee	3	19 %
Manual worker	3	19 %
Pensioner	2	13 %
Unemployed	1	6 %
<i>Place of residence</i>		
Provincial Center	10	63 %
Other	6	38 %

The CJ process consisted of five hours of deliberation per day for three days and a subsequent press event. The first day began with an introduction to the theme of the jury. Jurors watched a video where the scenario was described, before being divided into two groups. Both groups had a facilitator and a clerk. After their initial deliberations jurors had the chance to ask questions of the expert panel. The panellists included senior officers from the Regional State Administrative Agency and the Finnish Defence Forces. On the second day, the deliberations continued in small groups and the day ended with the observation of a specific accident simulation in the field. When the Pirkka 14 Citizens' Jury was designed, the idea of a Deliberative Walk had not yet been fully clarified. However, this was the first instance among Finnish CJs where deliberations were taken to the street. Participants were bussed to the off-site venue, an empty factory site. The simulation—a military truck laden with explosives catching fire—tested the new defence concept and the effectiveness of the co-operation between civil authorities and armed forces. Jurors observed the exercise while a commentator narrated the sequence of events. Jurors were also able to ask questions of the participants of the exercise. On the third day, facilitators were employed to help jurors focus on composing the declaration for the CJ. Once the jurors had

agreed the content of the declaration, each signed it. The declaration included 20 suggestions for improvement; from wider visions to more concrete action plans. On the fourth day, the jurors presented the declaration at a media event, after which official reactions to the declaration were requested from various stakeholders.

The Pirkka14 Citizens' Jury was implemented, more or less in accordance with traditional CJ principles. The unique off-site component, however, makes it an interesting case study from the point of view of the Deliberative Walks concept. All 16 Pirkka14 jurors were interviewed by telephone in the weeks following the CJ. The longest interview lasted for 70 minutes and the shortest for 25 minutes. The interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim. The participants agreed to the interviews being recorded but the transcripts preserve their anonymity by assigning each a coded identifier. The transcriptions produced 126 pages of text (Times New Roman 12p, line spacing 1.5). In the analysis process, qualitative content analysis was applied to identify instances from the transcripts that related to the off-site component of the CJ. In the next section, in order to understand the wider framework, a brief general view of the juror's perceptions of the overall CJ process is provided¹⁴. Quotes from the participants are freely translated from Finnish to English.

Perceptions of the jurors

In common with jurors who had served on previous Finnish CJs (see e.g. Raisio & Carson 2014), the Pirkka14 jurors generally perceived the procedural aspects of their CJ to have been very well implemented. It was, for example, felt that the atmosphere was open and friendly, which the jurors felt allowed them to voice their opinions and be heard by others, despite some initial reservations, as noted by one of the jurors: *"I then had the feeling that I belonged there, although at first I felt somewhat hesitant about participating"* (J12). The jurors reported that they appreciated the opportunity to meet people from different backgrounds and also the non-hierarchical interaction between the jurors and the panellists. The jurors also described the CJ as thought-provoking and an eye-opener, and the majority felt that being part of the CJ influenced their understanding of societal security in some way. Additionally, there were signs of jurors being empowered: *"I must say that I have rarely felt as necessary as I did there... It made me push myself"* (J1). There was also a shared support for the continuation of CJs in Finland; especially on local issues directly affecting local people.

The jurors did express some concerns over the limited diversity of the participants and the timetable of the event. It was felt that the selected jurors represented more or less middle class people, while some perspectives, such as those of immigrants, were absent. The CJ debate encompassed whether the results would have been different if the CJ had been more inclusive. The concerns over the timetable revolved around the fact that the CJ being run in the evening meant that those working during the day felt tired at times. Moreover, the ratio between the broad theme of the CJ and the time available for deliberation was seen to be somewhat disproportionate. Naturally, questions about the influence of the CJ

were also raised. Jurors expected that decision-makers would take the declaration seriously and hoped for detailed responses that would prompt at least some of the suggestions being implemented, and moreover that the declaration would be taken into account, for example, when making contingency plans. Detailed responses of various quality were received in due course from nine relevant stakeholders.¹⁵

The off-site component of the CJ prompted wide-ranging reflections. Jurors described the accident simulation as concretizing some of the key issues, especially the new local defence concept. Jurors saw that theory alone is not enough to determine such issues and highlighted the role of both the information received from panellists and the experience of the off-site component:

In my opinion, this was like the icing on the cake. We had received information and now as we actually went there, I think it [the simulation] was an unforgettable memory for quite a number of us. (J4)

It was also important that they [the panellists] advised us as it gave us a wider perspective. However, one remembers such an exercise [the simulation] better, because when we are just told things half of it is forgotten right away. (J11)

Many of their comments indicate that the jurors were aware of the different ways of learning. Interestingly, these included not only learning by hearing and seeing, but also by feeling. For example, one juror described the multiple learning opportunities in the following way:

It is always that when we, after the theoretical part, leave to the 'field,' people can then use their ears and eyes and heart, and thus to see. (J2)

Another juror took this further by stating that "...*intelligence is just intelligence. Reasoning might be different if there are no feelings in the background*" (J14). Jurors used many examples to make a point, from connecting school children to nature through outdoor experiences and experiencing the reality of elderly care by visiting geriatric care facilities, even to understanding the condition of those with lung disease by briefly introducing carbon dioxide momentarily into the room. The role of feeling and experiencing was also noted in relation to the accident simulation. Being in the dark with the flashing lights of emergency vehicles, not knowing what would happen next, was considered thrilling by some; such conditions clearly differing from those of a "*nice warm classroom*" (J2).

The off-site component seemed to enhance feelings of safety and security: "*I started to feel positive and safer when I saw that these things are taken pretty seriously. That these are practiced specifically and preparedness is maintained.*"

(J11) There were hints of this also in the declaration of the CJ, which included an affirmation that, based on what was heard and witnessed, the new local defence concept inspired confidence. Finally, the jurors evidently thought that interesting off-site components, when implemented well, could encourage people to be actively involved in CJs, and should thus be promoted.

Although all jurors viewed off-site components to generally be a valuable aspect of CJs, there were nevertheless some concerns. When assessing the specific accident simulation, they witnessed, the jurors expressed some disappointment over the lack of action: *“It was kind of an experience, but it was a little disappointing to see [the participants in the simulation] just standing there.”* (J6) Some of the jurors would have liked to see more activity, for example fire-fighting, but the jurors did generally also understand that the actual exercise lasted for hours, meaning that observing the whole accident simulation would have been excessively time-consuming. There was then a slight variation with respect to what was expected and what actually took place. Yet even the jurors who criticized the lack of action seemed to value the opportunity to question the participants in the simulation: *“I think the best part was that we got to ask questions from those people and hear their answers, but I did not see in the actual exercise anything that extraordinary”* (J8). The jurors suggested that those implementing such off-site components in the future should take care to ensure the events are prepared with a view to determining which issues would benefit from being exposed to public deliberation. As one juror cautioned organizers should avoid the simulation being, *“a kind of an end; that now we should get up and ‘stretch our legs’”* (J2).

Case II: Campus Forum

Background

The New Locality project (2011–2015) was a national five-year development project on citizen participation, with activities in three different locations in Finland. Led by the Finnish Federation of Settlements, the project sought to develop new practices in public participation, especially Citizens’ Juries and Development Walks, which were evaluated as promising participatory methods, in the context of Finnish local democracy. While the CJs struggled to attract enough participants and exert a real influence in policy-making, most participants enjoyed taking part in the CJ process and found the experience useful. Development Walks were more successful in attracting participants, especially when the theme concerned local planning and redevelopment. Addressing the first Development Walk arranged in the project, evaluators (Ehström & Katajamäki 2013) argued that *“one walk resulted in many development proposals. It showed that people are truly interested in their own neighbourhoods...A common walk gives the participants a chance to discuss, remember and create new ideas.”*

With these past experiences in mind a Deliberative Walk was tested within the New Locality project. The rationale for the experiment was both research and practice oriented in that the aim was to analyse the combination of CJs and Development Walks, but also to respond to an actual need in the field. This Deliberative Walk, which was labeled the *Campus Forum*, was implemented in one area of the New Locality project; one which included several higher education campuses surrounded by a densely populated residential area and various small enterprises. There had been discussion in the past on how the synergies between different institutions could be increased and also how the campuses could be made more accessible to local people. It was thought that a more participatory practice, such as a Deliberative Walk, could offer novel insights into the issue. Accordingly, the Campus Forum was implemented and guided by the question of “how could we create a common campus for all.”

Description of the forum process and the research methodology

The Campus Forum was run over three evenings, 24–25 and 27 November 2014, with each evening session running for three and a half hours. The event was convened in the facilities of the local branch of the Finnish Federation of Settlements, close to the campus. The first day began with an introduction to the process, the theme, and the people involved. There followed three expert presentations by a professor from one of the local universities, specialized in regional science, the chairman of the City Council, and the manager of the planning department. Participants were given the opportunity to question the experts before being divided into two subgroups for the discussion phase, with a neutral facilitator and a clerk appointed for each group. The first night ended with a short common discussion incorporating all participants.

The second day can be characterized as a *Development Walk evening*. The participating group convened on one of the campuses. A walk leader held a short introduction and then guided the group on a route, via eight different stops, where experts and/or managers gave short informative presentations of around 10 minutes long. The participants were given the opportunity to ask questions at each stop, and as some of the presenters joined the walk, the participants had an opportunity to continue the discussions with presenters or among themselves between stops. A designated person took minutes during the walk and also took photographs to supplement the notes. The walk lasted for two hours, after which the participants returned to the original facilities for a discussion and to reflect on what they had seen and heard. Some of the presenters also joined this discussion, which meant that the participants had an opportunity to ask further questions of the presenters. This participation of presenters was an unplanned benefit.

The third day followed a CJ pattern, as it concentrated on participants deliberating and then producing a declaration on the given theme. On 3 December 2014, the declaration—which included five suggestions for development—was formally handed over to the chair of the City Council at a specially convened meeting. The City Council were formally appraised of the Campus Forum process and the detail of the declaration, before the representatives of the city and

the institutes of higher education were given an opportunity to comment before the floor was opened to a general discussion. The Campus Forum and its declaration were well reported in the local media.

Nineteen people registered for the Campus Forum, of whom 18 actually participated. Six of the participants were students in institutes of higher education and five worked in the locality while another four participants lived nearby. The ages of the participants ranged from 20 to 67 years old. Three of the participants were entrepreneurs, and some had dual roles, that is, they belonged to more than one grouping¹⁶. However, of the 18 participants only six were present for the whole duration of the Campus Forum. This is a very unsatisfactory result, partly explained by misinformation, or misinterpreted information. For example, four people had thought that the Campus Forum was a one-night event—a variant of previously implemented Development Walks—and had prior engagements that prevented them from attending on the other nights.

As the research objective was to analyse the participatory process as a whole, only the six people who participated for the full three days were interviewed. In addition, a further interview was conducted with a person in a dual role as both a participant (on two days) and a presenter during the Development Walk phase. Interviews were conducted by telephone, the longest lasting for 26 minutes and the shortest for 15 minutes. Those interviews were recorded and transcribed. Because the region is a bilingual part of the country, six of interviews were conducted in Finnish and one in Swedish. The quotes in the following analysis section are freely translated from Finnish or Swedish into English.

Perceptions of the participants

The experiences of the Campus Forum participants were in many ways similar to those of the Pirkka14 CJ. First, the participants noted positive aspects of the walk at the campuses. The expert presentations on the first day and the walk on the second day were reported to support each other well. The walk brought out the issues in question for the participants, and as one said, *“It felt more real to visit actual places”* (Male, 26). Other participants considered that while it was useful, for example, to review zoning illustrations on the first day, it was still beneficial to actually visit the places in question. Another participant added that *“[the walk] is where it really starts. Although there were discussions, through the walk one saw how things really were”* (Male, 67). The application of the senses was explicitly highlighted: *“These are several senses then, and you can see visually in front of you what people are talking about, instead of just talking about it or seeing an image... you're there and you see it in three dimensions, yes.”* (Male, 30)

The walking session was particularly useful to those participants who were not very familiar with the campus areas, *“The Development Walk was very good, interesting. And to be able to see all those places where I hadn't been before, and actually even couldn't have visited as doors are locked... it was a very good walk. Comprehensive, and really fun.”* (Female, 60+) The participants who felt they already knew the campuses well enough (two participants), pointed out the

increased value of the walk for other participants with less knowledge of the place. The role of the presenters at each stop was also appreciated. These presentations supplemented each participant's own observations of the surroundings. Interestingly, participants also considered that the walk encouraged more lively discussion: "*[The walk] created a lively discussion. Participants were together and during the walk we talked a little with everybody. It felt like it in a way liberated people to have a chat.*" (Male, 26)

The participants voiced only a few criticisms of the walk itself. For example, only one of the participants stated that the walk could have taken in a wider area. That particular person was concerned by the increased traffic in the locality occasioned by the campuses and the resulting lack of parking places and considered that examining the issue in detail required walking the areas surrounding the campuses.

It is however important to note that the interview sample was very small. The additional interview with a person in a dual role went some way to addressing this shortcoming. The interviewee was present for the first two nights and expressed positive views on the Campus Forum, from both a participant's and expert/manager's point of view. She felt the Campus Forum increased informational interaction between experts/managers and citizens, especially during the walk. Her views thus support some of the positive views presented by the other interviewees.

Few other criticisms were raised. The participants did express concern over the low numbers of people involved and that the sample represented only a few societal groups. One participant felt the whole event was somewhat time constrained, "*...well, there was some feeling of haste in the discussions, a feeling that you always had to rush on and that perhaps you couldn't say all that you wanted*" (Female, 23). This was somewhat expected, as the time allocated for the deliberations was less than ideal. The lack of time might have underlain another participant's feeling that the attempts to seek consensus at the end of the Campus Forum resulted in diluted proposals:

And then when it came to the conclusions, they became a bit watered down, as usually is the case when you try to find a common denominator. Personally, I would have wanted some more tangible points... perhaps some sort of concept paper, and that everybody needn't necessarily support every point, but you could have gathered a few more suggestions and ideas for redevelopment (Male, 30).

As was the case with the Pirkka14 CJ, the participants in the Campus Forum also highlighted the impact on policy of their participation, especially considering the time spent: "*It's important that it has some kind of impact. Otherwise, if it doesn't, people won't participate for three evenings*" (Male, 26). Even though the declaration of the Campus Forum was well-received by officials, it remains questionable if the declaration actually influences politics. However, it is also

important not to focus only on policy makers in terms of the impact of deliberative practices such as the Campus Forum. As one of the participants stated, some of the suggestions for development could be implemented without political or institutional support.

Conclusions

In the literature on deliberative mini-publics, such as Citizens' Juries, the focus is often on issues such as discourse quality, changes to opinion, and political influence. This research, however, came to be focused more on the learning aspects, that is, "the provision of balanced, factual information that improves participants' knowledge of the issue" (Blacksher et al., 2012: 16). In relation to the expanded strand of deliberative democratic theory, which accepts many different ways of verbal and embodied communication (e.g., Clifford, 2012; Mansbridge et al., 2010), various ways of learning should also be accepted. Moreover, we emphasize the experiential aspects of learning, that is, the real-world immersion in the issues deliberated upon. Thus, in the current research, the Deliberative Walk was introduced as a vehicle for learning and feeling in a more complete and direct manner. The hypothesized ideal of the Deliberative Walk was tested through two case studies. The preliminary results are promising.

The Deliberative Walk approach makes it possible for all participants to acquire a more direct and holistic experience of the issue they are deliberating on. A person who finds it difficult to learn or experience an issue by merely listening to experts or reading packages of information, could learn and experience by seeing, observing, and feeling. The interviewees confirmed how the off-site components of both case studies made issues more tangible, and at best, made it possible for them to use all their senses. As one of the participants stated, in the field one can ideally use their ears and eyes and heart, and thus to see. This role of the heart is not some whimsical notion, but has been established elsewhere. For example, according to Morrell (2010) and Yankelovich (2011), a full and sustainable outcome can be achieved when deliberation takes place not only in the head but also in the heart. Without affect there would not be any empathy in deliberative democracy. It may be that some issues cannot be deliberated upon in a comprehensive manner solely in a nice warm classroom. Following the ideals of outdoor and place-responsive pedagogics (Wattchow & Brown, 2011) the participants in the two case studies were able to physically encounter different places as well as hearing several place-based narratives from the experts/managers. The issues deliberated upon did not remain abstractions, which might often be the case with traditional CJs.

The off-site component of the Deliberative Walk should not however be seen as automatically adding intrinsic value. Organizers must carefully consider if the added value of the walk is sufficient, and that involves examining which issues will be clarified by a Deliberative Walk, because just as not all issues call for deliberative mini-publics (Solomon & Abelson, 2012), not all call for Deliberative Walks. These are most clearly issues that are so abstract or intangible,

that the experiential phase of Deliberative Walk would not add much value. An example of such an issue is for example the much researched deliberative mini-public on electoral reform in British Columbia, Canada in 2004 (see e.g. Warren & Pearse, 2008).

Sometimes a single CJ or a single Development Walk is not enough; a combination is called for. Hence the need for the instructive concept of the Deliberative Walk. Based on the two case studies, our suggestion is that in place-specific deliberations (such as the Campus Forum), a Deliberative Walk is a suitable method when the issue that is being tackled has highly intertwined social and physical dimensions, while in more situation-specific deliberations, a Deliberative Walk adds value when the issue is such that it needs more complete and direct learning experience. This was seen in the Pirkka14 CJ where being able to observe an accident simulation at first-hand made things more tangible and real. To concretize, Deliberative Walk could add value to the following deliberated issues. When deliberating on energy policy options, deliberation could be taken, among others, to nuclear plants, wind farms and solar power stations.¹⁷ When deliberating on geriatric care, it could be worthwhile to visit different care facilities. On urban planning (especially zoning) issues, deliberation can be taken to the streets, where participants could get a better “feel” of the environment.

What, then, are the implications of this research for policy-makers and public officials? First, Deliberative Walk provides a new method for advancing deliberative turn in our societies. Ideally, Deliberative Walk would reduce the experiential distance between decision-makers and citizens. For example, in Pirkka 14 CJ, participants not only had the possibility to meet different public officials, but they also had the possibility to experience first-hand a situation usually common only to public officials. Getting familiar with difficult public issues in real life offers citizens the opportunity to increase their understanding of public processes and practices¹⁸. This might in turn also increase the legitimacy of public administration (as occurred in Pirkka 14 CJ). Deliberative Walk may also increase the transparency of decision-making by making it possible for ordinary citizens to experience sites, contexts and situations that often remain closed for public.

The most important implication for the theorists of deliberative democracy is that the notion of Deliberative Walk challenges the traditional understanding of knowledge-based goals in public deliberation¹⁹. In its classical form, public deliberation is understood as a purely cognitive process in which communication favours calm, dispassionate, literal and disembodied speech (see Raisio, Valkama & Peltola, 2014). Even though the theory of deliberative democracy has advanced, the epistemic goals of deliberation seem to favour this classical view. High-quality knowledge in deliberative mini-publics is mainly ensured by expert witnesses or information booklets. Emphasis is on the provision of balanced, factual information. To gain more holistic understanding of the deliberated issue, it might be necessary to advance these ideals so that the aspects of feeling and direct experiencing are also acknowledged²⁰. As a result the physical and social distance separating the deliberated issue from the participants may be reduced.

The current research is not without its limitations. First, neither of the case studies fully met the ideal facets of a Deliberative Walk. The off-site component of the Pirkka14 CJ was observation oriented and the activity in the field was limited. The Campus Forum incorporated a more active field experience, but suffered from having a limited number of participants, that consequently influenced the number of interviews. It must also be noted that research data only consisted of subjective perceptions gathered from the participants in the two case studies. A more exacting research strategy, such as using questionnaires to analyse changes in opinion at different stages of deliberation (e.g., Knobloch, Gastil, Reedy, & Walsh, 2013), could have provided important additional data. Additionally, the influence of the off-site components on the declarations of the Pirkka14 CJ and Campus Forum merits closer scrutiny. Especially with regard to the Campus Forum, it is difficult to say how much the walk around the campuses ultimately affected the content of the declaration. However, as we stated in the introduction to this article, we consider the case studies to be of sufficient quality to permit drawing preliminary conclusions on the prospects of Deliberative Walks and on the challenges they face. However, the limitations outlined above should prompt future experimentation with Deliberative Walks and more exacting research strategies.

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Notes

¹ Around the same time Professor Peter Dienel developed the *Planning Cell* model in Germany (Crosby & Hottinger 2011). Although the CJ and Planning Cell models developed in isolation from each other, they had many features in common.

² “During the Citizens' Initiative Review, a panel of randomly-selected and demographically-balanced voters is brought together from across the state to fairly evaluate a ballot measure. The panel hears directly from advocates for and against the measure and calls upon policy experts during the multi-day public review.” For more information about the process, see <http://healthydemocracy.org/>

³ The Citizens' Initiative Review has also been piloted in Arizona, Colorado, and Massachusetts.

⁴ The CJ model was expressed in legislation as a *Local Resident Panel*. The law also includes Participatory Budgeting. Section 22 of the law reads as follows (emphasis added):

“Section 22 – Opportunities to participate and exert influence

(1) A municipality's residents and service users have the right to participate in and influence the activities of the municipality. Local councils must ensure that there are diverse and effective opportunities for participation.

(2) Participation and exerting influence can be furthered especially by:

1) arranging opportunities for discussion and for views to be presented, and setting up local resident panels;

- 2) finding out residents' opinions before taking decisions;
- 3) electing representatives of service users to municipal decision-making bodies;
- 4) arranging opportunities to *participate in the planning of the municipality's finances*;
- 5) planning and developing services together with service users;
- 6) supporting independent planning and preparation of matters by residents, organisations and other corporate entities."

⁵ A similar kind of Deliberative Theater event was implemented by the State University of New York at Broome's in 2016. The theme of the event was what society should do for those who are dying. Small group deliberations were preceded by a play, *The Bridge Club of Death*. It was hoped that the play would "provide participants with a collective experience that could elicit an emotional connection to the issue prior to engaging in the topic with their fellow citizens." (Letson & Strahley, 2016: 7.)

⁶ For example Riener and Willingham (2010) and Newton (2015) have pointed out that current evidence does not support the notion of different learning styles. It is acknowledged that each learner is different from each other and individuals have preferences about how they learn, however, "[a] favorite mode of presentation (e.g., visual, auditory, or kinesthetic) often reveals itself to be instead a preference for tasks for which one has high ability and at which one feels successful" (Riener & Willingham, 2010: 32). The risk is that by putting emphasis on different learning styles, the attention on other dimensions, such as ability, background information and interest, decreases.

⁷ We thank one of the reviewers for suggesting alternative terms for the Deliberative Walk model, such as experiential deliberation, place-based deliberation, and discursive excursions.

⁸ More fundamentally, place-based or place-conscious educational initiatives can be seen "as the educational counterpart of a broader social movement reclaiming the significance of the local in the global age" (Gruenewald & Smith, 2008: XIII). Wattschow and Brown (2011) note that this is part of a "new localism", a reaction to economic globalization and corporate capitalism.

⁹ Deliberative democratic theory can be divided to micro- and macro-deliberation traditions. As micro-deliberation means individual events, such as deliberative mini-publics, macro-deliberation refers more to the deliberation in the wider public sphere (see Hendriks 2006; Mansbridge et al. 2012; Gastil & Richards 2013). Recently Lafont (2015) has critiqued the increase of deliberative mini-publics as deliberative democrats taking a "micro-deliberative shortcut" and being "agnostic about mass participation". For responses to the critique, see for example, Bächtiger, Setälä, & Grönlund (2014) and He (2015).

¹⁰ Through "the park bench problem" Fung (2015) depicts a situation where citizens are permitted to participate in decision making, but only on trivial matters such as choosing the colour of park benches. Fung states that such trivial participation does not increase citizen participation in any meaningful way.

¹¹ *A walk audit* (see Fenton 2011) is also a facilitated walk, similar to safety and security walks. In a walk audit more attention is directed to the health aspect. Issues observed on the walks might include challenges related to healthy eating and physical activity. The method is used widely in the USA.

¹² As Smith (2002: 586) writes, "[i]n many other places, people experience the world directly; in school, that experience is mediated." Similarly to in school classrooms, in traditional CJs the knowledge is mediated through e.g., expert witnesses or information booklets.

¹³ It is important to note, that without affect there would not be any empathy in deliberative democracy. As the virtue of public deliberation is about the common world, common problems and ultimately the common good, the absence of empathy would be a critical barrier to successful deliberation (see Morrell 2010).

¹⁴ A more comprehensive analysis of the Pirkka14 Citizens' jury, in relation to deliberative security governance, is made in Raisio & Virta (2016).

¹⁵ Responses were received, for example, from the Finnish Defence Forces, the National Emergency Agency, the Finnish Red Cross and the National Police Board. The response from the Regional State Administrative Agency of Western and Inland Finland was exemplary as it itself was a result of deliberation between 12 officials and included detailed responses to the suggestions made in the declaration of the CJ. Jurors have been updated on the responses received and with media coverage through e-mails and one follow-up meeting.

¹⁶ In contrast to the traditional CJ in which the objective is to form the local population in a miniature, in the Campus Forum the aim was to gather together a heterogeneous sample of different stakeholders, e.g. inhabitants of the locality and students and employees of the institutes of higher education.

¹⁷ As is the case with information shared by expert witnesses and information booklets, the experiential phase of the deliberation should also be as balanced as possible.

¹⁸ Learning process can be understood as being reciprocal. As participants learn during the process of Deliberative Walk, policy-makers and public officials learn (of participants' views) after the event.

¹⁹ Mansbridge (2015: 39) considers the epistemic, or knowledge-based goals to be important part of a good deliberation: "A deliberation of high quality will bring out and process well the important facts and perspectives needed for greater mutual understanding or a good decision". Also, having a possibility to gain information and to learn makes it possible for wider participation; one does not need to be an expert on the issue to be able to participate.

²⁰ As one of the reviewers exemplifies, a Citizens' Initiative Review process implemented in Arizona in 2016 on marijuana legalization "might have benefited greatly from the participants getting to see first-hand what a 500-foot buffer away from schools actually looked like, or what edible marijuana products actually looked like, rather than having to hear descriptions or see pictures on a computer screen".