Making Deliberation Work: Testing Theories of Deliberation

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Making Deliberation Work: Testing Theories of Deliberation

Thesis directed by Prof. Anand Edward Sokhey

In this project, I address three questions concerning the design and implementation of deliberative institutions in the United States. First, how do institutional choices in recruitment affect the pool of willing participants? I argue that people will express greater interest in taking part in deliberation when it is presented in a nonpartisan manner. Using a series of online experiments, I demonstrate that invitations from nonpartisan conveners illicit interest from politically diverse groups. Second, what factors affect participants' behavior during deliberative sessions? A common critique of deliberative democracy is that it cannot overcome the well-documented biases in people's information processing. I propose a theory based in motivated reasoning, arguing that reason-giving rules in deliberative session promotes accuracy-motivated reasoning over directionally-motivated reasoning. Using experimental deliberative sessions varying the reason-giving rules, I find that reason-giving results in higher discourse quality, and decreases opinion polarization. Third, how do structural factors affect spillover effects from deliberative sessions? While it is unreasonable to expect full citizenry participation in any deliberation effort, those who do not participate may experience some of the benefits through their social networks. For this portion of the project, I use data from the experimental sessions to better understand the multiplier effects from deliberative sessions. This project addresses underdeveloped areas within the political science literature, drawing upon work on participation, information processing, and discussion networks; it also provides a much needed link to deliberative practitioners, who rarely test myriad assumptions when designing and conducting deliberative institutions.

Dedication

For my Mom and Dad.

And for the State of New Hampshire: *Live Free or Die.*

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Introduction

When designing formal deliberative sessions, in what waysdo the structural choices matter? Specifically, how do such choices affect who chooses to participate, how participants behave during the sessions, and what the outcomes are for those who participate? Deliberation practitioners often adhere to a set of guidelines in designing deliberative institutions; they do so in service of the goals of democratic theorists who have long argued for mass public deliberation as a way to reinvigorate government with public voice. However, there has been little work on which structural choices affect which outcomes, which poses problems for theory and practice.

In this project, I ask how the recommendations made by deliberation practitioners affect people's willingness to participate, their behavior during deliberation, and the post-deliberation outcomes. Throughout, I offer a nuanced look at the way in which we define deliberation, providing a link between practitioners of deliberation, deliberation theorists, and empirical work on deliberation. The major contribution of this project will be to empirically demonstrate that institutional choices matter for recruitment, behavior, and outcomes — findings that are taken for granted within the practical world of deliberation. These findings will help to clarify the way in which political scientists conceptualize formal deliberation, offering insights into political participation, information processing, political learning, and political discussion.

I begin by looking at how institutional choices in recruitment affect the pool of par-

ticipants. Here, I am most interested in the factors that may make people more interested in deliberative opportunities. I argue that people will express greater interest in taking part in a deliberative session when it is presented in a nonpartisan manner. I then consider factors that may alter participants' behavior during deliberative sessions, focusing on the role that reason-giving rules play in encouraging accuracy-motivated reasoning as opposed to directionally-motivated reasoning. I also consider the ways in which reason-giving rules can promote higher quality deliberative discourse. Finally, I look at post-deliberation outcomes. Here, I focus on spillover effects from the deliberative session, looking at how deliberations may be structured so as to encourage the transfer of information from individual participants to their political discussion networks.

This goal of this project is to unpack the black-box of deliberation, identifying which structural decisions matter for which deliberative outcomes. I am specifically answering the call from Mutz (2008) — a call which has remained mostly unanswered — to develop middle-range theories of deliberation, drawing specific connections between structural decisions and desirable outcomes. Though much of the theoretical work on deliberation argues for certain conditions to be met in deliberative structures, little work has tried to isolate the causal mechanisms of these structures that affect deliberative outcomes. Deliberation is a costly endeavor, and as such it is important to understand where resources are best allocated in order to promote the desired outcomes. This project will shed light on this connection between structure and outcomes and will thus be of interest to deliberative practitioners as well as academic work on deliberation.

Before introducing the main chapters of this project, I begin this introduction by offering a broad take on the history of deliberative democratic theory, using a genealogical approach to its evolution (Elstub, 2010; Elstub, Ercan and Mendona, 2016). I then focus on the definitional debates surrounding deliberation, followed by a discussion of the effects of deliberation, focusing on individual-level changes. I move then to address the often-noted challenges and limitations of the deliberative democratic ideal. Finally, I lay out the argu-

ments and goals of this project in addressing unanswered questions within the deliberation literature, and provide a layout of the chapters ahead.

1.1 Theoretical Foundations of Deliberative Democracy

Democratic theorists have long argued for mass public deliberation as a way to reinvigorate democracy with public voice (Cohen, 1989; Habermas, 1991; Barber, 1984; Fishkin, 1991), and the study of deliberation has seen a growth in roughly the past 25 years (Dryzek, 2000). Despite the normatively positive claims made by these theorists, much of the empirical work on deliberation casts doubt on both its feasibility and the strength of its effects on democratic society. However, many deliberative theorists argue that the empirical work does not fully reflect normative theories of deliberation, and instead waters those theories down to testable hypotheses that do not, in fact, test true deliberative theory (Thompson, 2008; Neblo, 2015). As such, there exists a divide between deliberative theory and empirical work on the subject. Here, I trace the evolution of both of these bodies of literature before moving to thoughts on how to bridge this divide.

One way to consider the history of thinking on deliberation is through a genealogical approach (Elstub, 2010; Elstub, Ercan and Mendona, 2016; Bächtiger et al., 2018), though there are critiques of this tack (Dryzek, 2016). As noted by Elstub, Ercan and Mendona (2016) and Dryzek (2016), the generational approach to deliberative thought should not be thought of as strictly delineated throughout time. The work of many deliberative democracy scholars spans across these generations. That said, the generational approach offers a distinct understanding of the ideas presented and focused on by those scholars.

First generational approaches to understanding deliberation are still in use, and different works by scholars of deliberation may fall into different generational approaches. The first generation of scholars studying deliberation mostly took a philosophical approach of deliberation, often as a response to aggregative and/or economic models of political participation popular at the time (Chambers, 2018). These thinkers include Jürgen Habermas

(1991; 1995), who focused on deliberative procedures to develop consensus around the public will (deliberative legitimacy), and John Rawls (1993), who focused on public reasoning (deliberative justice). The first generation of deliberative scholars mostly used broad definitions of deliberation focused on the exchange of reasoning of beliefs on policies, and often infused those claims with an eye towards the common good.

The second generation of thinking on deliberation builds on the values espoused by the first generation by clarifying what those values look like in practice. Scholars in this tradition, such as Amy Gutmann and Dennis Thompson (1996; 2004), took the values of the first generation and provided clarifications as to measuring those values, and when those values are appropriate for different types of deliberation. This generation of scholars takes context and complexity seriously and often introduced ways in which deliberative complexities may be used in nefarious ways (Elstub, 2010). Overall, the second generation made a great contribution in taking deliberative theory from the philosophical ideal to practical reality (Neblo, 2007).

Elstub (2010) argues that this second generation laid the foundation for a third generation focused on understanding the deliberative institutions required to achieve deliberative values in practice. While scholars of the second generation introduced the ideas of practicality in understanding deliberation, the third generation moved to looking at deliberative institutional design. This body of work focuses on the implementation of deliberative democracy within society, such as work on deliberative polling (Fishkin, 1997; Fishkin and Luskin, 2005), minipublics (Fung, Wright et al., 2003; Fung, 2004), and participatory budgeting (Gilman, 2016). More recent work by Neblo and colleagues (Neblo et al., 2010; Lazer et al., 2015; Neblo, 2015; Neblo, Esterling and Lazer, 2018) focuses on online town halls with representatives to create a modernized form of Fenno's Home Style representation Fenno (1978). These studies tend to focus on individual types of deliberation without offering a larger picture of the deliberative world. In an effort to remedy this lack of a macro perspective, Elstub, Ercan and Mendona (2016) offers a fourth generation of thinking about deliberation in terms

of a deliberative system. Prior to discussing the idea of a deliberative system in detail, I begin with a discussion of the challenges that exist when attempting to define deliberation.

1.2   Defining Deliberation

Defining exactly what constitutes deliberation has been long been a hurdle for the literature, though many argue that it need not be. Stromer-Galley and Muhlberger (2009) note that much of the literature on deliberation treats it as a "black box," not giving enough attention to the context and details of the deliberative process that act as the effective mechanisms generating certain outcomes (174). In constructing definitions, one question is whether deliberation should include informal discussions on public issues or only formalized deliberative sessions. Do conversations in which individuals share opinions with one another constitute deliberation, or does deliberation necessarily include group conversations characterized by the formal exchange of ideas and opinions? Many deliberative theorists would argue for the second condition, arguing that deliberation's benefits require interaction between diverse groups of individuals seeking to understand others' views (Fishkin, 1991; Gutmann and Thompson, 2004; Cohen, 1989). However, this conception of deliberation eliminates the majority of political talk that occurs between people (Walsh, 2004; Mutz, 2006; Walsh, 2008). Mansbridge (1983, 1999) argues that public talk represents one end of the deliberative spectrum, but that it is deliberation nonetheless and can facilitate many of the benefits democratic theorists seek. However, it would be foolish to think that all types of deliberation should produce the same effects, thus the need for clarification. At the other end of the spectrum is formal deliberation, characterized by an exchange of ideas supported with reason in the service of reaching a decision. Figure 1.1 depicts this deliberative spectrum.

Figure 1.1: Deliberative Spectrum

Informal Political Talk	Formal Deliberation
- Egocentric discussion networks	- Decision-oriented
- "Brainstorming" (Neblo 2015)	- Rules/Reason giving
- Private	- Public
- Self-selected groups	- Exchange of ideas
	- Participatory equality

Walsh (2004, 2008)   - Deliberative Polls (Fishkin 1997)   - Fung (2004)
Mutz (2002, 2006)

Another definitional question has to do with the goals of the deliberative session. Does true deliberation require some aspect of problem solving whereby participants' mutual goal is to reach a decision on the issue(s) discussed? Furthermore, must this decision be binding? Many argue that it does (Habermas, 1991; Cohen, 1989; Abelson et al., 2003). Mansbridge (2007), in a discussion of the work of Gutmann and Thompson (2004), notes that differences between accountability in informal talk and binding decisions in formal deliberation may not be competing goals as much as two ends of a spectrum. The nature of the problem addressed through a deliberation — including decision-rules focusing on consensus or conflict — likely has important consequences for the evaluations of its outcomes (Karpowitz and Mansbridge, 2005).

As articulated by the previous two points, the lack of a clear definition of deliberation is a strong contributor to the theoretical and empirical divide within the deliberation literature. Deliberative theorists have provided many normative claims as to what constitutes true deliberation, but are less concerned with what deliberation looks like in practice. Empiricists have focused less on the structural definition of deliberation than the effects of a deliberative process. When they do not find evidence for the hypothesized beneficial effects of deliberation, or find normatively-negative effects, deliberative theorists argue that the study did not test true deliberation. This exchange leads Mutz (2008) to ask whether

the theory of deliberative democracy is falsifiable, a necessary feature of scientific research (Popper, 1963). Without a clear understanding of what deliberation looks like, it is difficult to make sense of the range of findings within the work on deliberation.

More recently, scholars have argued that there need not be a universal definition of deliberation (Neblo, 2015). Bächtiger et al. (2018) offer a mimimalist definition of deliberation: "mutual communication that involves weighing and reflecting on preferences, values, and interests regarding matters of common concern" (2). This definition, they argue, removes any normative connotations for the definition, instead allowing for discussions regarding what makes deliberation more or less "good." They lay out many standards for what makes for "good" deliberation (4), but some fundamental concepts are mutual respect, equality, and reason giving (Knight and Johnson, 1997; Gutmann and Thompson, 1996; Bächtiger et al., 2018).

1.3   The Deliberative System

In the mid-2000s, scholars of deliberative democracy began conceptualizing of a deliberative system whereby deliberation occurs in diverse, distinct, and often overlapping venues (Elstub, Ercan and Mendona, 2016). This idea, first put forward by Mansbridge (1999), argues that individual acts of deliberation exist within a broader democratic system, "with some venues (and persons) providing high quality reasons, other venues (or persons) having greater capacities for active listening and finding common ground, and still others functioning to include the marginalized or catalyzing new ideas" (Bächtiger et al., 2018, 15). This conception of deliberation allows for contextual differences to reach different goals rather than setting up competing (and likely impossible to achieve) goals in a single act of deliberation. These various acts of and venues for deliberation may be evaluated on their fulfillment of the various goals for deliberation, and placed within the larger democratic system. Here, I look to some of those venues.

1.3.1   Venues for Deliberation

The values associated with deliberation may be promoted in many, if not most, democratic and political institutions, both formal and informal. Additionally, the extent to which these values are pursued within various institutions helps us to better understand the complete deliberative system. First, we see deliberation in formal institutions such as legislatures and courts. In a legislative context, studies have used legislative debate to develop and test theories of deliberative quality, finding that those institutions rarely achieve quality deliberative standards (Quirk, Bendix and Bächtiger, 2018), but that certain contextual factors, such as the strength of parties, affect the quality of deliberation within different legislative contexts (Steenbergen et al., 2003; Steiner et al., 2004). Much work on deliberation has focused on courts, both at the level of higher courts (e.g., the US Supreme Court, as argued by Rawls (1993)), and within citizen juries and the effects of serving on juries (Gastil, Deess and Weiser, 2002).

Moving away from formal government institutions, deliberative theory, especially as studied by third generation thinkers, focuses on deliberation among the mass public. These venues may be more or less formal, falling anywhere along the deliberative spectrum, and may intertwine with government institutions. These deliberative institutions may follow the format of traditional New England town meetings where members of a community meet to share their preferences and priorities for local government, or may bring people together for one-off discussions about specific issues, such as the AmericaSpeaks: Our Budget, Our Economy event held in 2010 to discuss the federal budget (Fung, Wright et al., 2003). In Oregon, the Citizens' Initiative Review provides an opportunity for a randomly-selected group of Oregonians to deliberate about ballot initiatives and provide recommendations to fellow voters, which the public tends to support (Gastil, Richards and Knobloch, 2014). On the informal end of the spectrum, conversations among people at a coffee shop may exhibit many deliberative qualities (Walsh, 2004, 2008). Overall, deliberative ideals likely exist at

different rates within many venues. However, the effect of deliberation varies by venue, and certainly by the level of deliberation experienced. I turn now to consider the effects of deliberation, with a focus on the individual level.

1.4   Effects of Deliberation

Many arguments have been made and tested in regards to the effects of deliberation, both at the individual-level and the macro-level. Here, I focus on the effects of deliberation on four outcomes: political knowledge, opinion change, evaluations of outcomes, and political participation.

1.4.1   Political Knowledge

Many studies, across types of deliberation studied and methodologies used, find that deliberation has a positive effect on political knowledge (Fishkin and Luskin, 2005; Mutz, 2002**b**; Barabas, 2004). This is perhaps the least controversial finding in the deliberation literature. Many deliberative settings necessarily include inform participants about the issue to be discussed, so it would be surprising if participants did *not* learn from the experience. That said, work finds that certain conditions, such as the level of disagreement within the group and the rules of the deliberative session, can alter the effect of learning for certain participants. For example, shifts in political knowledge may be conditional on the diversity within the discussion group.

As previously mentioned, though the act of deliberation may have positive effects on individual-level political knowledge, inequalities in deliberative participation may serve to widen the knowledge gap at the macro level. If only the highly political knowledgeable and interested seek out and take part in deliberative experiences, those gains in political knowledge will benefit the group that least needs them. However, Neblo et al. (2010) find that exactly those people who find the conflictual 'politics as usual' distasteful are the ones who are most interested in deliberation as an alternative form of participation. Additionally,

they find that those who do participate in a deliberative sessions find the experience to be a positive one. Thus, there is also reason to think that deliberation may produce an aggregate increase in political knowledge.

1.4.1.1   Opinion Change

In a polarized political environment, can deliberation encourage participants to moderate their political views? There are several studies showing that deliberation can produce opinion change. The key mechanism working in opinion change is the exposure to the either consensual or conflicting opinions of other discussants. A fundamental argument for deliberation is that it will result in greater tolerance for opposing viewpoints among participants. This increase in tolerance may also result in gains in single-peaked preferences (Fishkin and Luskin, 2005).[1]   Persuasion may also occur, whereby participants with stronger prior views on an issue persuade the others in the group with weaker opinions on issues (Barabas, 2004). Additionally, Minozzi et al. (2015) find that congressional members are able to persuade constituents within a deliberative environment, suggesting that dynamics extend to deliberative designs incorporating elites directly. Proponents of deliberation argue that when presented with opposing viewpoints, people will update their own views by giving consideration to those disagreeable views (Mutz, 2006). Looking across work, there is evidence that deliberation may push in both directions, with some scholars finding tha tit encourages participants to polarize further, and some that it moderates positions.

Others argue that the nature of shifts in opinion may be influenced by the structure of deliberative sessions. Scholars consider the ways in which decision rules affect opinion change. If the goal of deliberation is a consensus in decision making, it will almost certainly require opinion change (Myers and Mendelberg, 2013). Other work focuses on issue area,

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[1] First identified by Black (1948), single-peaked preferences result when a person's ideal point preference can be placed on a left-right spectrum, and their preference for other options decreases as those options move further from the ideal point. Deliberation allows for participants to come to an agreement on this left-right spectrum, and this helps to address problems with social choices.

finding that opinion change through exposure to disagreement is less likely to occur for highly salient political issues (Wojcieszak and Price, 2010). Findings are mixed on the nature of opinion change in deliberative settings, and more attention should be given to the ways in which structural decisions affect opinions.

1.4.2 Evaluations of Policy Outcomes

Democratic theorists contend that the act of deliberation prior to decision making should result in greater support for the outcomes generated through the deliberation (Fearon, 1998). However, some work shows that deliberations that emphasize consensus may bury and ignore real conflicts; this results in dissatisfaction with the policy outcomes (Karpowitz and Mansbridge, 2005). Others find that the legitimacy ascribed to policy outcomes is partially dependent on participants' satisfaction with the deliberative experience (Stromer-Galley and Muhlberger, 2009). Here, I consider the procedural justice literature and how that speaks to deliberation outcome evaluations.

Thompson (2008) argues that the decisions reached through deliberation are inherently more legitimate because they include the input of participants. However, he states that this piece of deliberative theory cannot be placed under empirical scrutiny as it is simply a part of the process rather than a consequence. Other work on the approval of decision making procedures suggests that process does matter in the evaluation of outcomes. The procedural justice literature argues that people evaluate policy outcomes in part through the perceived fairness of the process used to reach the decision, and that people view processes as fair when they have a voice in reaching the decision (Lind and Tyler, 1988). Tyler, Rasinski and Spodick (1985) look at the effect of the level of opportunity for citizen input on decisions made by a city council, finding higher fairness evaluations from those individuals who had greater opportunity for input. Additionally, the effect of the opportunity to voice opinions on perceived fairness holds even if their opinions are not taken into consideration. This suggests that people prefer procedures that allow them greater input into the policymaking process.

Because they prefer those processes that allow for greater voice, they may also exhibit higher support for policy outcomes reached through a deliberative process.

Much of the work on procedural justice focuses on legal procedures—evaluating how processes used to reach a judgment in a legal case affect views on those decisions (Thibaut and Walker, 1975; Tyler, 1988). In these studies, support for a judgment is higher when people deem the decision-making process as fair. There is also experimental work that suggests process matters. Hibbing and Alford (2004) show that the way in which a decision is made affects how one views the outcome. Holding the outcome constant, individuals are more satisfied when they perceive the decision-making process as fair. This suggests that the evaluation of an outcome is influenced by the process used to reach the outcome and outcomes associated with fair processes should be viewed more favorably. Tyler, Rasinski and Spodick (1985) look at the relative influence of tangible benefits received, perceived distributive fairness, and perceived procedural fairness of policy decisions on individuals' evaluations of several policy outcomes, finding strong support for the idea that people use their perceptions of procedural fairness to evaluate policy outcomes. The deliberation literature can pull from the procedural justice literature to better understand the ways in which people evaluate outcomes reached through different decision making processes.

1.4.3   Political Participation

It is possible that the benefits observed in knowledge, trust, and satisfaction come at the cost of decreased participation. The theory for this suggests that the exposure to disagreeable views within a deliberative session may drive down participation. Mutz (2002**a**) finds that people with greater levels of disagreement within their political discussant network hold more ambivalent views on political issues and are thus less likely to participate. This means that, though exposure to opposing views increases knowledge about the other side or the issue, this generates ambivalence whereby people hold opposing views within themselves. This in turn causes people to not participate in the political process for fear of making a

wrong decision. However, while other work finds support for the Mutz idea that network disagreement leads to an increase in ambivalence, it does not find support for a link between disagreement and decreased political participation (Huckfeldt, Mendez and Osborn, 2004; Klofstad, Sokhey and McClurg, 2013).

Some research suggests that exposure to disagreement within a deliberative setting may cause participants to participate in the political process more. Work on jury deliberation finds that participation as a juror leads to increases voting turnout (Gastil, Deess and Weiser, 2002). Additionally, Jacobs, Cook and Carpini (2009) find that participants in public meetings discussing policy issues increased their subsequent political participation. Participation in a deliberative session may also lead to greater political talk within one's discussion network (Lazer et al., 2015). However, others find that increases in participation may be conditional on other factors, such as one's political ideology (Wojcieszak, Baek and Carpini, 2010). More work needs to be done to understand the contexts under which deliberation may cause increases or decreases in future political participation.

1.5   Challenges to the Deliberative System

Despite the many proponents of deliberative democracy, there are also many critics of deliberation. Indeed, Bächtiger et al. (2018) note that, "[if] a measure of the success of a political theory is the number of critics it attracts, deliberative democracy is doing very well indeed" (17). Here, I focus on three key challenges that will greatly inform the coming chapters: participatory interest, citizen competence, and problems of scale.

1.5.1   Interest in Participation

One of the most prominent critiques of deliberative efforts is the stealth hypothesis put forward by Hibbing and Theiss-Morse (2002) in *Stealth Democracy*. The stealth hypothesis argues that citizens find politics distasteful and are uninterested in additional participation. The authors argue that people instead prefer decisions be made by dispassionate, trustworthy

elites, and that when people do participate in politics, it is only to counteract elites who cannot be trusted. If the stealth hypothesis were to hold true, we would certainly expect that people would not want to be directly involved with the policy making process through deliberative events, as deliberation is a costly participatory action that is predicated on political discussion, an activity that has recently been found to be extremely disliked by people (Klar, Krupnikov and Ryan, 2018).

However, there is good reason to doubt the findings presented by Hibbing and Theiss-Morse (2002). Challenging the stealth hypothesis, Neblo et al. (2010) find that interest in deliberation is quite high in the population, and particularly high among those groups of people most disaffected by traditional forms of political participation. The authors thus turn the stealth hypothesis on its head: people express disinterest in traditional political participation *because* they view it as corrupt and/or ineffectual, and view deliberative opportunities as better alternative to those forms of participation. More recent work by the authors updating this foundational piece finds that this interest in deliberative opportunities has remained both steady and high (Neblo, Esterling and Lazer, 2018).

1.5.2   Citizen Competence

In addition to challenges regarding people's interest in deliberative opportunities, many question whether people are even competent enough to engage in such a demanding form of political participation. People face steep information costs on political issues — particularly in regards to narrow policy choices — and thus cannot deliberate meaningfully on issues of political importance (Achen and Bartels, 2017). A lack of knowledge on political issues may result in participants being unable to engage with others during a deliberative session, preventing those participants from achieving many of the proposed benefits of deliberation (Rosenberg, 2014). Finally, even if people do hold policy views that they may use to engage in a deliberative setting, their natural tendency towards biased reasoning may result in disparagement of those view points that do not support their previously-held opinions, and

result in polarized views among participants (Taber and Lodge, 2006). Rather than learning from other participants during deliberation, participants may become more convinced of their own views and more intolerant of other perspectives, calling into question their ability to reach consensual policy decisions (Sunstein, 2002).

Studies of deliberation in practice find support for the idea that citizens are in fact competent enough to meaningfully engage in political deliberation (Stromer-Galley, 2007) and that this engagement can result in opinion moderation as opposed to opinion polarization (Gerber et al., 2018). Key to understanding these findings is that institutional designs matter (Bächtiger et al., 2018). Discussion rules, facilitation, and diversity of viewpoints within a deliberative session may determine tendencies towards moderation or polarization (Fishkin and Luskin, 2005; Strandberg, Himmelroos and Grönlund, 2017). It is important to test these contextual effects on deliberation.

1.5.3   Problems of Scale

A final critique of deliberation is that it is unreasonable to expect mass deliberation in society, as deliberation is a costly activity — not only in terms of citizen interest and competency, but in organizing deliberative opportunities themselves. If only small minorities of the population take part in deliberative initiatives, we may question their utility in affecting the political world — particularly if those who participate are dissimilar to the population as a whole, and tend to be those people already advantaged by traditional forms of political participation (Sanders, 1997).

One way in which to address this problem of scale is to think about ways in which the benefits of deliberation can be spread to a broader population through social communication. Post-deliberation discussion of deliberative sessions among a participant's discussion network acts as a multiplier effect (Lazer et al., 2015), whereby those in a participant's day-to-day discussion network receive some of the benefits of a deliberative event. In this way, people who did not take part in a deliberative session may experience gains in political knowledge,

as well as an appreciation of policy outcomes, through learning from their social network. It is important, then, to understand what factors may promote or impede post-deliberation discussion.

1.6   Making Deliberation Work

The main argument of this project is that structural choices matter in the design of deliberative institutions. A major contribution is to unpack the "black box" of deliberation through the development of middle-range theories of deliberative democracy, as called for by Mutz (2008). Middle-range theories allow for testing of individual mechanisms of deliberative outcomes without having to develop and test one grand theory. This helps to bridge the theoretical and empirical divide in deliberation work.

Deliberation is costly. With governments and non-profits embracing the role of deliberative institutions in decision making, it is essential that officials have information on the consequences of design decisions. In order to gain this information, one must test the effects of those individual decisions. For instance, if greater diversity in participation generates more political learning among participants, it is helpful to understand how to best recruit for diversity. If certain types of information are more accessible for people when deliberating, groups may want to design their materials using those types of information.

As noted by Neblo (2015), "Assessing the full set of conditions under which elements of the deliberative system do and do not serve the functions assigned to them constitutes an enormous, open-ended research agenda" (14). Indeed, the ambition of this project is not to address all possible deliberative structures and how they affect outcomes. There are many structural decisions that may produce desirable or undesirable outcomes, and many of these decisions likely have conditional effects that are dependent on other institutional decisions. However, in this project I focus on several important questions that tie in with prominent (and active) literatures; this will help to define a future research agenda linking institutional structures to outcomes.

1.7   Outline of this Dissertation

In this dissertation, I examine how the structure of deliberative institutions affects behavior during three stages of the process: participant recruitment, the deliberative session itself, and post-deliberation discussion. I use data from both survey and lab experiments varying aspects of the deliberative design to test the effect of those designs on participants' behavior. Throughout, I offer connections across both theory and empirical work on deliberation, as well as across practical and scholarly views on deliberation.

The first empirical chapter, chapter two, examines how the presentation of deliberative opportunities in recruitment affects the composition of the pool of interested participants. What is key to achieving many of the proposed benefits of deliberation is that participants are exposed to cross-cutting or disagreeable political views during the deliberative session; there must be diverse viewpoints within the room. As such, it is important to understand how to recruit the right mix of people. Rather than focusing on the traits of individuals that may make them more or less likely to take part in a deliberative event, I investigate how deliberative events can be structured so as to elicit interest from a broad swath of people. Many of the arguments as to why people should not be interested in deliberation are rooted in the idea that people find political disagreement distasteful, which inhibits their interest to situations wherein they may be exposed to disagreement. Thus, if a deliberative opportunity signals the potential for conflict, people will likely be less interested in attending. Conversely, events described in a nonpartisan manner may signal a less conflictual environment and result in greater interest in attendance. In a series of online experiments varying the convener of a hypothetical deliberative session, I demonstrate that interest in deliberation is conditioned by the partisanship of the convener. As such, organizers of deliberative sessions are more likely to recruit a diverse group of people for deliberative sessions when those sessions are presented in a nonpartisan fashion. I also find that aversion to attending a deliberative session convened by the out-party can be alleviated when both parties act as conveners

together. Practically, this finding suggests that elected officials seeking input from a broad group of constituents would do best to partner up with members of the other party.

Chapter three focuses on information processing within a deliberative setting. During political discussions, people are exposed to information from others in the discussion. Based on theories of motivated reasoning, we may be concerned that people are biased in evaluating information that does not conform to their previously held beliefs. However, studies have found that individuals primed for accuracy are less affected by their previously held beliefs, and are able to overcome biased reasoning. Here, I argue that rules requiring participants to provide the reasoning for their stated political opinions help to promote accuracy-motivated reasoning. I held ten experimental deliberative sessions on the University of Colorado campus with student participants assigned to one of two groups: a treatment group with explicit reason-giving rules, and an open discussion group with no such rules. Each discussion group was made up of 5-8 participants. After being broken into these groups, participants discussed a political issue for about 45 minutes. I assess participants' information processing through pre-test and follow-up survey measures on opinion change and information search, as well as with video and audio transcripts from 360 degree recordings of each session. These recordings allow me to observe the qualitative experience of the deliberative sessions, and look for behaviors consistent with either biased or accuracy-motivated reasoning. I find that discourse within sessions with reason-giving rules is more thoughtful, reasoned, consensual, and equal in regards to participation. Additionally, I find some evidence that participants in reason-giving conditions were more likely to moderate in their opinions and less likely to polarize than those in open discussion groups. Finally, I find preliminary evidence suggesting that participants in reason-giving conditions were more likely to conduct additional research after the deliberative session, suggesting that they were in fact conducting a deeper information search.

In chapter four, I consider how deliberative sessions may be designed to encourage spillover effects. Given that deliberation is a costly activity, it is unreasonable to expect

everyone to participate in deliberative efforts. However, even those who do not participate in a deliberative session may experience some of its benefits through their social networks. Building on work on the multiplier effects of deliberative experiences, I consider how deliberative sessions may be designed to encourage those effects. I expect that deliberation promotes increases in political interest and knowledge for a participant, and that this in turn generates greater discussion related to the deliberation within the participant's social network. I also look at the way in which reason-giving rules condition the multiplier effect. Finally, I consider the ways in which disagreement conditions the multiplier effect. I test these expectations using the data collected from the experimental deliberative sessions. This project helps to show that not only do multiplier effects exist, but that deliberation can be designed so as to promote those effects. This helps to overcome some of the limitations of scale inherent to deliberative democracy efforts.

In chapter five, I offer a summary of my findings while also emphasizing questions to be addressed in future work. The major contribution of this project is to empirically demonstrate that institutional choices matter for recruitment for, behavior in, and outcomes from deliberation — findings that are taken for granted among practitioners who implement deliberative designs without empirically testing their impacts. These findings help to clarify the way in which political scientists conceptualize formal deliberation, offering insights into political participation, information processing, political learning, and political discussion. Additionally, this work helps deliberation practitioners and local governments seeking to design deliberative institutions, and all people hoping to challenge biased political thinking in a polarized environment. Taken together, the evidence presented in these chapters suggests that the design of deliberative institutions matters for many normatively-important deliberative outcomes.

Chapter 2

Recruitment Design and Partisanship

While interest in deliberative democracy has grown among scholars and practitioners alike, questions remain regarding people's interest in taking part in deliberative opportunities. Here, I consider how the way in which deliberative sessions are presented during the recruitment phase affects the pool of willing participants. I posit a theory that people's willingness to deliberate is conditioned by the convener of the deliberative session. Specifically, people will be less interested in attending a deliberative event when the convener of the session is not a co-partisan. Using a series of online experiments varying the convener of a hypothetical deliberative session, I demonstrate that interest in deliberation is conditioned by the partisanship of the convener. As such, I argue that in order to recruit a diverse group of people for deliberative sessions, those sessions should be presented in a nonpartisan fashion.

2.1   Introduction

Theorists of deliberative democracy have long argued for mass public deliberation as a way to reinvigorate democracy with public voice (Cohen, 1989; Habermas, 1991; Barber, 1984; Fishkin, 1991), and political scientists have begun empirically testing many of the normative claims made by those theorists. Overall, those findings have been mixed. Many studies find that deliberation has a positive effect on political knowledge (Fishkin and Luskin, 2005; Mutz, 2002**b**; Barabas, 2004). There are several studies showing that deliberation can produce opinion change (Barabas, 2004) as well as increases in tolerance of other viewpoints (Mutz, 2006). The key mechanism for both increases in knowledge and opinion change is the exposure to dissimilar viewpoints — exposure that is unlikely to occur in day-to-day life (Mutz and Mondak, 2006). Thus, these normative benefits of deliberation are conditional on the make-up of the deliberative group.

If the key to achieving many of the proposed benefits of deliberation requires that people are exposed to cross-cutting or disagreeable views, it is necessary to understand how to recruit the right mix of people. This may prove difficult for several reasons. First, there is reason to suspect that many people find the politics distateful and do not want greater involvement in the political process (Hibbing and Theiss-Morse, 2002). Second, people may be generally opposed to political discussion in general (Klar, Krupnikov and Ryan, 2018). If only those groups already advantaged in society take part in deliberative efforts, deliberation itself may exacerbate previous inequalities in society (Sanders, 1997).

In order to better understand the rate and nature of political talk and deliberation, Jacobs, Cook and Carpini (2009) conducted a survey of the general public regarding political conversation in 2003. They found that 25% of respondents reported participating in face-to-face deliberations about public issues in the year, a higher proportion than what one might expect given the previously mentioned concerns. In a series of field experiments whereby a random sample of citizens were invited to participate in an online deliberative session with

their Member of Congress, Neblo et al. (2010) find that 65% of people expressed interest in participating.

Prior to considering the ways in which to recruit diverse groups of participants, it is worth asking: why do people participate in deliberative events? There are two ways to think about this question — in terms of the individual and in terms of the deliberative event itself. There are many factors that may shape an individual's propensity to participate in politics, such as demographics (Verba et al., 1993; Burns, Schlozman and Verba, 2001), resources (Verba, Schlozman and Brady, 1995), or general psychological attributes like conflict avoidance (Mutz, 2006). Rather than focus on the individual characteristics that may make someone more or less willing to participate in politics, I instead consider how the ways in which deliberative opportunities are presented in the recruitment stage may affect participation rates. For instance, people may be more likely to express interest in deliberation if they will be deliberating with a member of Congress (Neblo et al., 2010).

I argue that people's interest in deliberation is conditional upon who is asking them to deliberate. Specifically, people's willingness to deliberate is conditioned by the partisanship of the convener of the deliberative event. Many of the arguments as to why people should not be interested in deliberation are rooted in the idea that people find political disagreement distasteful, and that this inhibits their interest in exposing themselves to situations wherein they may encounter disagreement. Thus, if a deliberative opportunity signals the potential for conflict, people will be less interested in attending. Conversely, if the events are described in a nonpartisan manner, this may signal a less conflictual environment and result in greater interest in attendance. I test these expectations using online experiments varying the convener of a hypothetical deliberative session. I find that one's interest in attending a deliberative session is significantly lower when invited by the out-party. As such, organizers of deliberative sessions are more likely to recruit a diverse group of people for deliberative sessions when those sessions are presented in a nonpartisan fashion. I also find that aversion to attending a deliberative session convened by the out-party can be alleviated

when both parties act as conveners together. Practically, this finding suggests that elected officials seeking input from a broad group of constituents would do best to partner up with members of the other party. Additionally, those building deliberative institutions would be smart to avoid signaling partisanship in their organizational efforts.

This chapter proceeds as follows. I begin by discussing the findings regarding why people participate in politics, focusing on how those findings may or may not apply to participation in deliberative events. Next, I present the theoretical framework regarding the conditioning effect of partisanship on interest in deliberation. I then describe each of the experiments conducted, and the results from those experiments. I conclude with a discussion of the implications of my findings, and offer some thoughts on future questions to be considered.

2.2   Interest in Deliberation

What motivates people to participate in high-cost political events? Classical rational choice models of participation argue that political acts can be explained using a cost-benefit analysis; people will participate when the benefits from that participation are greater than the costs required to participate (Downs, 1957). Because there are costs associated with political participation— such as time, money, or information — we might expect overall participation to be quite low. This is particularly applicable when one person's participation does not much affect outcomes resulting in people shirking their participatory responsibility (Olson, 1965). That said, people may choose to vote because it is a low-cost activity (Aldrich, 1993). Formal deliberation, however, is not such an activity. As such, much of the work on why people participate in high-cost political activities centers on characteristics that may lower the individual-level costs of participating.

Of the individual-level factors driving political participation, sociodemographic factors such as education (Wolfinger and Rosenstone, 1980; Nie, Junn and Stehlik-Barry, 1996) and income (Brady, Verba and Schlozman, 1995; Verba, Schlozman and Brady, 1995) are of

central concern. Increases in both education and income lower the informational and monetary costs necessary to participate in the political process, resulting in a participatory body that is skewed towards those of higher socioeconomic status (Verba and Nie, 1972). Indeed, there is concern that deliberation would in fact exacerbate inequality of voice in the political system if only those who already enjoy greater representation based on sociodemographic advantages participate (Sanders, 1997).

Perhaps because so many people are not naturally inclined to participate in politics, a large body of work focuses on the role of mobilization. Rosenstone and Hansen (1993) break mobilization into two types — direct and indirect. Direct mobilization is that that is undertaken by political leaders. Political leaders perform campaign duties such as phone banking and canvassing to encourage people to participate, and this activity subsidizes the opportunity costs of participation for average citizens. Indirect mobilization is mobilization that occurs as the effect of direct mobilization dissipates through one's social network. So-called strategic politicians target their outreach to individuals with greater proclivity to not only participate themselves but to encourage others' participation (Rosenstone and Hansen, 1993; Huckfeldt and Sprague, 1992). Building on this, much work focuses on the effects of social networks on individual participation. Dating back to studies out of the Columbia school (Lazarsfeld, 1948; Berelson, Lazarsfeld and McPhee, 1954), these socially-oriented approaches to participation are predicated on the idea that individual behavior is, at least in part, dependent on one's social context. People receive much of their political information through their social networks (Huckfeldt and Sprague, 1987). In acquiring this information, one's cost of participation is lowered, resulting in a higher likelihood of participation (McClurg, 2003). People may also feel pressured to participate if they know members of their social network are made aware of their participation (or lack thereof) (Gerber, Green and Larimer, 2008).

A main finding in the participation literature is that people participate because someone asked them to (Verba, Schlozman and Brady, 1995). This ask to participate can also

permeate through one's social network (Nickerson, 2008). However, there are certain conditions under which these asks are more or less successful. While people do tend to vote at higher rates when asked face-to-face (Green, Gerber and Nickerson, 2003), phone calls do not appear to be effective in mobilizing voter turnout (Gerber and Green, 2001). In most of this experimental work, it is a nonpartisan group asking people to participate. There is little consideration, however, of how the leanings of the group asking one to participate affects one's willingness to do so.

How do the findings regarding political participation apply to deliberative institutions? Perhaps the most convincing argument against the feasibility of deliberative efforts is the stealth democracy thesis. In their book *Stealth Democracy*, Hibbing and Theiss-Morse (2002) argue that people do not want greater involvement in politics, and that the only reason they may express a desire for greater involvement in politics is because they are distrusting of political elites. According to this theory, it is only when people are most distrusting of government and elites that they will increase their participation in politics. However, empirical work finds little support for the stealth thesis. Neblo et al. (2010) find that people express greater interest in deliberative opportunities when there is *less* perceived corruption among elites. Additionally, they find that segments of people from those populations less likely to take part in more traditional forms of political participation were more likely to express interest in deliberative opportunities.

Moving away from an individual's interest in deliberation based on the characteristics of the individual, Neblo et al. (2010) also examine whether aspects of deliberative sessions themselves affect people's willingness to attend. They vary the length of the sessions, whether the sessions are online or in person, the issue area of the discussion, whether or not participants are paid, and with whom the participants would be deliberating. They find that people express greater interest in deliberation when it is with their member of Congress. They also find that people express greater interest when their is a financial incentive. I continue this line of inquiry by considering how the characteristics of the convener of a deliberative event

affects interest in participation, focusing on the convener's partisanship.

2.3   Theoretical Framework

There exists a divide between theoretical and empirical studies of deliberation, with empirical work casting doubt on the claims made by theorists, and theorists criticizing the techniques of empiricists. The inability to address all of the normative claims sufficiently has generated interest in developing middle-range theories of deliberation. Rather than testing all of the implications of normative deliberative theory, middle-range theories allow us to develop a better understanding of the individual components of deliberation and their effects (Mutz, 2008; Thompson, 2008; Neblo, 2015). As argued by Neblo (2015), "we are not concerned primarily with the absolute distance between reality and the ideal, but rather with whether we can adjust our institutions and practices to help average citizens recognize their contributions and interests in the results of an improved policy process" (9-10). We might not necessarily meet all criteria of the deliberative ideal in order to achieve desirable outcomes. Rather than focus on the ideal, the literature on deliberation should try to determine which institutional designs best promote normatively-positive outcomes in a feasible way. Here, I take up that line of inquiry by considering how deliberative institutions can be structured during recruitment so as to elicit greater participatory interest from a diverse group of people.

Deliberation practitioners often adhere to a set of guidelines in designing deliberative institutions so as to best serve the purposes outlined by democratic theorists. One area of focus is recruitment (Ryfe and Stalsburg, 2012). There are a great many number of factors that could affect one's decision of whether to attend a deliberative event — the time of day, the day of the week, the location, the topic, etc. Indeed, previous work finds that certain conditions of a deliberative opportunity as presented do affect individuals' interest in attending (Neblo et al., 2010). Here, I argue that that people's interest in deliberation is conditional upon who is asking them to take part. First, I argue that people's distaste of both expressive partisanship and conflictual political environments results in (overall) greater

interest in attending deliberative events when they are presented in a nonpartisan manner. Second, I consider a conditional effect of partisanship, whereby partisans will express greater interest in attending deliberative events convened by co-partisans than when invited by the out-party.

The American public is affectively polarized along partisan lines, exhibiting increases in positive affect for one's own party and negative affect for the out party (Iyengar and Westwood, 2015). This division is explicitly partisan; even if Democrats and Republicans agree on an issue, their partisan distrust of one another remains (Mason, 2018). However, others argue that some measures of affective polarization are picking up a different emotion: dislike of parties in general (Klar, Krupnikov and Ryan, 2018). Specifically, Klar, Krupnikov and Ryan (2018) find that people are "willing to spend time with individuals with whom they disagree as long as they do not talk about politics" (389). More broadly, Klar and Krupnikov (2016) demonstrate that people find partisanship socially undesirable, resulting in greater numbers of people to self-identify as independents even if they hold partisan views. Partisans behave covertly; they continue to support partisan policies and vote for members of their party, but do so discreetly. This avoidance of public displays of partisanship is particularly demobilizing in the context of a deliberative event, as it is specifically the social demonstration of partisanship that people tend to avoid. When an opportunity for discussion is presented in a partisan fashion, people will be less interested in attending than when a signaling of partisanship is avoided.

Another line of argument for the idea that people are uninterested in deliberation is rooted in the idea that people find political disagreement distasteful, and that this inhibits their interest in situations wherein they may be exposed to disagreement (Mutz, 2006). Based on this line of reasoning, if a deliberative opportunity signals the potential for conflict, people will likely be less interested in attending. How may a deliberative event be presented as to signal an event characterized by more or less conflict? I argue that explicitly partisan invitations signal greater conflict and thus drive down interest in participation. Conversely, if the

events are described in a nonpartisan manner, this may signal a less conflictual environment and result in greater interest in attendance.

> H$_1$: *Overall, interest in attending deliberative sessions will be highest when those sessions are convened in a nonpartisan fashion.*

While I expect that overall interest in attending a deliberative event will be highest under nonpartisan conditions, I also consider a conditional relationship based on one's own partisan identity. I expect that partisans will express greater interest in attending a deliberative event when invited by the in party, and less interest when invited by the out party. There are several potential mechanisms that drive this expectation. People may generate greater social esteem by participating in an event promoted by their co-partisans, and thus be more willing to participate in potentially conflictual political events (McClendon, 2014). An invitation from the out-party may signal a greater amount of conflict than would an invite from one's co-partisans. Another possibility is simply that partisans would not feel as though they would be able to contribute to a meeting of the out party, or think that they would not be welcome at the meeting. Finally, people may be more trusting of their co-partisans and less so of those in the out party, and thus express greater/less interest in attending (Carlin and Love, 2013).

> H$_2$: *Partisans will express greater interest in attending deliberative sessions when invited by the in party and less interest in attending when invited by the out party.*

The combined implication of these two hypotheses is that the make-up of a deliberative group will be affected by the convener. In planning a deliberative event, practitioners hoping for diverse opinions among those in attendance should keep this in mind during the recruitment stage. The diversity of views in the room should be highest when recruitment is done in a nonpartisan fashion. When deliberation is presented in a partisan manner, practitioners will likely recruit a greater number of co-partisans and fewer members of the out party.

2.4   Analysis

I conducted two experiments to assess individuals' interest in attending a deliberative session. Holding the general information about the sessions constant, participants were randomly assigned to a condition varying the convener of the deliberative session. After reading the invitation to take part in the session, participants were asked about their hypothetical interest in attending the session. I present the findings of each study separately.

2.4.1   Study 1

In the first experiment, conducted in the spring of 2017, participants were recruited through the Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk). MTurk provides researchers with a way in which to recruit survey respondents through an online task completion market whereby individuals are compensated for completing short tasks such as taking surveys. Research shows that the samples of respondents recruited from the MTurk do differ significantly from random population-based samples (Levay, Freese and Druckman, 2016). Turk respondents tend to be younger and better educated, and include higher proportions of men and Democrats. However, there is little evidence that these differences limit the generalizability of the findings from such samples (Mullinix et al., 2015).

Participants read an invitation to take part in a deliberative opportunity, and were randomly assigned to one of four treatment conditions varying the convener of the deliberative session: the local Democratic party, the local Republican party, local government officials, and local community volunteers. The full text of the invitations can be found in Figure 2.1. After reading the invitation, participants were asked about their interest in attending the event, as well as several other questions about their feelings about the event and deliberative events more generally. 1800 participants were recruited for roughly 450 participants per treatment condition.[1]

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[1] The results of a manipulation check suggest that participants were able to comprehend both what the invitation was about (98.6%) and who was convening the event (90.1%).

Figure 2.1: Study 1: Treatment Vignettes

DEMOCRATIC PARTY:

Deliberative Opportunity with your local Democratic Party
The local Democratic Party would like to invite you to an event to discuss important issues in your community. This three-hour community conversation is designed to create a list of priorities and areas for improvement. In these conversations, you will be asked to share your views and ideas with the others in the group. What is happening now in your community? What actions would create the best possible community? These are the kinds of questions at the heart of these conversations.

Our local Democratic Party would like to invite community members from all walks of life to come together for this conversation, where people will talk about local issues with one another and come up with solutions to local problems. Local Democrats hope to see you there!

REPUBLICAN PARTY:

Deliberative Opportunity with your local Republican Party
The local Republican Party would like to invite you to an event to discuss important issues in your community. This three-hour community conversation is designed to create a list of priorities and areas for improvement. In these conversations, you will be asked to share your views and ideas with the others in the group. What is happening now in your community? What actions would create the best possible community? These are the kinds of questions at the heart of these conversations.

Our local Republican Party would like to invite community members from all walks of life to come together for this conversation, where people will talk about local issues with one another and come up with solutions to local problems. Local Democrats hope to see you there!

LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS:

Deliberative Opportunity with Local Government Officials
Local government officials would like to invite you to an event to discuss important issues in your community. This three-hour community conversation is designed to create a list of priorities and areas for improvement. In these conversations, you will be asked to share your views and ideas with the others in the group. What is happening now in your community? What actions would create the best possible community? These are the kinds of questions at the heart of these conversations.

Local government officials would like to invite community members from all walks of life to come together for this conversation, where people will talk about local issues with one another and come up with solutions to local problems. Your local government officials hope to see you there!

COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS:

Deliberative Opportunity with Local Community Volunteers
Local community volunteers would like to invite you to an event to discuss important issues in your community. This three-hour community conversation is designed to create a list of priorities and areas for improvement. In these conversations, you will be asked to share your views and ideas with the others in the group. What is happening now in your community? What actions would create the best possible community? These are the kinds of questions at the heart of these conversations.

Local community volunteers would like to invite community members from all walks of life to come together for this conversation, where people will talk about local issues with one another and come up with solutions to local problems. Your local community volunteers hope to see you there!

Figure 2.2 presents the results from the treatment on participants' interest in attending the deliberative event. The dependent variable asks participants, "How interested would you be in attending this deliberative event?" Participants dragged their response from a scale of 0 or "Very uninterested" to 100 or "Very interested". Figure 2.2a shows the difference-in-means across the four treatment groups, with bars indicating the means of each treatment group and lines for the 95% confidence intervals. The mean interest in attending is highest under the local government condition (47.1, SE=1.46), but this estimate is only statistically different[2] from the Republican Party treatment condition, the condition under which the participants had the lowest overall interest in attending (36.1, SE=1.40).[3] While those in the Republican treatment condition expressed significantly lower interest in attending versus the other three groups, this is likely due to the fact that the experiment sample skews Democratic. These results suggest that there will be greater interest in attending a deliberative session if it is presented in a nonpartisan manner.

Figure 2.2: "How interested would you be in attending this deliberative event?"
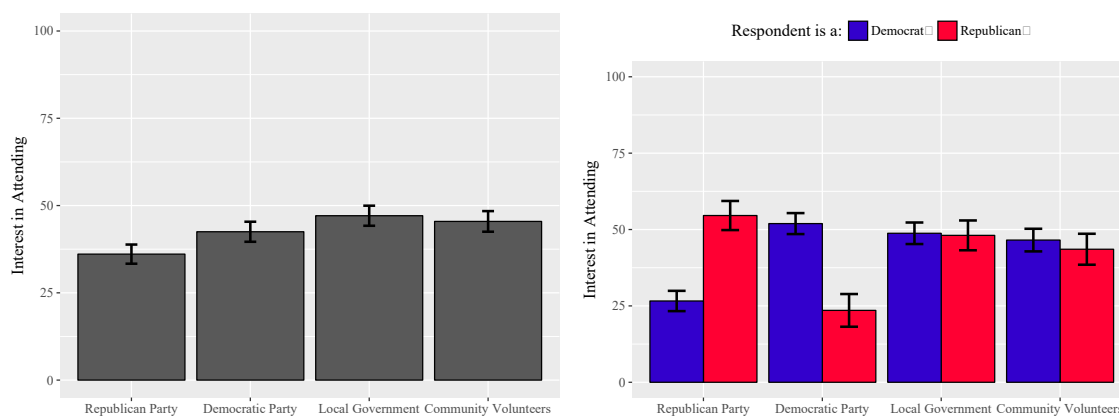
(a) Overall Interest by Treatment

(b) Interest by Respondent's Partisanship

Figure 2.2b shows the difference-in-means across the four treatment groups with bars

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[2] All statistical tests are conducted using a Bonferroni correction from an analysis-of-variance analysis.

[3] Followed by the Democratic Party (42.5, SE=1.46), and the community volunteers (45.5, SE=1.51).

indicating the means of each treatment group and lines for the 95% confidence intervals, broken up by the partisanship of the participant. Based on a 7-point scale, participants were divided into self-identified Democrats (Republicans) if they identified as, at least, leaning towards a certain party. Independents were excluded from this analysis. The results display a clear conditioning effect of partisanship; under the partisan conditions, participants' interest in attending the deliberative session is conditioned by their own partisanship. Specifically, participants expressed significantly less interest in attending the deliberative session when the convener of the session was the out-party. The mean interest in attending a session convened by the Republican Party for Democrats is 26.6 (SE=1.69), while the mean interest under the same condition is 54.6 (SE=2.43) for Republican participants. Conversely, Democratic participants expressed a mean interest in attending of 51.9 (SE=1.75) when invited by the Democratic Party, while Republicans' mean interest was 23.5 (SE=2.72). These findings suggest that participants are less interested in attending a deliberative event when it is convened by the out-party.

Additionally, though partisans did express greater interest in attending the session when invited by co-partisans than they did under nonpartisan conditions, the differences are minor. Republican participants did express significantly greater interest in attending under the Republican Party condition than the community volunteers condition, but Democratic participants did not express significantly greater interest in the Democratic Party condition than they did in either nonpartisan condition. Broadly, partisans are not much more interested in attending when invited by their own party, but they are significantly less interested in attending when invited by the out-party, and that difference is substantively large.

2.4.2   Study 2

A second experiment was conducted in the fall of 2017. This experiment was conducted on the 2017 Colorado Political Climate Survey, an annual public opinion survey conducted by the University of Colorado Boulder. This survey used a representative sample of 800

Colorado residents and was administered by the survey firm YouGov. This experiment was embedded within the larger survey.

Similar to the first experiment, respondents read an invitation to take part in a deliberative opportunity and were randomly assigned to a condition varying the convener. For this experiment, there were five treatment conditions varying the convener of the deliberative session: the local Democratic party, the local Republican party, both the local Democratic and local Republican Parties, local government officials, and a control condition wherein no convener was signaled. The introduction of a true control condition allows for better understanding of people's baseline interest in deliberation. Additionally, I added a condition of both parties to determine whether the people's disinterest in attending when invited by the out-party can be lifted when their own party is also included in the session. The full text of the invitations can be found in Figure 2.3. After reading the invitation, participants were asked about their interest in attending the event.

Figure 2.4: "How interested would you be in attending this deliberative event?"
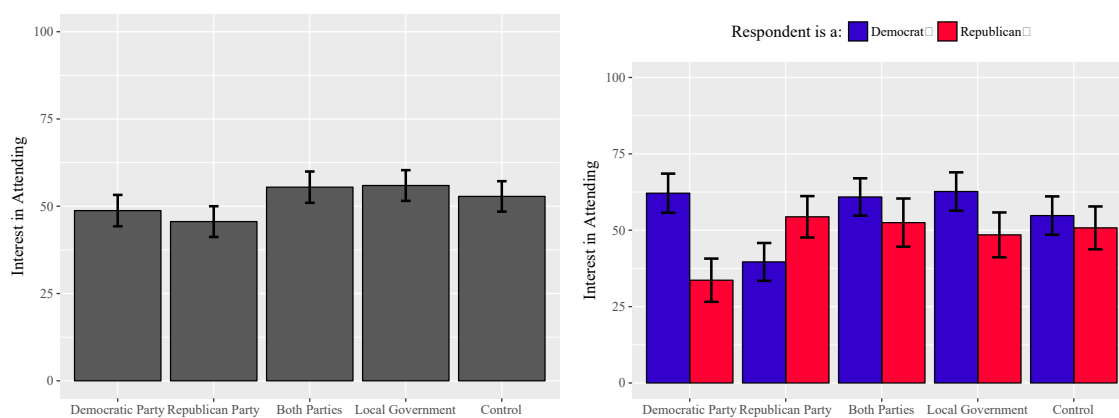
(a) Overall Interest by Treatment   (b) Interest by Respondent's Partisanship

Figure 2.4 presents the results from the second experiment. Figure 2.4a shows the difference-in-means across all five treatment conditions with bars indicating the means of

Figure 2.3: Study 2: Treatment Vignettes

DEMOCRATIC PARTY:

Deliberative Opportunity with your local Democratic Party
The local Democratic Party would like to invite you to an event to discuss important issues in your community. This three-hour community conversation is designed to create a list of priorities and areas for improvement. In these conversations, you will be asked to share your views and ideas with the others in the group. What is happening now in your community? What actions would create the best possible community? These are the kinds of questions at the heart of these conversations.

Our local Democratic Party would like to invite community members from all walks of life to come together for this conversation, where people will talk about local issues with one another and come up with solutions to local problems. Local Democrats hope to see you there!

REPUBLICAN PARTY:

Deliberative Opportunity with your local Republican Party
The local Republican Party would like to invite you to an event to discuss important issues in your community. This three-hour community conversation is designed to create a list of priorities and areas for improvement. In these conversations, you will be asked to share your views and ideas with the others in the group. What is happening now in your community? What actions would create the best possible community? These are the kinds of questions at the heart of these conversations.

Our local Republican Party would like to invite community members from all walks of life to come together for this conversation, where people will talk about local issues with one another and come up with solutions to local problems. Local Democrats hope to see you there!

BOTH PARTIES:

Deliberative Opportunity with your local Democratic and Republican Parties
The local Democratic and Republican Parties would like to invite you to an event to discuss important issues in your community. This three-hour community conversation is designed to create a list of priorities and areas for improvement. In these conversations, you will be asked to share your views and ideas with the others in the group. What is happening now in your community? What actions would create the best possible community? These are the kinds of questions at the heart of these conversations.

Our local Democratic and Republican Parties would like to invite community members from all walks of life to come together for this conversation, where people will talk about local issues with one another and come up with solutions to local problems. Local Democrats and Republicans hope to see you there!

LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS:

Deliberative Opportunity with Local Government Officials
Local government officials would like to invite you to an event to discuss important issues in your community. This three-hour community conversation is designed to create a list of priorities and areas for improvement. In these conversations, you will be asked to share your views and ideas with the others in the group. What is happening now in your community? What actions would create the best possible community? These are the kinds of questions at the heart of these conversations.

Local government officials would like to invite community members from all walks of life to come together for this conversation, where people will talk about local issues with one another and come up with solutions to local problems. Your local government officials hope to see you there!

CONTROL CONDITION:

Deliberative Opportunity
You're invited to an event to discuss important issues in your community. This three-hour community conversation is designed to create a list of priorities and areas for improvement. In these conversations, you will be asked to share your views and ideas with the others in the group. What is happening now in your community? What actions would create the best possible community? These are the kinds of questions at the heart of these conversations.

We would like to invite community members from all walks of life to come together for this conversation, where people will talk about local issues with one another and come up with solutions to local problems. We hope to see you there!

each treatment group and lines for the 95% confidence intervals. Again, the dependent variable measures hypothetical interest in attending from 0 to 100. The mean interest in attending ranges from 45.6 in the Republican condition to 55.9 in the local government condition. While there is little difference across treatment conditions, interest in attending is lower under the partisan conditions. Overall, interest was lowest under the Republican condition, but this could be due to the fact that there were fewer Republicans in the sample.

Figure 2.4b shows the interest in attending by the respondents' partisanship with bars indicating the means of each treatment group and lines for the 95% confidence intervals. Here, we again see that respondents were less interested in attending the session when invited by the out party. In the ten groups reported in Figure 4b, interest in attending was lowest among Republicans in the Democratic Party treatment condition (33.6, SE=3.59), followed by Democrats in the Republican Party treatment condition (39.6, SE=3.15). Interest in attending was highest for Democrats in the local government condition (62.7, SE=3.19), but not statistically higher than Democrats in the Democratic Party condition (62.1, SE=3.26) or the Democrats in the both parties condition (60.9, SE=3.19). Across the three non-partisan conditions, Republican respondents report less interest in attending the event than Democrats, though not always statistically significantly less. Figure 4b also shows that respondents were not more likely to express interest in attending the event if convened by co-partisans.

2.5   Discussion

Overall, the findings from both experiments support my theory. Though interest in attending the deliberative sessions was not always significantly higher under nonpartisan conditions, interest was consistently higher in nonpartisan conditions across the experiments. The strongest finding from these experiments is that partisans will express less interest in attending a deliberative session when it is being convened by the out-party. Democrats will express less interest in attending when invited by Republicans, and vice versa. These

differences are both statistically and substantively significant. Additionally, partisans were not more likely to express interest in attending the deliberative sessions when invited by co-partisans. These conditional effects are most consistent with the mechanism that people are less likely to feel welcome or able to contribute to a discussion held by the out party, rather than increased social esteem from engaging with co-partisans or being more trusting of co-partisans.

A major implication of these findings is that groups that are recruiting people to take part in deliberative sessions should consider how they frame the discussion if they want to ensure a diverse group of attendees. It may be difficult, for instance, that an elected official seeking input from constituents about certain policies will not be able to personally recruit people to attend a discussion. Instead, they may only hear from co-partisans because people from the other party will simply not attend. In study two, the findings suggest that the two major political parties could develop deliberative institutions together, where both parties are able to signal that all are welcome. Rather than providing opportunities for constituents to deliberate with a single elected representative, elected officials would do better to organize opportunities across the aisle with representatives from both parties if they wanted to hear from all of their constituents.

Moving forward, more can be done to better understand the convener effect. For instance, how would people respond to deliberative sessions convened by certain interest groups? It may be that interest groups provide the similar signal as partisanship, and people will respond similarly. However, perhaps the interest itself matters, and people would be more interested to take part in discussions hosted by an interest group whether they agree or disagree with the group so long as they are passionate about the issue. This may also help to recruit a more diverse groups, as partisan polarization does not necessarily reflect issue polarization (Mason, 2015). It would also be interesting to look at how the level of government or issue area affect interest. Are people more interested in participating in conversations about federal policy than they are local issues? All of these variations would

help shed light on what drives interest in taking part in deliberation.

It may also be that people would be more or less interested in deliberating with specific individuals. If people are provided with an opportunity to deliberate with their own Senator, they may express interest in the opportunity even if they are not co-partisans. People may want to express their opinions on views on which they disagree with their Senator. Deliberation with an elected official signals buy-in from decision makers. Buy-in refers to the idea that decision makers are not simply aware of the deliberative initiatives, but that they will be taking any conclusions reached by participants into consideration in their decisionmaking. Taking part in a deliberative session requires an investment on behalf of the participants; if they feel as though their participation does not matter for the decisions that are made, they may not see that investment as cost-effective. In this scenario, partisanship may not matter.

2.6   Conclusion

The benefits of deliberation are often promoted within democratic theory. The empirical work on deliberation, however, casts doubts on its feasibility. In particular, many argue that people do not have the time and resources to take part in deliberative sessions, and on top of that, people do not have any interest in being more involved in the political process. Because of this, many warn that increased opportunities for deliberation may exacerbate current levels of inequality of voice in government. Rather than focusing on individuals' baseline interest in taking part in deliberative sessions, this work considers how deliberative institutions can be structured so as to elicit greater levels of interest in participating across the board. I find that partisans express less interest in participating in deliberative sessions when those sessions are presented by the out party. These results are both statistically and substantively significant.

If deliberation practitioners believe that diversity is required in order for deliberation to achieve its intended benefits, they must consider how to best recruit participants of diverse

viewpoints. The findings from this research suggest that organizers of deliberative events should be sure to avoid signaling partisanship in the recruitment stage. Additional work can shed light on other recruitment techniques to promote diversity in deliberative groups.

Chapter 3

Reason-giving and Information Processing

How do people process information in a deliberative setting? When processing information provided by others within a political conversation, participants may exhibit biased motivated reasoning whereby they denigrate opinions that do not confirm their previously held beliefs. While the growing empirical literature on deliberation has noted the presence of certain biases, this work does not always speak to the insights garnered from public opinion and political psychology. Reason-giving rules require participants to provide the reasoning behind their stated political opinions within a structured conversation; I argue that these rules promote accuracy-oriented motivated reasoning. Using experimental deliberative sessions varying the rule-giving structure, I demonstrate that deliberative institutions can be structured in ways so as to overcome biased reasoning. Additionally, I provide evidence that reason-giving rules generate a qualitatively different deliberative experience — one characterized by higher deliberative quality. This project sheds light on one potential mechanism to encourage the formation of qualified policy preferences, helping to overcome the starkly partisan thinking evidenced in a polarized political climate.

3.1   Introduction

In the proliferation of work on deliberation, there exists deep debate regarding what makes for good deliberation, and what outcomes we can expect from deliberation. While normative theories of deliberation focus on the many aspects argued to be necessary for quality deliberation, such as mutual respect, equality, and reason-giving, there remains a lack of empirical work testing of these aspects. Additionally, while there are many studies of deliberation that test knowledge acquisition and opinion change, few examine what factors may condition those outcomes. Here, I develop an empirical test of one of the most often cited aspects of good deliberation — reason-giving — on deliberative outcomes.

A common critique of deliberative democracy is that it cannot overcome the well-documented biases in people's information processing whereby people denigrate positions that do not conform with their previously held beliefs, resulting in opinion polarization among deliberation participants (Sunstein, 2002). Are there ways in which to structure deliberative sessions so as to overcome biased information processing? I propose a theory based in motivated reasoning, arguing that deliberative sessions can be structured in ways as to promote accuracy-motivated reasoning over directionally-motivated reasoning. I argue that reason-giving rules, whereby participants are required to provide reasons for their stated political opinions, promote accuracy-motivated reasoning. To test this, I convened deliberative sessions whereby participants were randomly-assigned to one of two conditions: one where participants were given explicit directions to provide reasons for their stated opinions, and another group where participants were not given reason-giving rules. I use pre-test and follow-up survey measures of participants' political views to determine whether reason-giving results in opinion moderation or polarization.

Prior to looking at post-deliberation opinion change, I begin by assessing the nature of the deliberative sessions themselves. I argue that reason-giving rules within a deliberative session will result in higher quality deliberation. To measure this, the deliberative sessions

were recorded using 360 degree video cameras so as to capture the full conversation without distracting from the natural flow of discussion (by pointing a camera at each speaker). I develop a coding scheme based on the Discourse Quality Index (DQI) develped by Steenbergen et al. (2003), coding for the length of statements made, reason giving, justification for reasons given, expressions of agreement and disagreement, and interruptions of other participants. Overall, I find that the nature of discussion in the deliberative sessions with reason-giving rules was more thoughtful, reasoned, consensual, and equal in regards to participation than in the open discussion groups.

After demonstrating that reason-giving in deliberation results in higher quality discourse, I consider the effect of reason-giving rules on opinion change. I argue that reason-giving rules will promote accuracy-motivated reasoning over biased directionally-motivated reasoning. The act of developing a justification for their stated viewpoint should force participants to break away from their natural inclination towards biased processing. Using the baseline opinions as measured in a pre-test survey, and post-deliberative opinions measured in a follow-up survey, I show that participants in sessions that required reason-giving were more likely to moderate their opinions on the issues, and were less likely to polarize in their views post-deliberation (as compared to those in open discussion groups). Finally, I attempt to better understand the mechanism behind this opinion shift by asking participants in the follow-up survey if they had conducted any research on the discussion topic post-deliberation. I present evidence that participants in reason-giving conditions were more likely to conduct an additional information search post-deliberation. This provides evidence for the idea that participants in reason-giving conditions were accuracy-motivated in their processing of the information from the deliberative event.

3.2   Reason-giving and Deliberative Quality

In order to make the case that reason-giving rules have an effect on participants of deliberative sessions, it is necessary to demonstrate that reason-giving rules produce a dif-

ferent quality of deliberation. If deliberative sessions with and without reason-giving rules look qualitatively the same, it would be difficult to argue that one produced a different effect on participants. As such, I begin with an argument for why reason-giving rules should result in higher quality deliberation.

Though there is not a single definition of deliberation that can satisfy all deliberative democrats, scholars have begun to offer more minimalist definitions, which can then be elaborated upon to represent more or less "good" deliberation (Bächtiger et al., 2018). Common among both first and second generation conceptions of good deliberation is mutual respect among participants (Gutmann and Thompson, 1996), which should promote open communication (Bächtiger et al., 2018). Related to mutual respect, good deliberation should be characterized by equality, meaning that all participants should have the ability to offer their opinions without interruption or otherwise being prevented from doing so (Habermas, 2008). Finally, conceptualizations of good deliberation often include a discussion of reason-giving (Cohen, 1989). Indeed, some argue that deliberation's "first and most important characteristic... is its reason-giving requirement" (Gutmann and Thompson, 2004, 3). While early on Habermas (1991) argued for a conceptualization of reasons as simply those having the better argument, reason-giving has evolved to include broader forms of communication, such as "testimony" and "storytelling" (Sanders, 1997). As such, subsequent conceptualizations of reason-giving are not simply a dichotomous measure of yes or no, but more akin to levels of justification.

Here, I argue that enforcing reason-giving rules within a deliberative session should result in higher quality deliberative discourse as measured by other conceptualizations of "good" deliberation. Requiring people to provide reasons for their stated opinions should promote greater thoughtfulness both within and among participants. This thoughtfulness will translate into more respectful discourse among participants.

> H_1: *Requiring participants to give reasons to support their policy preferences will result in higher-quality deliberation.*

To my knowledge, this is the first study to use video transcriptions of experimental, in-person deliberative sessions to assess deliberative quality. I develop a deliberative quality coding scheme based on the Discourse Quality Index developed by Steenbergen et al. (2003). Using this coding scheme, I measure deliberative quality using the length of statements made, the reason-giving nature of demands or answers offered by participants, expressive agreement and disagreement, and interruptions. Overall, these measures are indicative of more or less "good" deliberation, allowing for a test of Hypothesis 1.

3.3   Reason-giving and Information Processing

Political psychologists have long sought to understand political information processing and its effects on political behavior. Some rational theorists argue that humans are Bayesian updaters, using new information to update their previously held thoughts in an efficient and unbiased manner (Gerber and Green, 1998). Others adhere to the theory of motivated reasoning, arguing that individuals are biased information processors seeking to confirm previously held beliefs and reject disconfirming information. I propose a theory rooted in motivated reasoning.

People may be motivated by any number of goals. Kunda (1990) divides the motivations behind information processing into two categories — those to arrive at an accurate conclusion, and those to reach a particular conclusion. Taber and Lodge (2006) argue that, though people do have accuracy-motivated goals, they rely upon their predispositions when reasoning, and that a tension always exists between the two. Ryfe (2005) highlights three factors that influence people towards accuracy-motivated thinking — or, as he puts it, deliberative thinking: "accountability, high stakes, and diversity" (57). This suggests that structural conditions can promote accuracy-motivated thinking.

Some argue that when people are primed for accuracy, whether in the real world or in an experimental setting, they will apply the cognitive efforts necessary in order to make an accurate decision, generally producing a deeper information search. Studies have found

that individuals primed for accuracy in an experimental setting are less affected by their previously held beliefs (Kruglanski and Freund, 1983), suggesting that priming individuals for accuracy may help to overcome biased reasoning. However, Lord, Lepper and Preston (1984) find that individuals primed in an experimental setting to consider information in an unbiased way (e.g., mimicking the role of jury or judge) actually become more polarized in their views.

Within political discussions, people process the information they receive from those with whom they are talking. When processing that information, there exists a bias whereby they will denigrate those opinions that do not confirm their previously held beliefs (Taber and Lodge, 2006). Is it possible to overcome participants' inclination towards partisan motivated reasoning within a deliberative session? I argue that reason-giving rules, whereby participants are required to provide the reasoning for their stated political opinions, promote accuracy-motivated reasoning. Previous experimental work has found that when people are required to justify their reasoning, they are more likely to evaluate information in an unbiased fashion (Tetlock, 1985). A key mechanism for this accuracy prime within the context of this project is the idea of social pressures (Asch, 1955). Within the deliberative session, with all participants playing by the same reason-giving rules, participants will feel compelled by the situation to provide what they feel are defensible arguments as opposed to falling back on politically-charged talking points for which they may be challenged.

> H_2: *Requiring participants to give reasons to support their policy preferences will promote accuracy-motivated reasoning.*

3.4   Experimental Design

In order to test these expectations, I organized experimental deliberative sessions with student populations in the spring and summer of 2018.[1]   Students were recruited to take

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[1] This experimental design was pre-registered with the Harvard Dataverse. The pre-analysis plan can be found at https://doi.org/10.7910/DVN/PODKJQ

part in a political discussion both in political science classes and through posters placed around campus.[2]   Participants used an online scheduling tool to sign-up for time slots, having been told that the total time commitment for the experiment would be about 1-1.5 hours. They were informed that the experiment would consist of two visits: the first a longer visit that would include the discussion, and the second a shorter visit. Participants were paid $5 for their participation in the first event, and offered an additional $5 to return to complete a follow-up survey. Sixty-one students ultimately took part in the experiment, and 47 completed the follow-up survey (77% retention rate).

Ten-to-18 students were scheduled for each time slot. When participants arrived for their scheduled session, they completed a pre-test survey measuring general political attitudes and discussion. Participants were then randomly assigned into one of two conditions — the reason-giving treatment group where participants were assigned to discussion groups with reason-giving rules, and an open discussion group without reason-giving rules. This resulted in a total of 10 discussion groups (5 in each condition), ranging in size from 5-7 participants in each group. The groups were then separated into two different rooms to begin the deliberative session.

Participants were not told the topic of the political discussion prior to the discussion itself. After the two groups were separated into their respective rooms to begin the deliberation, they were given discussion sheets with both instructions for the conversation and questions to spur conversation about gun policy in the United States.[3]   The discussion sheets for both groups included identical talking points and instructions, save for an additional instruction for the reason-giving group to provide reasons for their stated positions.[4]

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[2] A copy of the poster used for recruitment can be found in Appendix B.

[3] I selected gun control as the topic of conversation because I thought it would be an issue that participants would have opinions on, and is a political issue. I also expected there to be variance in the opinions held by students.

[4] To avoid any one talking point disproportionately affecting discussion patterns, the order of talking points was randomized for each participant's discussion sheet. The full text of the discussion sheet can be found in Appendix B.

Figure 3.1: Instructions Provided to Reason-Giving Treatment Group

> Throughout this discussion, we ask that you provide clear reasons for your stated positions. These reasons should be fact-based. The discussion facilitator will encourage all participants to explain the reasoning behind their stated positions.

Figure 3.1 presents the text of this additional instruction — the reason-giving treatment.[5]

As noted in the text of Figure 3.1, participants were told that reason-giving rules would be enforced by the facilitator. While the groups without reason-giving rules did have a person who provided the discussion sheet and gave participants the general idea of what was to happen in the discussion, the reason-giving treatment group's session was run by a trained deliberation facilitator who encouraged participants to follow the reason-giving rules; this acted as an enforcement mechanism to ensure compliance with the treatment. For both discussion groups, discussions were held for roughly 45 minutes. In order to assess the quality of the deliberative sessions, the sessions were recorded using 360 degree cameras that allowed for all participants to be recorded at the same time. After the discussion, participants completed a post-test survey measuring political views and participants' experience within the deliberative session. This survey also measured basic demographics of the group. Approximately two weeks after the sessions, participants were asked to return to complete a follow-up survey, receiving an additional $5 if they did return in person to complete the survey. Participants were also given the opportunity to complete the follow-up survey remotely with the understanding that they would not receive the additional $5.

It is important to note that in this research design, there is no true control condition. All of the participants took part in a deliberative session, thus all received a treatment. This was done because of the costs associated with organizing and conducting deliberative sessions and not wanting to assign one-third of the willing participants to a non-deliberative

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[5] In Appendix B, I include a table of descriptive measures by treatment condition as a check on randomization. Heterogeneity checks suggest successful randomization, as there are no significant differences between open discussion and reason-giving groups.

condition. However, this also means that I do not have a control condition to use for baseline measures. I use pre-test measures to establish participants' baseline opinions.

3.5 Results

I begin by assessing the quality of the deliberative experience using data from the coded transcriptions of the deliberative sessions. The purpose is to determine whether the two treatment conditions produced qualitatively different discussion. I then move to an analysis of the way in which reason-giving rules in a deliberative session affect opinion change.

3.5.1 Assessing the Deliberative Experience

To better understand the quality of the deliberative experience under both the open discussion treatment and the reason-giving treatment, I transcribed four of the videotaped sessions — two from each treatment conditions.[6] I developed a coding scheme based on the Discourse Quality Index (DQI) as developed by Steenbergen et al. (2003) (which is itself grounded in theories by Habermas (1991)). Specifically, while transcribing the videos, I recorded the speaker of each statement, the length of each statement, whether or not the statement included a demand (or an answer or suggestion), and the level of justification provided for any demand made. I also noted whether the statement was an interruption of another participant, and whether the speaker explicitly agreed with another participant. I conducted this transcription through a survey platform built in Qualtrics, and then converted the data to be in group-speaker-statement format for analysis. The full Deliberative Quality coding scheme can be found in Appendix B. These data are comprised of over three hours of transcribed video and 491 individual statements. The unit of analysis here is a single statement made by a participant.

I begin by considering the length of the individual statements made, as presented in

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[6] While ten sessions were held, and all 10 were recorded, the audio on several of the recordings was too poor to gather reliable transcriptions. In the future, I hope to transcribe more of the sessions.

Figure 3.2. Figure 3.2a shows the distribution of the lengths of statements in seconds by treatment condition. Figure 3.2b shows the mean statement lengths for each treatment condition, with bars indicating means and lines indicating a 95% confidence interval.

Figure 3.2: Lengths of Statements by Treatment Condition
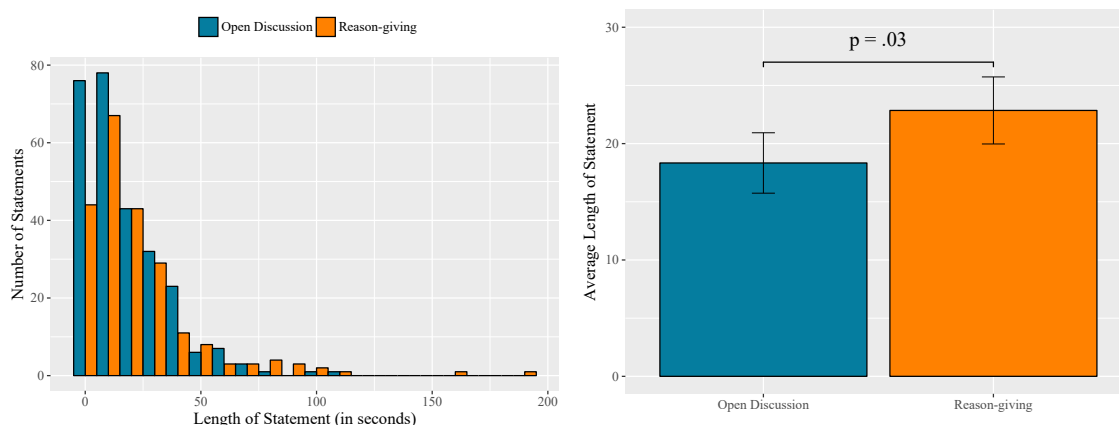
(a) Distribution of Statement Lengths

(b) Average Length of Statement

Here, we see that statements made in reason-giving groups were significantly longer than those in the open discussion groups; the mean increase in statement length is 4.6 seconds (t=2.21, p=.03). In reason-giving groups, the average statement was 22.9 seconds (SE=1.5), while the average statement in the open discussion groups was 18.3 seconds (SE=1.3). Participants using longer statements in a deliberative session is consistent with the idea that reason-giving rules caused participants to be more thoughtful about their arguments. However, length does not tell us anything about the content of their statements.

In order to assess the reason-giving rules in practice, I begin by coding each statement as either including a demand or not. A demand can be thought of as an answer to a problem, or a suggestion about what "should" be done. For instance, if a participant says, "we need to increase background checks" at any point in her statement, that statement would be coded as including a demand. Once a demand is identified, I then coded the level of justification

for that demand, as done in Steenbergen et al. (2003). The level of justification can take on four values: (1) No justification, (2) Inferior justification, (3) Complete justification, (4) Superior justification (4).

Statements were coded as having no justification if participants made a demand without connecting it to an outcome. For instance, simply stating, "we need to increase background checks" and nothing else would result in a coding of 1 for no justification. An inferior justification is when a participant connects a demand (X) to a desired result (Y) but does not offer a connection between the two. If a participant says, "we need to increase background checks to prevent gun deaths" without connecting those two things together, this would be coded as a 2 for inferior justification. A complete justification gives a demand, a desired result from that demand, and connects the two together. An example of a complete justification would be: "we need to increase background checks which will stop mentally-ill people from getting guns which will prevent gun deaths." A superior justification occurs when participants provide multiple reasons connecting their demand to the desired result, for example: "we need to increase background checks which will stop mentally-ill people from getting guns and help improve state records which will prevent gun deaths." Of the 491 statements in this dataset, 197 included some kind of a demand that was then coded for its level of justification. Figure 3.3 shows results from this coding by treatment.

Figure 3.3: Justification of Arguments by Treatment Condition
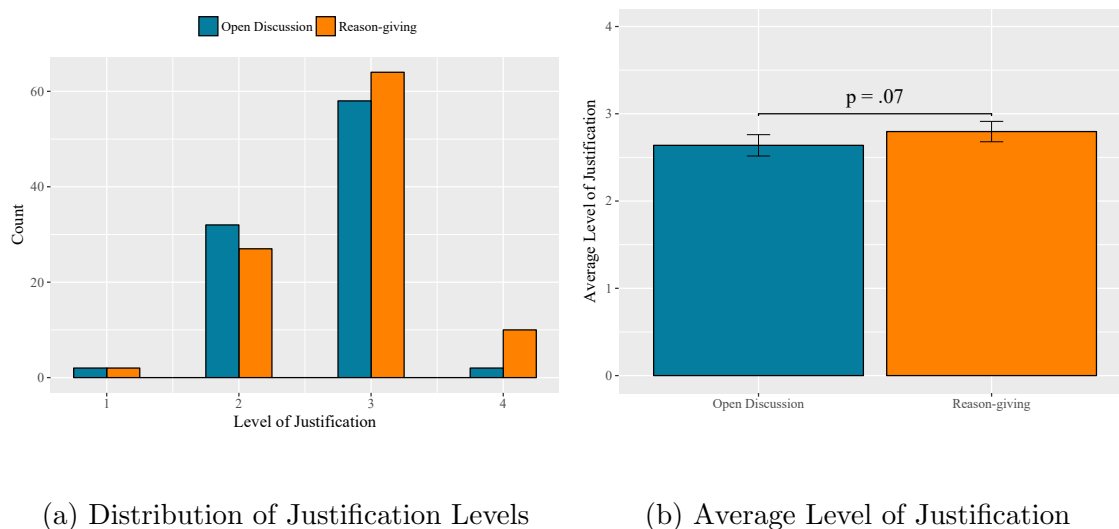
(a) Distribution of Justification Levels

(b) Average Level of Justification

Figure 3.3a shows the distribution of justifications made for demands by treatment condition. Here, we can see that the modal type of justification for both treatment conditions is a complete justification. Figure 3.3b shows the mean level of justification provided by treatment condition, with bars indicating means and lines indicating 95% confidence intervals. The mean score for participants in reason-giving conditions was 2.8 (SE=0.06), while the mean score for participants in open discussion groups was 2.6 (SE=0.06), for a mean difference of 0.02 (t=1.85, p=.07). Additionally, while only two statements within the open discussion groups were coded to have superior justification, there were 10 statements with superior justifications in the reason-giving conditions. Taken together, the previous two sets of results suggest that participants in reason-giving conditions were providing longer, more justified statements in support of their views.

I now consider how the two treatment groups varied in their patterns of conversation with others in the group. In coding the statements made, I noted whether the statements included explicit agreement or disagreement with another participant. Figure 3.4a shows the proportion of statements that included explicit agreement with another participant by

treatment condition.[7]   Reason-giving groups were characterized by greater amounts of agreement than the open discussion groups. Agreeable statements made up about 7% of the total statements made in reason-giving groups (SE=0.01) and 3% of statements in open discussion groups (SE=0.01), for a mean difference of 0.04 (t=1.91, p=0.06). Participants verbally indicating agreement suggests a more respectful tone among participants in reason-giving groups, as these statements are expressions of support of others' ideas.

Figure 3.4: Nature of Discussion by Treatment Condition

(a) Average Level of Agreement   (b) Average Level of Interruption
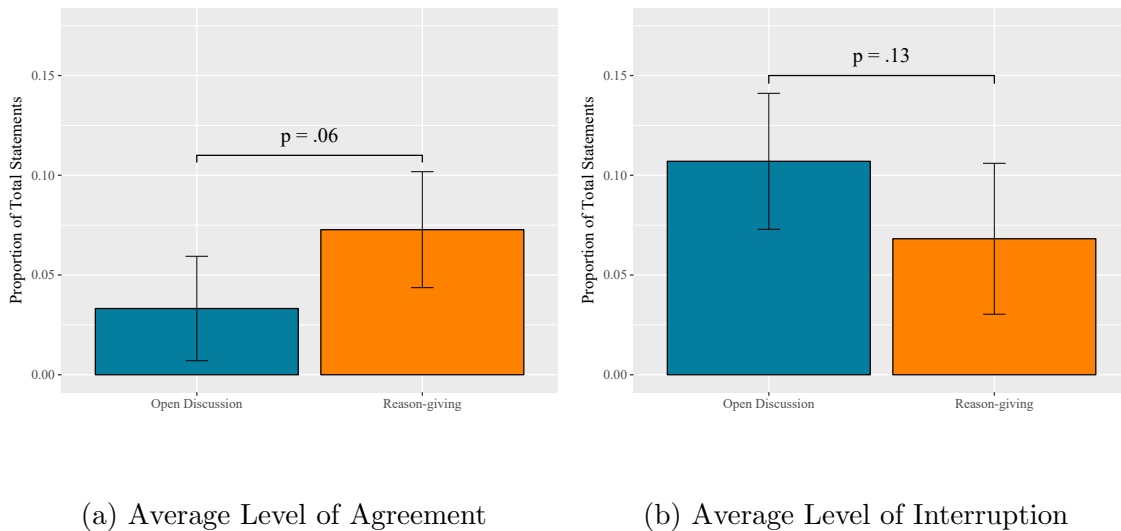
Habermas' discourse ethics include a primary focus on the idea of free participation whereby participants are able to offer their views without interruption (Habermas, 1991; Steenbergen et al., 2003). Figure 3.4b displays the proportion of statements that were interruptions of other speakers by treatment condition. Interruption was more common in the open discussion treatment groups than it was in the reason-giving groups. While interruptions made up about 11% of the statements made in open discussion groups (SE=0.02), they made up about only 7% of statements in reason-giving groups (SE=0.02) for a mean difference of 0.04 (t=1.53, p=.13). However, this difference does not reach conventional levels of

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[7] I only show results for agreement rather than disagreement, as explicit disagreement was very rare — only 4 statements out of 491.

statistical significance.

Overall, these results show support for Hypothesis 1. The quality of the discussion within each treatment condition were fundamentally different. As compared to open discussion, reason-giving resulted in deliberations characterized by longer statements with greater justification for arguments, more agreement, and less interruption. However, did these differences in the nature of conversations produce different outcomes for participants?

3.5.2   Reason-giving and Opinion Change

In Hypothesis 2, I argue that reason-giving rules should promote accuracy-motivated reasoning, helping to overcome biased information processing. One way to evaluate such information processing is to measure opinion change. Opinion polarization, whereby participants become more entrenched in their previously held views, would be evidence of directionally-motivated reasoning. However, if participants moderate their previously held opinions, also referred to as opinion convergence (Myers and Mendelberg, 2013), this would provide evidence for accuracy-motivated reasoning. To measure opinion change, I took the difference between participants' pre-test and follow-up survey responses to the following question: "On a scale of 0 to 100 where 0 means less strict and 100 means more strict, in general, do you feel that the laws covering the sale of firearms should be made less strict or more strict?"[8]   Figure 3.5 shows the distribution of opinion change for both treatment conditions, where negative values indicate opinion moderation and positive values indicate opinion polarization. The modal condition for both groups was no opinion change, indicated by the spike at 0 for both treatment groups.

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[8] Participants were also asked this question in the post-test survey that was taken immediately after the deliberative session. However, I am using the follow-up measure to measure opinion change to avoid pretest sensitization and a consistency bias whereby participants provide the same answer pre- and post-test (Lana, 2009).

Figure 3.5: Distribution of Opinion Change by Treatment
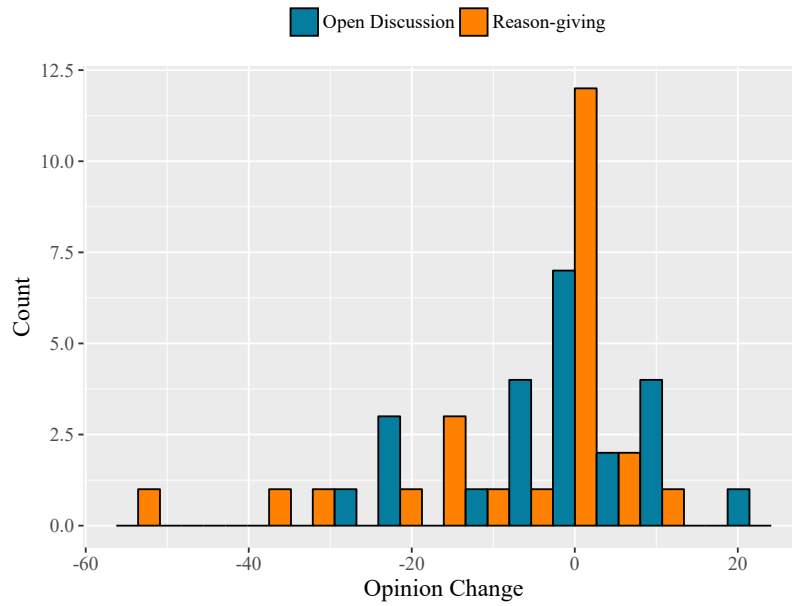
I then broke that variable into two groups: those whose opinion moderated and those whose opinion polarized. Included in both measures are those whose opinions did not change (the 0 value for both). While both of these variables could theoretically range from 0 to 100, the actual ranges are from 0 to 55 and 0 to 20 for moderation and polarization respectively. Figure 3.6 displays opinion moderation and polarization by treatment condition.

Figure 3.6: Opinion Change by Treatment Condition

(a) Opinion Moderation

(b) Opinion Polarization
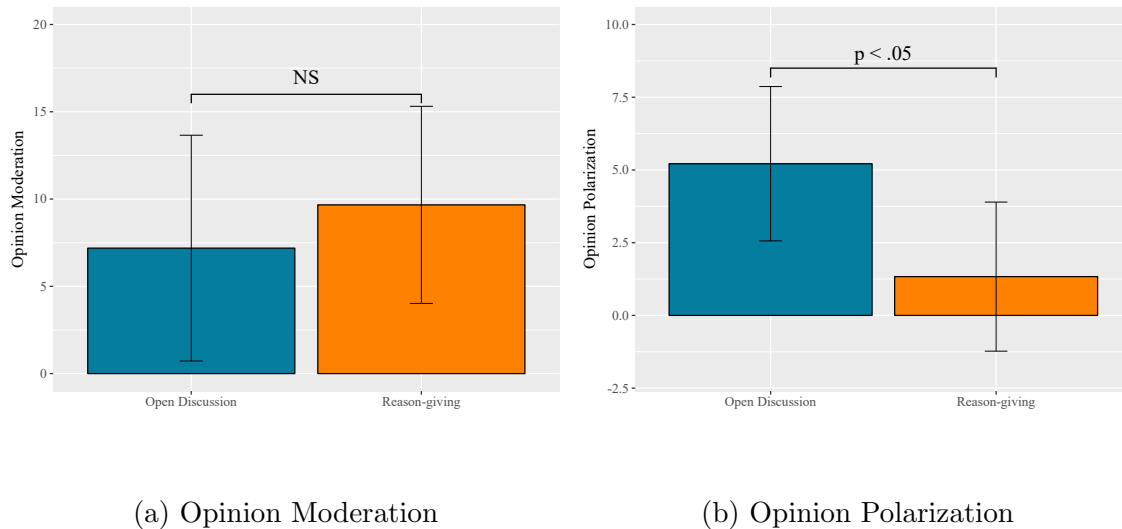
Figure 3.6a shows the mean levels of opinion moderation for both treatment conditions, with bars indicating means and lines indicating 95% confidence intervals. Participants in reason-giving groups reported higher levels of opinion moderation than participants in open discussion groups. On average, for participants in reason-giving groups whose opinion on gun laws moderated, there was a 9.7 shift in opinion (SE=2.8). For those in open discussion groups whose opinion on gun laws moderated, there was a 7.2 shift in opinion (SE=3.2). This difference between treatment conditions does not reach statistical significance. Figure 3.6b shows the mean levels of opinion polarization for both treatment conditions. Of those whose opinions polarized, participants in the open discussion group's opinions polarized more than those in reason giving groups. For those in open discussion groups whose opinions polarized, on average, their opinions shifted by 5.2 (SE=1.3); for those in reason-giving groups, their opinions shifted by 1.3 (SE=1.2). This difference is statistically significant (t=2.11, p=0.05). These findings suggest that reason-giving rules promote accuracy-motivated reasoning as measured by opinion moderation, which provides evidence in support of Hypothesis 2.

Finally, I consider whether reason-giving rules promoted a greater information search among participants when compared to open discussion. An information search is indicative

of accuracy-motivated reasoning, providing evidence for the mechanism underlying opinion change. In the follow-up survey, participants were asked, "Since the discussion session you attended, have you done any additional research on gun policy?" Figure 3.7 shows the proportion of participants who reported conducting additional research on gun policy. Here, we see that participants in reason-giving groups were more likely to report conducting additional research after the deliberative session. About 39% of participants in reason-giving groups reported doing additional research (SE=0.1), while only about 23% of participants in open discussion groups reported doing the same (SE=0.1). Though this difference is not statistically significant (t=1.18, p=.24), it is consistent with the hypothesis that reason-giving promotes accuracy-motivated reasoning and would thus generate a greater information search among participants.

Figure 3.7: Post-Deliberation Information Search by Treatment
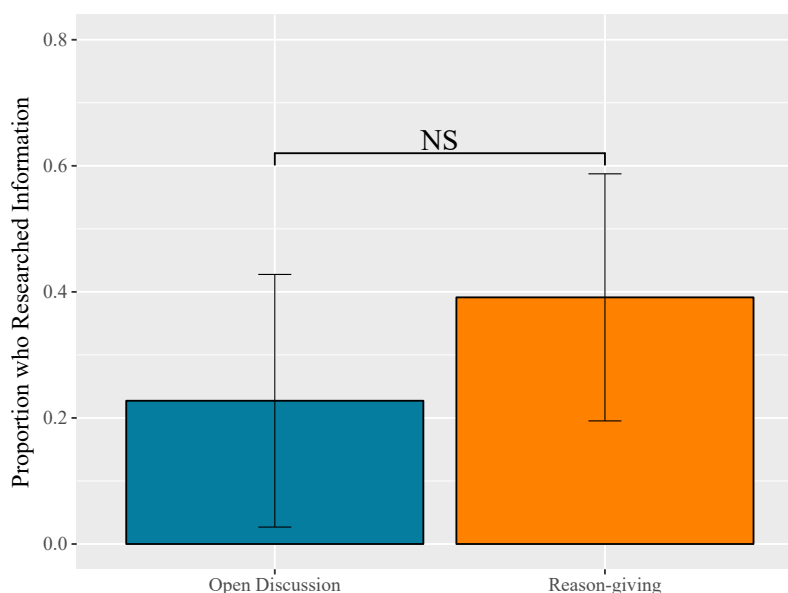
Taken together, the results presented in this section suggest provide evidence for Hypothesis 2: reason-giving rules promoted accuracy-motivated reasoning over directionally-motivated reasoning. Participants in those conditions were more likely to experience opinion

moderation over opinion polarization, and were more likely to report conducting an additional information search after the deliberative session.

3.6   Discussion

While the set of findings presented in this chapter focused on understanding quality deliberation and its outcomes, the main takeaway is that reason-giving rules affect deliberative quality. Not only do reason-giving rules affect the ways in which participants experience a deliberative session — making it more thoughtful, reasoned, consensual, and equal — but they also affect participants' opinions and behaviors post-deliberation. This provides empirical support for the idea that reason-giving is a fundamental requirement for quality deliberation.

In the analysis of deliberative quality, I used a statement-level analysis. In future iterations of this project, I plan to incorporate a networks perspective to better understand patterns of communication within the discussion groups. For example, I plan to look at patterns of interruptions and expressions of agreement among individual participants, linking data on the individual participants to their statements. Additionally, I will look at additional aspects of the group composition that may affect the quality and outcomes of deliberation. This will provide a better understanding of the group dynamics that may affect deliberative quality.

I also plan to conduct various content analyses on the actual transcription of participants' statements. I will use sentiment analysis to better understand the nature of the conversations, testing whether reason-giving groups were more conciliatory in their discourse. I will also use the transcriptions to better explore the complexity of arguments, testing not only the quality of reasons given but also the sophistication of the argumentation.

One limitation of this study, in regards to opinion change, is that it is unable to test the durability of opinion change. Here, opinion change is measured about 2 weeks after a deliberative session. How long do those shifts in opinions last? Is opinion moderation

more or less durable than opinion polarization? With only one measure of post-deliberation opinion change, it is impossible to gauge its durability. In order to address these questions, future work should conduct follow-up surveys at several points in time.

Future work should also consider how people use the information they gain from deliberative experiences, or how it shapes their future behavior. While these results do suggest that deliberation affects people's post-deliberation opinions, if those shifts in opinion do not result in any shifts in behavior, their importance may be questioned. In Chapter 4, I look at the spillover effects of deliberation as measured by post-deliberation discussion as one measure of behavior change. Other post-deliberation outcomes that should be considered include participant attempts at persuasion and shifts in voting behavior or participation more broadly.

3.7   Conclusion

In this chapter, I have demonstrated that rules governing deliberative sessions have consequences for deliberative quality and opinion change. Using an experimental manipulation of deliberative sessions, I have placed an oft-cited requirement of deliberation — reason-giving — under empirical scrutiny and found support for the claims of deliberative theorists. Reason-giving within a deliberative session results in more thoughtful, reasoned, consensual, and equal discourse. In turn, reason-giving sessions promote opinion moderation over polarization, and encourage an information search among deliberative participants.

These findings inform several literatures in political science. First, I find support for theories advanced by deliberative democrats regarding deliberative quality. This speaks to theory, but also deliberative practitioners who seek best practices for deliberative institutions. Second, I make a connection between the quality of political discussions and the outcomes from those discussions, providing insight into the field of political communication. Third, I provide evidence that political discussions can be designed so as to promote accuracy-motivated reasoning over biased, directionally-motivated reasoning, something important to

the field of political psychology. While there are still many variations of deliberative design that should be empirically tested, as well as tests of the way in which various deliberative structures interact with each other, this work advances the field of deliberative democracy by linking the theoretical and empirical divide within the deliberative field. This path of study should continue, as the divide between theoretical and empirical work is not only unnecessary but detrimental to advancing the field. Instead, development and testing of micro-theories of deliberation, as recommended by more empirically-minded scholars working in this area (Mutz, 2006; Neblo, 2015), provides a direction forward for deliberation research.

Chapter 4

Network Spillover Effects from Deliberative Sessions

Formal deliberation is costly and it is unreasonable to expect full citizenry participation in deliberative efforts. However, even those who do not participate in a deliberative session may experience some of its benefits through their social networks. Building on work highlighting the multiplier effects of deliberative experiences, I consider how deliberative sessions may be designed to encourage those effects. Specifically, I look at how a trained facilitator encourages spillover effects. A trained facilitator helps to monitor the conversation for equal participation and encourages participants to provide reasons for their stated opinions. I expect that a facilitator promotes increases in political interest and knowledge for a participant, and that this in turn generates greater political discussion within the participant's social network. I test this expectation using data collected from experimental deliberative sessions varying the use of a trained facilitator. This project helps to show that, not only do multiplier effects exist, but deliberative sessions can be designed in ways to promote greater spillover. This helps to overcome some of the limitations of scale inherent to deliberative democracy efforts.

4.1   Introduction

While scholars promote deliberation as a means to reinvigorate democracy with higher quality public voice and greater support for public policies (Barber, 1984; Fishkin, 1991; Gutmann and Thompson, 2004; Fung, 2004), others caution against what they see as overly optimistic claims. Some argue that people do not, in fact, want any greater involvement in the political process and would prefer experts to make decisions about policy on their behalf (Hibbing and Theiss-Morse, 2002, but see Neblo et al. (2010)). Others note that increases in tolerance resulting from exposure to disagreement may also lead to decreased participation as a result of greater attitude ambivalence (Mutz, 2006). An emphasis on consensus-building within a deliberative setting may bury real conflicts that ultimately result in dissatisfaction with policy outcomes (Karpowitz and Mansbridge, 2005). Many question the capabilities of the average citizen to knowledgeably and rationally engage with political issues (Schumpeter, 1942).

A major critique of deliberative theory focuses on the feasibility of scaling of deliberative efforts. Jacobs, Cook and Carpini (2009) argue that one of the fundamental conditions of effective deliberation is universalism, wherein everyone affected by a particular decision takes part in the deliberation about that decision. However, based on the high cost of participation in deliberative sessions, the goal of universalism is arguably unattainable. Complicating this matter is the fact that participatory skills are unevenly distributed across the population, with those of higher socioeconomic status being more likely to possess the necessary civic skills that often preclude participation (Verba, Schlozman and Brady, 1995). As such, some argue that uneven participation in deliberation through self-selection may exacerbate inequalities in political representation, where those opinions heard and the benefits gained in a deliberative setting are skewed toward the elite (Sanders, 1997). This calls into question the true democratic nature (or lack thereof) of deliberation in practice.

If it is unreasonable to expect full citizenry participation in deliberative democracy

efforts, are there ways to structure deliberation so as to scale up its proposed benefits? Recent work considers the idea of a multiplier effect from individuals' participation in a deliberative event (Lazer et al., 2015). The multiplier effect occurs when the benefits of taking part in a deliberative event are transmitted through discussion to people who did not attend the event. Lazer et al. (2015) find support for a multiplier effect where one person's participation in a deliberative event spurred conversation within their personal discussant network, and that conversation was specific to the issues discussed during the deliberation. Additionally, they find that this effect is not conditioned by participants' personal characteristics nor dyadic characteristics between participant and discussant. Taken together, these results suggest that it is possible to scale up the effects of deliberation, and that the spillover effects of deliberative events are not isolated to certain demographic groups.

Here, I build on this finding to consider how deliberative events may be structured so as to encourage multiplier effects. Following a two-step information flow (Katz and Lazarsfeld, 1955), information is first received by a participant in a deliberative session and then that participant shares that information with their interpersonal discussant network. Thus, I argue that there is a direct effect of the experience of deliberation resulting in greater discussion within participants' discussion networks. I also expect that this multiplier effect will be stronger when deliberative sessions require reason-giving, whereby participants are encouraged to give reasons for their stated positions, as this will likely expose participants to greater amounts of information to share with their interpersonal discussant networks. I then move to consider two ways in which group dynamics condition deliberation's effects on future discussion. First, I look at the way in which disagreement within the deliberative session affects future discussion, arguing that participants in more disagreeable groups will be more likely to discuss the experience than those in more agreeable groups (as the disagreeable groups are likely to convey more novel information for the individual participant). I then look at the way in which disagreement within one's own interpersonal discussion network affects the likelihood of discussing the deliberative session with those in the network. I test

these expectations using an experimental design that randomizes both the reason-giving rules of the discussion as well as the composition of the groups. I find support for the multiplier effect.

4.2   Deliberation and Problems of Scale

Since the deliberative turn of the late 20th century (Dryzek, 2000), deliberative democracy has grown both as a theoretical field and in practice. Some estimates suggest that roughly 25% of Americans take part in in-person meetings about public issues (Jacobs, Cook and Carpini, 2009). Previous work finds that broad swaths of the American public show interest in taking part in deliberative events, and a recent update to that work finds that that interest is sustained and remains high (Neblo et al., 2010; Neblo, Esterling and Lazer, 2018). Despite this increased study of and general interest in deliberation, the problem of scale remains. If only a minority of the population takes part in deliberative opportunities, deliberative democratic theory is only applicable to a minority segment of political activity (Levine, Fung and Gastil, 2005). However, deliberative actions do not take place in a vacuum; individual acts of deliberation exist in a broader democratic system.

Deliberative democratic theory promotes thinking of any single deliberative act as part of a larger deliberative system (Parkinson and Mansbridge, 2012). The systemic view of deliberation acknowledges that "it is impossible for everyone — or representatives of everyone — to gather together in a single room to hear all of the proposals for action and inaction and reason together to reach a joint conclusion" (Parkinson, 2018, 433). Instead, these theories conceptualize of a larger deliberative system whereby deliberative ideals are distributed throughout society and influence the way in which decisions are made. Rather than focusing only on what happens during a deliberative event, systems scholars consider what happens *after* a deliberative event. Systems scholars are often focused on the ways in which deliberation influences decision making institutions. Less considered, however, is what individuals who have taken part in a deliberative event do with the informational gains

received during that event. Here, I focus on the ways in which the effects of an individual's participation in a deliberative event reverberate through their social network.

People's political behavior is influenced by their social networks (Huckfeldt et al., 1995; McClurg, 2003; Sokhey and Djupe, 2011; Sokhey and McClurg, 2012; Sinclair, 2012). Additionally, people are influenced by political information provided by personal discussants (Ryan, 2013). As such, if participants in a deliberative event share information received during the event with their discussant network, deliberative efforts will have a multiplier effect whereby the benefits of deliberation are spread to those who did not take part in the actual event. This helps to alleviate problems of scale, as the benefits extolled by deliberative democrats need not be isolated within the participants — even those who do not participate in deliberative events may receive the benefits gained from those events. This is a key way in which to address problems of scale regarding deliberative efforts.

4.2.1   Deliberation and the Multiplier Effect

While there is strong evidence supporting the idea that deliberation has positive direct effects on knowledge acquisition and tolerance for those who participate in deliberation, are there secondary effects generated from an individual's participation? Here, I focus on spillover effects of deliberation as measured by participants' post-deliberation interpersonal discussion. I argue that formal deliberative events influence larger patterns of political discussion and public opinion through a multiplier effect. A multiplier effect occurs when the effects of a deliberative opportunity are reproduced within one's discussion network. When people take part in a deliberative session, they learn more about the subject discussed and subsequently discuss the issue with people in their discussion networks — that is, the people with whom they regularly discuss politics. In this way, deliberative discussions can affect the way people talk about politics.

Key to this idea is that people are sharing information with their discussant networks. Here, we can think about the sharing of political information as following the two-step

flow (Katz and Lazarsfeld, 1955). The two-step flow is usually discussed in terms of the acquisition of information through media consumption, but the same idea applies here. During deliberation, people learn novel information and share that information with others in their discussant networks. Though their discussants did not attend the deliberative session, they are gaining information through this communication. As such, information gains are not isolated to those who take part in deliberative sessions, but are multiplied through participants' discussion network. This is the basis for my first expectation:

> H_1: *Multiplier Effect: Participants in a deliberative session will discuss the session with people in their interpersonal discussion networks, creating a multiplier effect.*

Previous work finds support for the multiplier effect (Lazer et al., 2015). Additionally, studies of the Oregon Citizens' Initiative Review suggests that the public is accepting of the information resulting from deliberative efforts (Gastil, Richards and Knobloch, 2014). I now move to consider structural factors that may condition the multiplier effect.

4.2.2   Reason-giving and the Multiplier Effect

If the benefits of deliberation can be scaled up through a multiplier effect, what factors affect the magnitude of the multiplier effect? In answering this question, it is necessary to consider how and why people discuss political issues with others in their interpersonal discussion networks. People may share information with their discussant network to persuade (Ryan, 2013), or for simply sociability reasons (Lyons and Sokhey, 2014). While recent work finds that people, in general, find political discussion distasteful (Klar, Krupnikov and Ryan, 2018), others find that, even if political discussion is considered distasteful, it is quite common (Jacobs, Cook and Carpini, 2009).

Rather than focus on individual-level characteristics that may make one more or less likely to discuss a deliberative event with others, I focus on structural factors that may promote or impede a multiplier effect. Specifically, I consider how reason-giving rules, whereby

participants in a deliberative session are required to provide a reason for their stated opinions, condition the multiplier effect. Scholars of deliberation have argued that reason-giving is really at the core of deliberation itself (Gutmann and Thompson, 2004). Here, I argue that reason-giving will expose participants to greater amounts of novel information during the deliberative session. Because other participants are required to provide more information about their views, everyone in the group will learn more. Participants in deliberative sessions are then armed with greater amounts of information to share with their personal discussants. This leads to my second expectation:

> H_2: *Reason-giving: Participants will be more likely to discuss the deliberative session with people in their interpersonal discussion networks if the session requires reason-giving.*

4.2.3   Disagreement and the Multiplier Effect

Exposure to disagreeable opinions is of key interest to scholars of political discussion (Mutz, 2006; Klofstad, Sokhey and McClurg, 2013; Hutchens et al., 2018). Not only does exposure to disagreeable points of view affect individuals' knowledge acquisition, but people's personal discussant network may influence the ways in which people process disagreeable information. Here, I consider how disagreement may affect the multiplier effect of deliberation.

4.2.3.1   Conditional Effect of Discussion Group Disagreement

First, I argue that the effect of reason-giving on post-deliberation discussion will be conditional on the level of disagreement encountered within the discussion group. However, I have competing expectations for what the conditional effect will be. Consistent with the theory of the two-step flow of information, people in more disagreeable groups may gain additional pieces of information that they then share in their discussion networks. Under this theory, we would expect to see the effect of reason-giving on post-deliberation discussion

to be stronger for those in more disagreeable discussion groups. However, this exposure to greater amounts of disagreeable may cause participants to become more ambivalent, which in turn could drive down their future discussion (Mutz, 2006). Thus, we may expect that the effect of reason-giving on post-deliberation discussion to be negative under more disagreeable conditions. While there are theoretical reasons to expect both a positive and a negative conditional effect, I do expect to find a conditional relationship between reason-giving and group-level disagreement on post-deliberation discussion.

> H_{3A}: *Discussion Group Disagreement: The effect of reason-giving rules on future discussion is conditional on the level of disagreement within the discussion group composition.*

4.2.3.2   Conditional Effect of Personal Network Disagreement

I also expect the effect of reason-giving to be conditional on the level of disagreement in one's personal discussant network. People reside in interpersonal discussion networks that can be described as more or less disagreeable. I argue that the effect of reason-giving rules will be more pronounced for those who reside in more disagreeable discussion networks. I propose two potential mechanisms behind this effect. In reason-giving conditions, participants may become more tolerant of the views of those they disagree with as a result of the exposure to fact-based reasons behind those views. Those participants will then return to their personal discussion networks and discuss those issues with greater understanding. In other words, people become more understanding of the other side and share that with those with whom they discuss politics. On the other hand, participants in reason-giving conditions may also feel better informed on the issue, and armed with new facts, return to their discussion network and attempt to persuade those disagreeable discussants to their side. Overall, I expect a conditional relationship whereby the effect of reason-giving on post-deliberation discussion is greater for those who reside in more disagreeable personal discussant networks.

> H_{3B}: *Network Disagreement: The effect of reason-giving rules on future*

> *discussion is conditional on the level of disagreement within ones personal discussant network.*

4.3   Experimental Design

In order to test these expectations, I use data collected from the experimental deliberative sessions with the student population, held in the spring and summer of 2018. When participants arrived for their scheduled session, they completed a pre-test survey measuring general political attitudes and discussion. Specifically, participants were given an ego-net discussion battery where they were asked to name three discussants with whom they regularly discuss government and politics, and were asked questions about each of those discussants. They were also asked how many additional people they discuss these things with in an average week.[1]   Participants were then randomly assigned into one of two conditions — the reason-giving treatment group where participants assigned to discussion groups with reason-giving rules, and an open discussion group without reason-giving rules. This resulted in a total of 10 discussion groups (5 in each condition), ranging in size from 5-7 participants in each group. The groups were then separated into two different rooms to begin the deliberative session.

For both discussion groups, discussions were held for roughly 45 minutes. After the discussion, participants completed a post-test survey measuring political views and participants' experience within the deliberative session. This survey also measured basic demographics of the group. Approximately two weeks after the sessions, participants were asked to return to complete a follow-up survey, receiving an additional $5 if they did return in person to complete the survey. Participants were also given the opportunity to complete the follow-up survey remotely with the understanding that they would not receive the additional $5. As noted in the previous chapter, 47 of the students who took part in the experiment completed the follow-up survey (77% retention rate).

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[1] The full text of survey questions can be found in Appendix C.

The follow-up survey asked participants to report on their political discussions within their immediate personal discussant network as well as additional discussion partners. Specifically, participants were asked to name those with whom they discuss politics with regularly and were then asked specific questions regarding the content of their recent discussions with those people, and then were asked if they discussed those issues with any other people.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, in this experimental design, there is no true control condition. All of the participants took part in a deliberative session and received a treatment. This was done because of the costs associated with organizing and conducting deliberative sessions and not wanting to assign one-third of the willing participants to a non-deliberative condition. Instead, I use pre-test measures to establish participants' baseline discussion patterns.

4.4   Results

I present the results in three sections. First, I assess the direct multiplier effect whereby participants in a deliberative session discuss the related issue within their personal discussant networks post-deliberation. Second, I examine whether reason-giving rules within the deliberative session promote the multiplier effect. Third, I look at the conditional effect of both discussion-group disagreement and personal discussant network disagreement on post-deliberation discussion.

4.4.1   Deliberation and the Multiplier Effect

I first assess whether the experience of deliberation had a multiplier effect as measured by post-deliberation discussion within participants' discussion networks. In the follow-up survey, participants were asked the following of each of their name-generated egonet discussants: "Since the session you attended, have you talked with this person about gun rights/gun control?" Figure 4.1 displays the distribution of network averages of post-deliberation discussion for all participants.

Figure 4.1: Post-Deliberation Network Discussion on Gun Rights/Gun Control
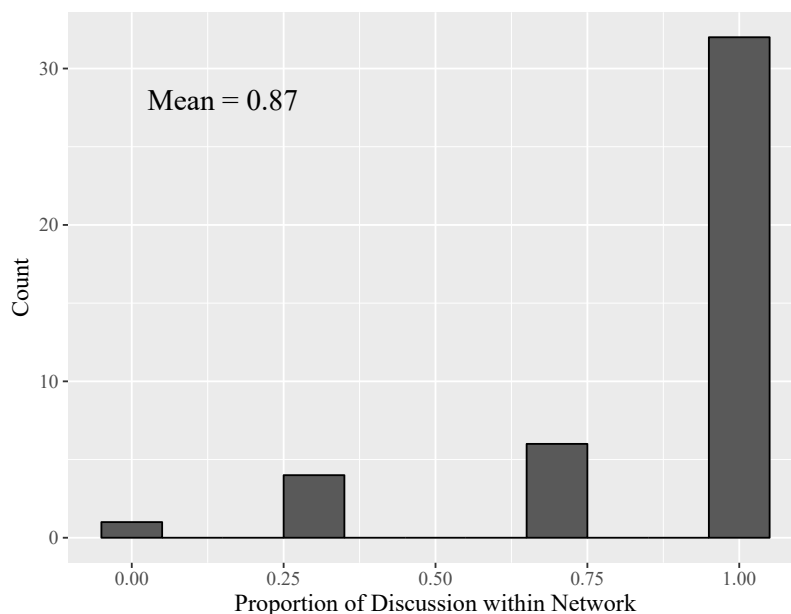
Post-deliberation, participants reported discussing gun policy with 2.6 discussants for a network average of 0.87 (SE=0.04).[2] To account for the fact that the name-generated networks are right-censored at three, participants were also asked in the follow-up survey: "Aside from anyone you named, since the discussion session you attended, about how many people have you talked with about gun laws?" On average, participants reported discussing gun laws with an additional 3.59 people (SE=0.41).

While these findings support the idea of a multiplier effect whereby participants were discussing gun policy post-deliberation, the lack of a control group means that I cannot estimate a treatment effect. In order to better understand the effect, I compare post-deliberation discussion on gun policy to post-deliberation discussion of other issues. Participants were asked about post-deliberation discussion within their networks on two other issues: the Me Too movement and the 2018 election. Figures 4.2a and 4.2b display the distributions of

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[2] Network averages were created by taking the number of discussants with whom participants discussed gun policy and dividing by the total number of discussants named. The network average accounts for the fact that some participants reported information on fewer than three discussants. Thus, the average allows for a valid proportion of discussants named.

network averages of post-deliberation discussion on the Me Too movement and the 2018 election respectively.

Figure 4.2: Post-Deliberation Discussion of Other Issues

(a) Me Too Movement
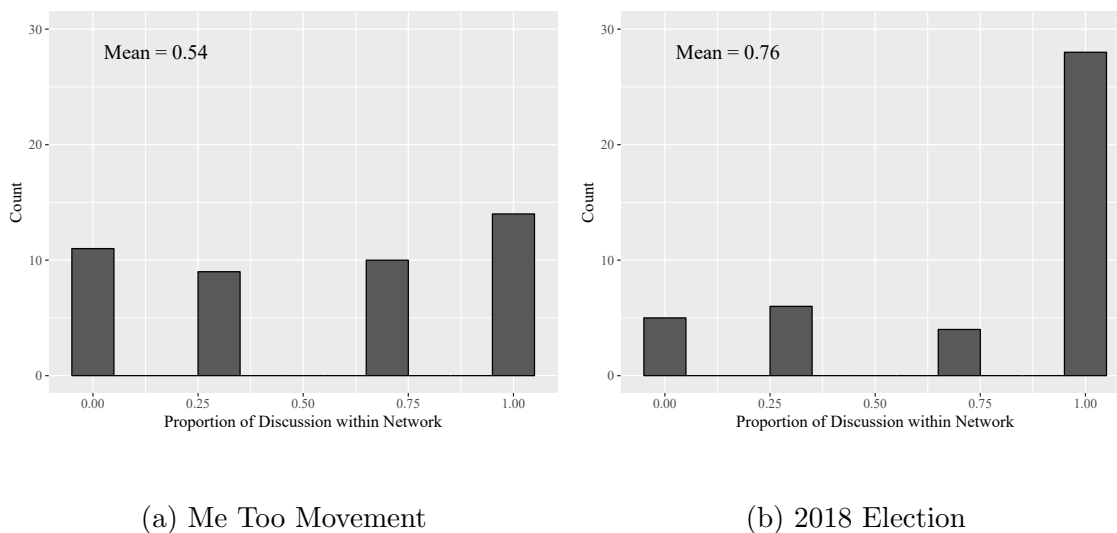
(b) 2018 Election

Participants reported higher levels of post-deliberation discussion of gun policy than both the Me Too movement and the 2018 election. Participants reported discussing the Me Too movement and the 2018 election with 0.54 and 0.76 of their discussant networks respectively. This demonstrates that post-deliberation discussion was related to the policy issue discussed in the sessions, and even outpaced more general discussion about political issues as measured by discussion on the 2018 election.[3] Overall, these results suggest that deliberative events do produce a multiplier effect through participants' future discussion on relevant topics.

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[3] In the appendix, I gauge public interest in these three issues using Google Trends data for the following: the topic area "gun control", the search term "Me Too", and the search term "2018 election". I look at search data for these from April 15, 2018, to July 22, 2018. For each of these three areas, the average normalized search value during this time period was 10.72, 4.60, and 17.58 respectively. The full time series of these trends can be found in the appendix.

4.4.2 Reason-giving and the Multiplier Effect

I now consider the relationship between reason-giving rules and the multiplier effect. In hypothesis 2, I argue that participants in the reason-giving condition will discuss gun policy more because they were exposed to greater amounts of new information to share with their discussants. Figure 4.3a shows network averages for post-deliberation discussion on gun policy, broken down by treatment condition. Contrary to expectations, I find that participants given the open discussion treatment reported higher levels of post-deliberation discussion within their discussion networks than those in the reason-giving condition. On average, participants in open discussion groups reported discussing gun policy with 0.95 of their discussion networks, while participants in reason-giving groups reported discussing gun policy with 0.78 of their discussion networks. This difference is statistically significant (t=2.38, p=0.02).

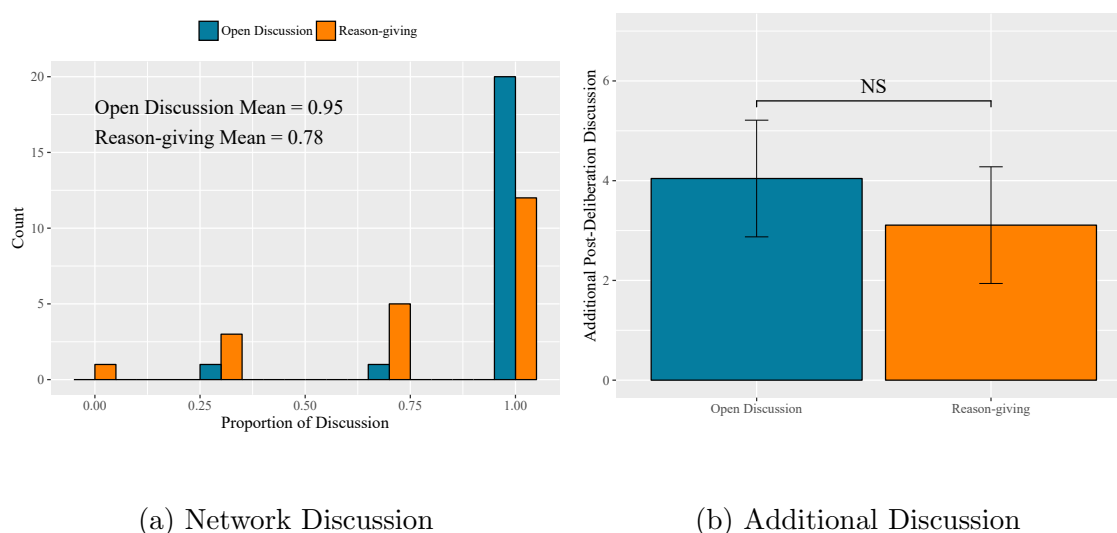Figure 4.3: Post-Deliberation Discussion of Gun Rights/Gun Control by Treatment Condition

(a) Network Discussion   (b) Additional Discussion

Figure 4.3b shows the additional number of people with whom participants reported

discussing gun policy by treatment condition.[4]   Again, participants in open discussion groups reported higher amounts of post-deliberation discussion with additional people (mean=4.02, SE=0.61) than those in reason-giving groups (mean=3.12, SE=0.61). However, this difference is not statistically significant.

Taken together, these results suggest that participants in open discussion groups were more likely to discuss gun policy with others than those in reason-giving groups after the deliberative sessions. This finding is consistent with multiple possibilities. For instance, it may be that open discussion facilitated greater post-deliberation discussion, or reason-giving impeded post-deliberation discussion. In order to get a better understanding of this finding, I consider characteristics of both the discussion groups and participants' discussant networks and how those may affect post-deliberation discussion.

4.4.3   Disagreement and the Multiplier Effect

In the remainder of this chapter, I consider the ways in which disagreement affects deliberation's multiplier effect as measured by post-deliberation discussion. Exposure to disagreeable information is a fundamental aspect of not only deliberation but political communication more broadly (Huckfeldt, Johnson and Sprague, 2004; Klofstad, Sokhey and McClurg, 2013). Here, I consider how exposure to disagreement — both in a deliberative setting and within one's personal discussant network — affects broader patterns of political discussion. I measure discussion group disagreement by averaging the individual group member's responses to the following question: "On a scale of 0 to 100 where 0 means less strict and 100 means more strict, in general, do you feel that the laws covering the sale of firearms should be made less strict or more strict?" For each participant, group level disagreement is calculated by differencing the participant's response to this question and the group-level average. Figure 4.4a shows the distribution of this variable by each treatment

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[4] A linear model is used rather than a count model because some respondents reported discussing gun policy with half values — for example, "3-4 people". This response was recorded as 3.5.

condition. Personal discussion network disagreement is measured using a pre-test network battery question: "How often do you disagree with this person about politics and public affairs? (0=Rarely, 1=Sometimes, 2=Often)." This response is averaged across the total named discussants for a network average that ranges from 0-2. Figure 4.4b displays the distribution of this variable by each treatment condition.

Figure 4.4: Distributions of Discussion Group and Discussant Network Disagreement

(a) Discussion Group Disagreement

(b) Discussant Network Disagreement
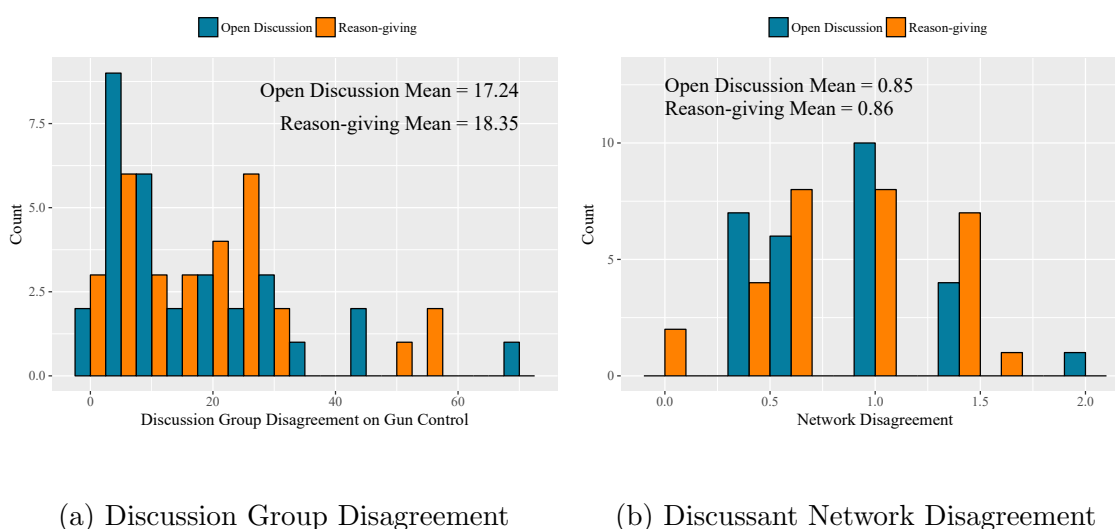
4.4.3.1 Conditional Effect of Discussion Group Disagreement

In Hypothesis 3A, I argue that the effect of reason-giving rules on post-deliebration discussion may be conditional on the level of disagreement encountered in the deliberative session. I offer competing expectations for the nature of that conditional effect. Reason-giving should expose participants to greater amounts of novel information, and this effect should be strongest when participants are in more disagreeable groups. Based on the idea of the two-step information flow, we would expect that reason-giving and disagreement would interact to produce the greatest amount of exposure to novel information that participants would subsequently share with others. However, if exposure to disagreeable information increases ambivalence in the minds of the participants, they may become less likely to discuss

the issue with others.

Figure 4.5: Conditional Effect of Discussion Group Disagreement on Post-Deliberation Discussion

Figure 4.5 shows the conditional effect of discussion group-level disagreement on post-deliberation discussion for each treatment condition, with lines indicating linear estimates and shading covering 90% confidence levels. Contrary to expectations, I do not find evidence of a conditional effect of group-level disagreement While there is some evidence of a negative conditional effect of discussion group-level disagreement on reason-giving's effect on post-deliberation discussion, the effect does not reach conventional levels of statistical significance. This finding, or lack thereof, is consistent with several possibilities. The slight negative effect of discussion-group disagreement for reason-giving groups is consistent with the idea that exposure to disagreement increases ambivalence and in turn drives down discussion. However, the generally null results indicate that there is not a conditional effect of group-level disagreement.

4.4.3.2   Conditional Effect of Personal Network Disagreement

In Hypothesis 3B, I argue that the effect of reason-giving rules on post-deliberation discussion will be conditional on the level of disagreement within the participants' personal discussion networks. Reason-giving should expose participants to greater amounts of novel information, and this effect should be strongest when participants are in more disagreeable groups. Based on the idea of the two-step information flow, we would expect that reason-giving and disagreement would interact to produce the greatest amount of exposure to novel information that participants would subsequently share with others in disagreeable networks precisely because it is novel information to share with those disagreea people.

Figure 4.6: Conditional Effect of Discussant Network Disagreement on Post-Deliberation Discussion
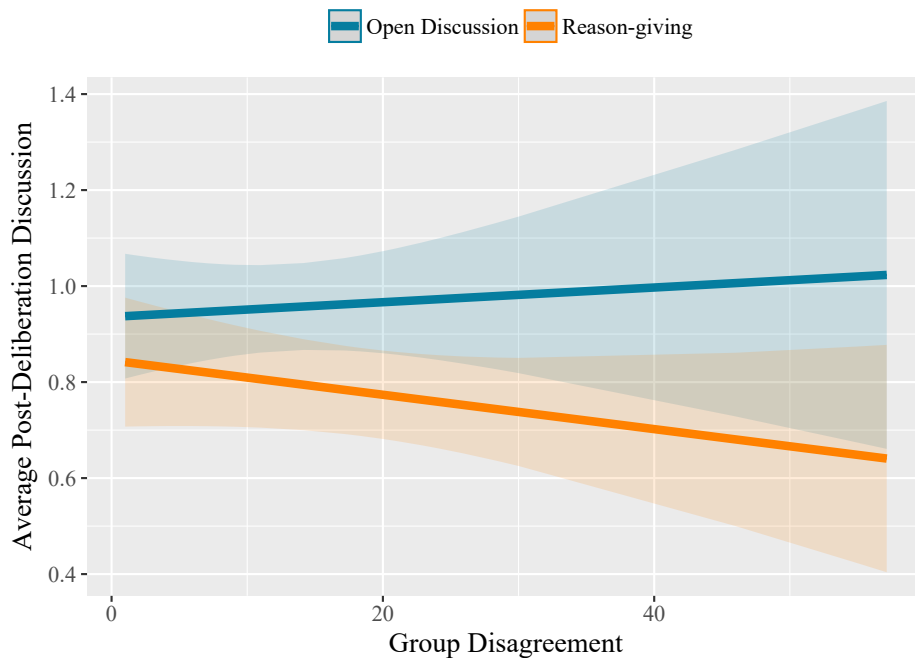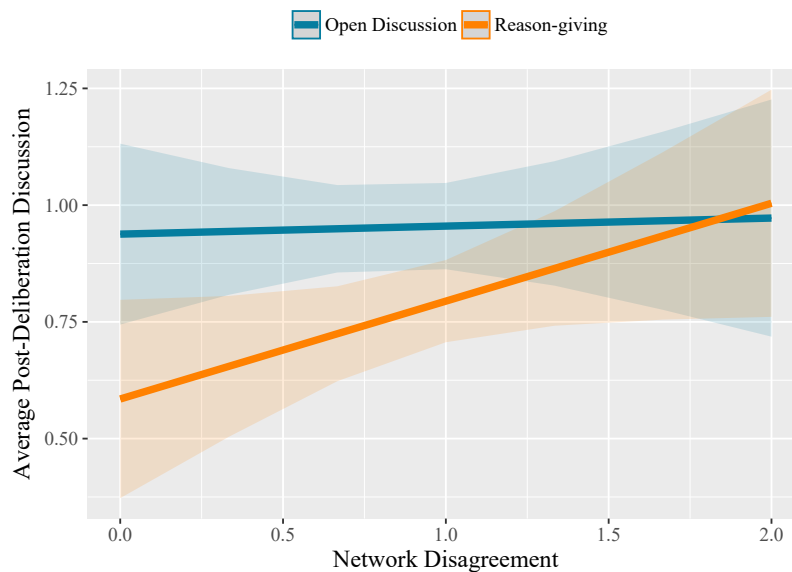

Figure 4.6 shows the conditional effect of personal discussant network disagreement on post-deliberation discussion for each treatment condition. While personal network disagreement does not affect post-deliberation discussion for respondents in the open discussion treatment group, it has a slight positive effect on post-deliberation discussion for those in

the reason-giving condition. The predicted value of post-deliberation network discussion for participants who reported the least amount of disagreement within their personal discussion network is 0.58 (SE=0.13), while the predicted value for those in the most disagreeable discussion networks is 1.00 (SE=0.15). This finding provides support for Hypothesis 3B. However, the results do not help to identify the mechanism behind this positive effect.

In Appendix C, I present the results from an additional analysis of a three-way interaction between discussion group-level disagreement, personal discussant network disagreement, and treatment condition. These preliminary results demonstrate that, for those participants in the reason-giving condition, personal discussant network disagreement had a strong positive effect on post-deliberation discussion for those in more agreeable groups. This is most consistent with the idea that participants in the reason-giving treatment felt better informed on their own views after deliberating with like-minded people, and returned to their personal discussants with more information to use to persuade. However, it is not advisable to estimate a three-way interaction with such a small sample, and these results should be interpreted with caution.

4.5   Discussion

In the previous section, I presented findings to support the idea that deliberation produces multiplier effects and that those effects are conditioned by contextual factors. First, I demonstrate that people who take part in deliberative sessions discuss topics specifically related to that session with their discussant networks, providing evidence for a multiplier effect. For the 43 participants who answered the follow-up discussant network battery, the average post-deliberation discussion measures resulted in at least 113 conversations within participants' discussion networks, and 152 additional discussions outside of those discussion networks. It is important to note that these results are from a lab experimental deliberative session, where participants were recruited on a college campus. In a practical setting, where participants have self-selected into attending a deliberative session, we may expect these

effects to be stronger as participants had prior interest in the deliberative opportunity prior to attendance.

The other findings are focused on the contextual factors that affect post-deliberation discussion. First, I find that post-deliberation discussion of gun policy tended to be higher among those in the open discussion groups rather than the reason-giving groups. This finding is consistent with the idea that reason-giving may have generated greater ambivalence among participants, which in turn decreased political discussion (Mutz, 2006). However, this mechanism should be considered more in the future, as this study is unable to test whether the open discussion format promoted additional discussion or if reason-giving impeded future discussion.

The biggest limitation of this study is the inability to observe the content of these post-deliberation discussions. While people may report greater discussion on relevant topics post-deliberation, it is not known what information was discussed in those conversations. Participants' intentions behind those post-deliberation discussions may not always be sincere in an attempt to share information. Additionally, recent work finds that socially supplied information may not generate as much political learning as other information sources like the media, especially if the person sharing that information ("ego") does not share the same political views as the person receiving that information ("alter") (Carlson, Forthcoming.).

Chapter 5

Conclusion

> "To social scientists wedded to a monological account of citizen competence or incompetence, deliberative democracy may appear utopian and naïve in a world suffused by power, interests, manipulation, and demagoguery. However, empirical research supports the key claims of deliberative democratic theory (although not uncritically), enabling deliberative democracy to be deployed in both diagnosis of democratic ills and in the development of effective responses to the contemporary crisis of democracy."
> — Dryzek et al. (2019, 1145)

A recent article in *Science*, co-authored by many leading deliberative democracy scholars, argues that deliberation can serve as a solution to a democracy in crisis, arguing, among other things, that "[d]eliberation can overcome polarization" (Dryzek et al., 2019, 1145). This is by no means a small feat, but, as noted in the article, the research on deliberation suggests that it is up to the task. The findings from studies on deliberation suggest that it can help people become less extreme in their views (Grönlund, Herne and Setälä, 2015), more reasoned (Fishkin and Luskin, 2005), and less susceptible to elite manipulation (Niemeyer, 2011). And, people are not only interested in opportunities for deliberation (Neblo et al., 2010), but they are capable of engaging in high-quality deliberation (Gerber et al., 2018). However, the authors qualify this claim by stating that achieving many of these benefits requires that "deliberative processes are well-arranged" (Dryzek et al., 2019, 1145). Indeed, I have identified and presented support for the claim that deliberative design decisions matter.

This project focuses on three broad questions: Who wants to deliberate? What happens during deliberation? What happens after deliberation? Rather than taking an

individual-centered approach to answering these questions, I have focused on institutional factors that shape deliberative outcomes. This is intentional; it is notoriously difficult to change individual behavior, and there are far from universal solutions to do so. Instead, it makes sense to focus on institutional changes that can be made so as to find ways to structure deliberation in ways that promote the normatively-positive outcomes promoted by deliberative democrats and possibly counter predisposition, i.e. bias.

This project makes a contribution to the field of deliberative democracy by adding support for the idea that deliberation may be a tool to help counteract against polarization and partisan disdain, provided that it is designed in purposeful ways. While recent work suggests that some people want to avoid political discussion (Klar, Krupnikov and Ryan, 2018), this project develops a way in to structure political discussion so as to promote thoughtful and reasoned discussion that in turn contributes to a broader deliberative system. In concluding this project, I begin by summarizing the findings presented in the preceding chapters. I then offer ideas for further work on deliberation.

5.1   Summary of Findings

In the previous chapters, I have demonstrated that structural and contextual factors matter for deliberative outcomes. Though these studies have been presented separately, they each inform one another. For instance, in Chapter 2, I provide evidence for the idea that the convener of a deliberative session matters for the diversity of the group of people recruited to take part. This in turn may inform knowledge gains within deliberative sessions, and the extent to which participants discuss new information within their discussant networks, thus affecting the multiplier effect. Here, I summarize the findings presented in the preceding chapters.

5.1.1   Participant Recruitment

In Chapter 2, I use survey experiments to look at the way in which the nature of the convener of deliberative sessions affects the pool of willing participants. This research design was inspired by my own experience working with deliberative organizations. While we were crafting the mission statement and organizational goals, leaders of the organization went to great lengths to avoid signaling any amount of partisanship. In order to be trusted and inclusive — normative goals of deliberation — the assumption was that the organization could not have partisan affiliations. In Chapter 2, I placed this assumption under empirical scrutiny.

Here, I find that when partisanship is signaled in the invitation for a deliberative event, there is significantly less interest in participation among the out-party. This means that those hoping to gather a diverse group in regards to political opinion should avoid signaling partisanship in recruitment materials. However, this negative effect on participation among the out-party can be ameliorated if deliberative opportunities are presented in a bipartisan manner, where the invitation comes from both the Democratic and Republican parties. One major implication of this finding is that elected officials and candidates for office who are recruiting constituents for town hall style meetings — events that Neblo, Esterling and Lazer (2018) claim can revolutionize representation as we know it — might do best to organize these meetings with members of the other party. For example, Republican and Democratic members of Congress should jointly invite constituents to take part in online town hall meetings in order to elicit interest among a (politically) diverse group of constituents.

5.1.2   Deliberative Quality and Opinion Change

In a novel design using 360 degree recordings of experimental deliberative sessions, I demonstrate in Chapter 3 that reason-giving rules promote higher quality deliberative discourse within deliberative sessions. I develop a way in which to analyze deliberative quality

using a deliberative quality assessment tool, built on guidance provided by the Discourse Quality Index developed by Steenbergen et al. (2003). I find that reason-giving within a deliberative session results in discourse that is more thoughtful, reasoned, consensual, and equal in terms of participation.

Additionally, I provide evidence that reason-giving rules promote opinion moderation over polarization, and facilitate information seeking among participants. These findings are consistent with the idea that deliberation can be structured so as to promote accuracy-motivated reasoning over biased, directionally-motivated reasoning. Together, these findings highlight ways in which to design venues for political discussion that allow participants to have more thoughtful conversations, avoiding reliance on partisan biases. This is helpful in a polarized political climate, as a way to develop greater understanding across the political divide. Providing evidence for the idea of deliberation as a tool to combat partisan polarization should attract support from policymakers as well as the public as a way in which to increase satisfaction with government.

Moving forward, I will use the video recordings to analyze participants' body language during the deliberative sessions. While here I have focused on the verbal discourse of participants, there is much that can be conveyed by participants through nonverbal communication. Indeed, analysis of nonverbal communication is a fundamental aspect of qualitative research using interviews (Denham and Onwuegbuzie, 2013). I expect that participants in reason-giving groups will appear more engaged in the conversation as evidenced by leaning into the discussion, while participants in open discussion groups will be more likely to appear disengaged through behavior such as crossed arms and leaning back from the conversation. These behaviors are also indicative of respect, or a lack thereof, of others in the discussion group.

5.1.3   Spillover Effects

Finally, in Chapter 4, I use post-deliberation measures of political discussion to evaluate the multiplier effect from deliberative sessions. Given that the design and organization of deliberative sessions is costly, demonstrating that the effects of these efforts can grow out from the participants of the sessions themselves is imperative. I find that people who take part in a deliberative session discuss the issues associated with a deliberative session within their discussion networks after taking part. Additionally, I find that reason-giving rules may decrease post-deliberation discussion, consistent with the theory that an increase in information gained in deliberation may also increase ambivalence and drive down future discussion. However, I also find that participants who reside in more disagreeable personal discussion networks and were in reason-giving groups were more inclined towards post-deliberation discussion, and argue that this is likely a result of an attempt to persuade their personal discussants to their side.

Overall, there is much work to be done to better understand multiplier effects of deliberation. While this project focuses on the multiplier effect as measured by post-deliberation discussion, future work should consider other spillover effects from deliberation. Specifically, studies should identify other ways in which deliberation may alter future engagement. While information gains may decrease political discussion, I present support for the idea that participants in reason-giving groups conducted information searches post-deliberation in Chapter 3. It would be interesting to consider how this behavior may affect future engagement with and action on those issues deliberated, which may result in a different kind of spillover effect outside of interpersonal discussion.

5.2   Future Directions

Interest in deliberation as a field of study shows no sign of stopping. Luckily for those interested in deliberative democracy, there remain many fruitful research agendas to pursue.

In Figure 5.1, inspired by Mutz (2008), I offer several ideas for future deliberative design decisions that may be tested, and outcome measures to be used in analyzing the effects of those decisions. This alone presents a massive research agenda, but expands even further when one considers the potential interactions between these variables. Here, I offer ideas for some of those potential paths forward in research on deliberation, noting ways in which these research ideas benefit practitioners of deliberation.

Figure 5.1: Ideas for Future Work on Deliberative Design

Deliberative Structures

- Recruitment style
- Timing/schedule
- Length
- Materials provided
- Group composition
- Issue subject
- Facilitation
- Decision maker inclusion
- Publicity
- Venue
- Discussion rules
- Level of government/ geographic scope
- Consensus/outcome/act ion
- On-line or in person
- Discussion leadership

Deliberative Outcomes

- Participatory equality
- Political learning
- Political participation
- Political interest
- Discussion network changes
- Opinion change
- Issue ownership
- Policy change
- Policy support
- Decision-making process
- Diversity of future engagement
- Polarization
- Satisfaction with government
- Political efficacy

Building on the findings presented in Chapter 2, there are many other questions to advance regarding best practices for diverse recruitment. For instance, the time of day that a deliberative session is held may (dis)incentive people differently. To recruit a diverse group of participants, would be it better to hold deliberative sessions in the evening, or on the weekends? What effect does providing child care at the event have on the social demographics of willing participants? How would inviting people to come with other people using a more networked approach affect interest in participating? These are, again, questions that deliberative groups ask when attempting to recruit diverse participants. If these claims

were tested empirically, these groups may be able to secure more funding for these initiatives in order to make them more appealing to a more balanced socioeconomic group, alleviating concerns that only those in higher socioeconomic groups would participate, exacerbating existing inequalities (Sanders, 1997). One way to test many recruitment design decisions efficiently would be to use conjoint experiments, whereby multiple attributes of recruitment design can be manipulated within a single experiment.

In Chapter 3, I test the effect of reason-giving rules on deliberative quality and opinion change. However, there are many other design features of deliberative sessions that may affect both quality and behaviors during deliberation. One feature that should be explored is the role of a trained facilitator during deliberative sessions. Trained facilitators enforce compliance with discussion rules, such as reason-giving, participatory equality, and consideration of opposing viewpoints. It would be useful for practitioners to have empirical tests of the effect of facilitators. It is costly to recruit and train people to serve as facilitators, but if groups are able to present to funding institutions the value in having facilitators, they would likely be able to secure more funding. Additionally, future work should consider the ways in which deliberative design affect different participants. One example would be to explore the gender dynamics of conversation, as deliberative design can help to balance participation along gender lines (Karpowitz and Mendelberg, 2014).

The results presented in Chapter 3 demonstrate that reason-giving rules alter the quality of discourse, promoting more civility in political conversation. This finding is encouraging in an era characterized by declining civility (Dryzek et al., 2019). Future work should continue to explore this finding. Does the shift in civility within a deliberative context extend outside of the deliberative session? Do participants in a deliberative session become more thoughtful and/or consensual in their future political discussions? This extends to the idea of the multiplier effect, as the shift in civility may transfer from individual participants to their discussant partners.

Deliberation scholars should work to better understand the mechanism behind the ef-

fect of reason giving on more civil discussion. What is it about providing reasons for one's stated opinions that promotes more civil discussion? In Chapter 3, I argue that social pressures enforce reason-giving behavior. One way in which to better understand the interaction between reason giving and social pressures would be to examine the effect of reason-giving rules in an online deliberative interaction. In online deliberation, participants likely experience less social pressures from others in the discussion. If reason giving does not promote more civil discussion in an online deliberation, this would suggest that social pressures act as the mechanism behind the effect of reason giving on civility in political discussions.

While I expand upon (Lazer et al., 2015) in Chapter 4 to offer additional insight into the multiplier effect of deliberation, much more work should be done to explore the spillover effects from deliberation that may help scale up deliberative efforts. Here, it may be useful to develop a more qualitative understanding of the population of deliberative organizations working together to address problems of scale through shared resources. Organizations like Everyday Democracy provide training for deliberative facilitation, materials to provide participants in deliberative groups, and networks of experts to provide guidance on deliberative efforts. Additionally, deliberative groups often partner with local media to promote both deliberative opportunities and the findings from deliberative sessions. As such, network analysis would be an especially useful tool for developing a greater understanding of deliberative systems.

In regards to research design, scholars should continue to collaborate with practitioners of deliberation to test deliberative designs and their effects. To improve on past research, researchers should help to design field experimental manipulations with those working within deliberation organizing groups.Do sustained and repeated interactions in deliberative groups foster normatively-desirable outcomes? For example, the organization Portsmouth Listens based in New Hampshire organizes series of deliberative events around the approval of the city budget where representatives from the city's governmental departments present their proposed budgets for the year. Members of the community come together once a week for

six weeks, meet in small groups, listen to presentations from the heads of departments, such as the fire chief, and subsequently discuss the budget in their small groups. Anecdotally, this repeated interaction builds trust among the participants. Researchers can work with groups like Portsmouth Listens to to develop experimental designs testing whether those anecdotal assumptions withstand empirical scrutiny. Experimental designs are well-suited to research on deliberation, as they are able to identify causal mechanisms and unpack the "black box" of deliberative theory. Additionally, opportunities for field experiments abound (somewhat of a rarity within political science research) which offers both internal and external validity to research design. However, deliberative experiments do require much in the way of organization, time, and participation, which presents a challenge (Gerber and Green, 2012; Esterling, 2018).

This project focuses on formal deliberation. However, the majority of political discussion occurs in informal settings. How may the lessons learned in this project be applied to more informal forms of deliberation? The findings presented in Chapter 3 suggest that reason-giving promotes more thoughtful and considered discussion. Does reason-giving have similar effects in daily interpersonal political discussions? Future work should consider whether people can be primed to provide reasons in everyday political discussion, and if that reason giving results in more thoughtful discussions. Additionally, practices adopted in formal deliberative sessions may spillover into everyday discussions, as argued by those who focus on a larger deliberative system. Do participants in formal deliberative sessions that require reason giving become more thoughtful in their daily political discussions? More work should consider the relationship between structured deliberation and informal, daily political talk.

5.3   Concluding Remarks

With this project, I offer concrete ideas for ways in which to structure deliberation so as to promote the ideals put forth by deliberative democratic theory. I answer calls from

Mutz (2008) and Neblo (2015) specifically, who have called on social scientists interested in deliberation to empirically test individual aspects of deliberation so as to demonstrate its effects. This advances the idea of developing middle-range theories of deliberation. Rather than attempting to defend a massive, idealistic idea of deliberation — which indeed calls into question the falsifiability of such claims — I identify testable claims that inform larger ideas of deliberation. Though there is much work to be done to understand the role of deliberative structures on deliberative outcomes, this work helps advance the field of deliberation with regard to its practicality and influence.

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Appendix A

Appendix to Recruitment Design and Partisanship

A.1   Sample Demographics

Table A.1: Descriptive Estimates, MTurk and CPC Samples vs. 2016 ANES

	Study 1: MTurk	**Study 2: CPC**	**2016 ANES**
Age			
18 to 24 years	13.7%	8.1%	12.0%
25-34 years	41.3%	23.4%	16.5%
35-44 years	21.9%	15.3%	14.9%
45-54 years	11.7%	13.8%	17.3%
55-64 years	8.7%	21.6%	18.9%
65-74 years	2.3%	14.1%	11.8%
75 and over	0.4%	4.7%	6.4%
Gender			
Female	49.8%	52%	51.4%
Male	49.4%	48%	47.5%
Education			
Less than high school	0.4%	2%	6.6%
HS diploma	9.2%	19%	19.0%
Some college	33.1%	31%	35.12%
Bachelors degree	40.6%	30%	22.4%
Advanced degree	16.8%	17%	15.9%
Party Identification			
Strong Democrat	24.9%	22.9%	20.8%
Democrat	20.3%	10.6%	13.1%
Lean Democrat	15.1%	13.1%	11.5%
Independent	11.3%	19.5%	13.6%
Lean Republican	8.5%	10.9%	11.7%
Republican	10.4%	7.9%	11.9%
Strong Republican	9.7%	13.9%	16.9%

Appendix B

Appendix to Reason-giving and Information Processing

B.1 Sample Descriptives

Table **??** displays the mean values of variables used in the analysis by treatment condition. None of the differences in the means reported are statistically significant, providing evidence for successful randomization of treatment condition.

B.2 Recruitment Materials

Figure B.1 is the flyer that was placed around the University of Colorado to recruit participants for the study. I also visited several classes to recruit participants, and asked others to share this information with their own classes.

Table B.1: Sample Means by Treatment Condition

Variable	Open Discussion	Reason-giving Rules
Female	51.7	56.7
Party ID (7-point scale)	2.97	2.53
Political interest (4-pt scale)	1.68	1.60
Gun law strictness	75.74	74.67
Gun disagreement	17.24	18.35
Network discussion	2.20	2.12
Network disagreement	0.85	0.86

Figure B.1: Recruitment Flyer

Research Opportunity: Talk about Politics and Make Money!

WHAT IS IT?

- A small-group conversation about politics
- Take pre-, post-, and follow-up surveys
- 1-1.5 hour total time commitment
- Takes place on campus

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

- Any current CU undergraduate student is eligible to participate
- Participants may only take part in the study once

TO REGISTER, VISIT:
https://cu-ladam.doodle.com/poll/t42q5tf42b33wu3r

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT CHRISTINA LADAM AT
CHRISTINA.LADAM@COLORADO.EDU
IRB# 18-0117

B.3   Discussion Guides

Figure B.2 shows the discussion guide given to participants in the open discussion groups, and B.3 show the discussion guide provided to those in the reason-giving groups. Substantively, the only difference is the reason-giving treatment. However, the order of discussion points was randomized for each participant in both treatment conditions so as to avoid primacy bias in discussing any one question. These discussion guides were modeled off of several similar guides from deliberative study circles groups.

Figure B.2: Discussion Guide, Open Discussion

<div style="border:1px solid">

<u>Talking about Guns</u>

We are holding conversations on campus focusing on gun policy. We want our campus community to be a place where people from all backgrounds can participate fully in campus life and make their voices heard. Many people have very strong opinions and political beliefs regarding guns in America, and even when viewing the same statistics and research, can come to different conclusions. During this discussion, we ask that you maintain a respectful atmosphere for everyone to share their views. Our goal for this discussion is for everyone to share their views honestly and respectfully and to learn from one another. Our goal is dialogue, not debate.

Here are some questions to reflect upon during this discussion:

Role: Does the government have a role in restricting gun ownership?

Restrictions: Would additional government restrictions on gun ownership help to prevent mass shootings?

2nd Amendment: second amendment reads: *"A well-regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed."* How do you interpret this amendment?

Rights: Why is the right to own guns so important to Americans?

Schools: What can and should schools do to keep students safe?

Labels: How do labels such as "gun control," "gun rights," and "pro-gun," shape the debate and the way people think about the issues? How do the terms that people use to frame this debate accurately or inaccurately describe your positions? What would accurately describe them?

Bridging Divides: What do you see as possible in bridging divides on gun-related issues?

Questions: What questions do you have for those who see this issue differently from you? Think about how you can phrase your question with genuine intent to understand, rather than purely an attempt to persuade.

</div>

Figure B.3: Discussion Guide, Reason-giving

Talking about Guns

We are holding conversations on campus focusing on gun policy. We want our campus community to be a place where people from all backgrounds can participate fully in campus life and make their voices heard. Many people have very strong opinions and political beliefs regarding guns in America, and even when viewing the same statistics and research, can come to different conclusions. During this discussion, we ask that you maintain a respectful atmosphere for everyone to share their views. Our goal for this discussion is for everyone to share their views honestly and respectfully and to learn from one another. Our goal is dialogue, not debate.

Throughout this discussion, we ask that you provide clear reasons for your stated positions. These reasons should be fact-based. The discussion facilitator will encourage all participants to explain the reasoning behind their stated positions.

Here are some questions to reflect upon during this discussion:

Role: Does the government have a role in restricting gun ownership?

Restrictions: Would additional government restrictions on gun ownership help to prevent mass shootings?

2nd Amendment: second amendment reads: *"A well-regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed."* How do you interpret this amendment?

Rights: Why is the right to own guns so important to Americans?

Schools: What can and should schools do to keep students safe?

Labels: How do labels such as "gun control," "gun rights," and "pro-gun," shape the debate and the way people think about the issues? How do the terms that people use to frame this debate accurately or inaccurately describe your positions? What would accurately describe them?

Bridging Divides: What do you see as possible in bridging divides on gun-related issues?

Questions: What questions do you have for those who see this issue differently from you? Think about how you can phrase your question with genuine intent to understand, rather than purely an attempt to persuade.

B.4   Deliberative Quality Coding

The following shows the questions used to code the videos of the deliberative sessions. This template was designed based on guidelines from Steenbergen et al. (2003), which was itself based on the work of Habermas (1991). This template was formatted into a Qualtrics-based "survey" with a loop that allowed for me to answer the questions of the survey for each statement made during the deliberative session.

(1) Group Number

(2) Speaker ID Number

(3) Please note if any of these specific characteristics are applicable:

- Interrupts or talks over another participant

- Explicitly agrees with another participant

- Explicitly disagrees with another participant

- Addresses response directly to another participant

The following questions were asked based on the answers to the previous questions:

- Interrupt: Which participant?

- Agree: Which participant?

- Disagree: Which participant?

- Address: Which participant?

(4) Statement start time

(5) Transcript of statement

(6) Demand (answer, suggestion) made?

The following questions were asked based on the answers to the previous questions:

- No justification (no reason giving) (1)

- Inferior justification (reason Y given for X but no connection) (2)

- Complete justification (justification connecting Y to X) (3)

- Superior justification (more than one justification) (4)

(7) Statement end time

After finishing the deliberative coding, I had four group-level observations with variables for each measure of each statement made. I then reshaped that wide dataset into a long one, where each observation was a statement made during a deliberative session. The full unit of analysis for this dataset is group-speaker-statement, as each statement is nested within an individual who is nested within a deliberative group.

B.5   Survey Questions

B.5.1   Pre-Test Questions

"On a scale of 0 to 100 where 0 means less strict and 100 means more strict, in general, do you feel that the laws covering the sale of firearms should be made less strict or more strict?"

"Less Strict" (0) to "More Strict" (100)

B.5.2   Follow-up Questions

"On a scale of 0 to 100 where 0 means less strict and 100 means more strict, in general, do you feel that the laws covering the sale of firearms should be made less strict or more strict?"

"Less Strict" (0) to "More Strict" (100)

"Since the discussion session you attended, have you done any additional research on gun policy?"

No (0)

Yes (1)

Appendix C

Appendix to Network Spillover Effects from Deliberation

C.1   Survey Questions

C.1.1   Pre-test Questions

"On a scale of 0 to 100 where 0 means less strict and 100 means more strict, in general, do you feel that the laws covering the sale of firearms should be made less strict or more strict?"

"Less Strict" (0) to "More Strict" (100)

YOUR CONVERSATIONS ABOUT SOCIAL ISSUES Now shifting gears, from time to time, people discuss government & politics. Looking back over the last few months, we would like to know about the people you talked with about these matters. Please think of the first three people that come to mind and answer each question for each person. We will not attempt to contact the people you list.

How often do you disagree with this person about politics and public affairs?

"Rarely" (0)

"Sometimes" (1)

"Often" (2)

C.1.2   Follow-up Questions

"On a scale of 0 to 100 where 0 means less strict and 100 means more strict, in general, do you feel that the laws covering the sale of firearms should be made less strict or more strict?"

"Less Strict" (0) to "More Strict" (100)

YOUR CONVERSATIONS ABOUT SOCIAL ISSUES "Now shifting gears, from time to time, people discuss government & politics. Looking back over the last few months, we would like to know about the people you talked with about these matters. Please think of the first three people that come to mind and answer each question for each person. We will not attempt to contact the people you list."

"Have you talked with this person about gun rights/gun control?"

"No" (0)

"Yes" (1)

"Have you talked with this person about the 2018 elections?"

"No" (0)

"Yes" (1)

"Have you talked with this person about the#MeToo movement?"

"No" (0)

"Yes" (1)

"Aside from anyone you named, since the discussion session you attended, about how many people have you talked with about gun laws?"

Open Response

C.2   Google Trends Data

Because these deliberative experiments did not have a true control condition whereby participants were assigned to not take part in any deliberative treatment, there is no baseline measure from which to gauge the post-deliberation discussion on gun control. As presented in the main text, I compare post-deliberation discussion to other issues in order to establish a baseline of political discussion: the #MeToo movement and the 2018 election. Figure C.1 shows the Google search trend data for the terms "Gun Control", "Me Too", and "2018 Election" beginning two weeks before the first deliberative experiment and ending two weeks after the last deliberative experiment. Google trends data compares relative interest in subject areas by comparing searches for terms as compared to the population of Google searches. The average Google trends search for "Gun Control", "Me Too", and "2018 Election" for this time period were 10.72, 4.60, and 17.59 respectively.

Figure C.1: Google Trends Data
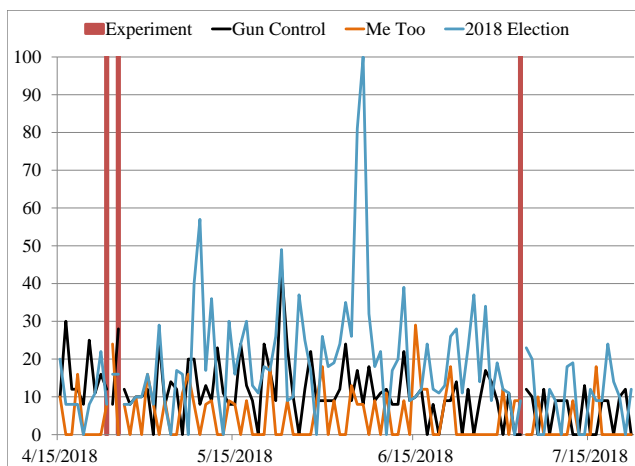
If Google trends data corresponds to public interest in these terms, we would expect that participants' interpersonal discussion would feature the 2018 election most prominently, followed by gun control, and then the #MeToo. As presented in the main text, average post-deliberation discussion was greatest for gun control, providing evidence for a multiplier effect.

C.3   Additional Analysis

Figure C.2 plots the expected values for the three-way interaction between treatment condition, personal network disagreement, and group-level disagreement at the 10% (low) and 90% (high) levels of group-level interaction. This three-way interaction provides initial support for the theory that participants who reside in more disagreeable personal discussion networks are using the information gained in deliberative sessions to attempt to persuade their discussants, as those who have more disagreeable networks and were in less disagreeable discussion groups were more likely to discuss gun policy with their interpersonal discussants. However, this effect is only evident in reason-giving groups. That said, these results should be interpreted very cautiously, as a three-way interaction with this sample size is ill-advised.

I simply present these results and initial support for the idea of persuasion.

Figure C.2: Three-way Interaction between Group-level Disagreement, Personal Discussant Network Disagreement, and Treatment Condition