Teaching Deliberative Democracy Deliberatively

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Abstract

In this article, the author argues that university faculty can create courses that explore deliberative democracy theory and practice while structuring those courses to make them deliberative and participatory for undergraduate students. Challenging norms within higher education requires thinking differently about one's pedagogical approach and connecting courses to wider public issues. This article focuses on an undergraduate seminar in which students co-created a course on deliberative democracy and how both the content and process were approached democratically.

Keywords: deliberative pedagogy, public deliberation, civic engagement

The Political, Epistemological, and Pedagogical Context

In the early 1990s, the field of democratic theory took a "deliberative turn," shifting its focus away from democracy as primarily (if not exclusively) the work of governments and elected officials. As Dryzek (2000) noted, "prior to that turn, the democratic ideal was seen mainly in terms of aggregation of preferences or interests into collective decisions through devices such as voting and representation" (p. v). However, proponents of the "turn" argued that "the essence of democratic legitimacy should be sought instead in the ability of all individuals subject to a collective decision to engage in authentic deliberation about that decision" (p. v). While the field has become more robust and developed since that time (e.g., Bohman & Rehg, 1997; Gastil & Levine, 2005; Gutmann & Thompson, 2004, 2010; Macedo, 1999; Nabatchi, Gastil, Weiksner, & Leighninger, 2012), accompanied by growing interest in the role of deliberation in higher education settings (Carcasson, 2010; Dedrick, Grattan, & Dienstfrey, 2008; Shaffer, 2014; Shaffer, Longo, Manosevitch, & Thomas, forthcoming; Thomas, 2010; Thomas & Levine, 2011), it is important to acknowledge some of the roots that have helped to define deliberative democracy.

Mansbridge's *Beyond Adversarial Democracy* (1983) and Barber's *Strong Democracy* (1984) offer two foundational articulations of what a more deliberative and participatory democracy might look like, with the field building on these critiques of adversarial democracy and models of democracy that espouse agency and power in ways detached from the everyday lives of citizens. Additionally, the use of deliberative democracy in educational settings—increasingly referred to as deliberative pedagogy (Doherty, 2012; Shaffer et al., forthcoming)—builds on a long tradition of discussion-based education as well as the foundational work of education philosopher John Dewey (1910, [1916] 1997), whose influential writings focused on experience as central to learning. For Dewey, "education was critical to a democratic society and democracy was central to the educational enterprise" (Boyte & Finders, 2016, p. 127). Creating space for questioning presumptions and putting into practice democratic approaches to problems inside and outside of classrooms helps to shift discussion from larger, more abstract societal concerns to grounded concerns manifest in educational settings, which are part of democratic life—here and now.

Alongside Dewey, Paulo Freire (1974, 2000) articulated a fundamental distinction between the "banking" and "dialogic" models of education, noting that

so much of education has become typified by the transmission of knowledge between the expert teacher/instructor and the uninformed student, thus requiring students to "bank" the deposited knowledge. Both Dewey and Freire sought to break down barriers between the teacher and learner, positioning those who traditionally receive knowledge as also producers of it.

In a paper responding to Barber's *Strong Democracy* which established an explicit connection between the idea that citizens need greater opportunities within higher education to engage one another in thoughtful and practical discussion, Preskill (1989) argued that the "community in the classroom" could learn from the "strong democratic community outside of it" (p. 221). Preskill wrote:

> disciplined dialogue and fostering inquiry are insufficient. The community in the classroom, like the strong democratic community outside of it, must be prepared to engage in creative conflicts, untainted by competitive individualism, that will require students to confront one another critically and fairly over highly controversial topics. Controversy and conflict must be embraced even as individual advantage, intellectual arrogance, and unproductive bickering are jettisoned. Despite the tensions generated by controversy and conflict, community can be preserved as long as the participants genuinely support and care for one another. In an essay on community and conflict, Parker Palmer argues that in the face of such necessary conflict the only thing holding community together and making possible a capacity for relatedness is love: love of learning and of learners. I initially regarded this conclusion as trite and unachievable, but I would argue tentatively that in addition to the love of learning that so many teachers value and seek to impart above all else, we must do far more as teachers and human beings to put mutual respect, caring, and even love at the heart of our pedagogic enterprise. This we should do for our own sake as well as for the welfare of the polity. (p. 221)

Preskill referred to Palmer's (1987) article published two years earlier in *Change*. In that article, Palmer shared his ambitions about themes like community and conflict in the context of education: "To put it in philosophical terms, I want to try to connect concepts of community to questions of epistemology, which I believe are the central questions for any institution engaged in a mission of knowing, teaching and learning. How do we know? How do we learn? Under what conditions and with what validity?" (p. 22). He went on to note that "the *way* we know has

powerful implications for the *way* we live." But he did not stop at the epistemological level, stating clearly that questions about how we live and interact with one another in a community must also play out in pedagogies as well. "Community must become a central concept in ways we teach and learn" (p. 25). Palmer's insights on this point are worth quoting at length:

> Many communal experiments in pedagogy have been tried in the history of American higher education, and many have fallen by the wayside. And the reason, I think, is simple: The underlying mode of knowing remained the same. You cannot derive communal ways of teaching and learning from an essentially anticommunal mode of knowing. The pedagogy falls apart if the epistemology isn't there to support and sustain it.
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> The root fallacy in the pedagogy of most of our institutions is that the individual is the agent of knowing and therefore the focus for teaching and learning. We all know that if we draw the lines of instruction in most classrooms, they run singularly from the teacher to each individual student. These lines are there for the convenience of the instructor, not for the corporate reality. They do not reveal a complex web of relationships between teacher and students and subject that would look like true community.
>
> Given this focus on the individual in the classroom, competition between individuals for knowledge becomes inevitable. The competitive individualism of the classroom is not simply the function of a social ethic; it reflects a pedagogy that stresses the individual as the prime agent of knowing. But to say the obvious, knowing and learning are *communal* acts. They require many eyes and ears, many observations and experiences. They require a continual cycle of discussion, disagreement, and consensus over what has been seen and what it all means. This is the essence of the "community of scholars," and it should be the essence of the classroom as well. (p. 25)

Challenging a dominant paradigm within higher education and American society at large, deliberative pedagogy builds on the work of Dewey, Freire, Palmer, Preskill, and others who have written about the democratic classroom as a learning environment that models democratic habits and practices. In contrast to deliberative politics, which couples deliberative decision-making with public action,

deliberative pedagogy integrates deliberative decision-making with teaching, learning, and engagement—both inside the classroom and in community settings (Drury, 2015; Latimer & Hempson, 2012; Longo, 2013; Shaffer et al., forthcoming). Centrally, I pose this question: In what ways can deliberative pedagogy cultivate deliberative democracy in both the classroom and in the life and culture of a college or university? The course described in this article highlights how such an outcome is possible. While not intended to represent other possibilities coming from the emerging field of deliberative pedagogy, my own further teaching and research have pointed to the promise—and shortcomings—of such an approach to teaching, learning, and engagement (Shaffer, forthcoming).

It is important to note that how I position myself within academe as an engaged scholar shapes how I approach my role as an academic professional with teaching responsibilities and, in particular, the course highlighted in this article. I position myself as a practitioner of deliberative pedagogy and as a scholar in the field of civic studies, a complementary field that articulates a commitment to the question, "What should you and I do?" (Levine, 2011, p. 4). The strength of civic studies, Levine (2011) argued, comes from its acknowledgment of three important and interrelated matters: facts, values, and strategies. As he explained:

> We citizens need to know facts because we should not try to do something that is impossible, or redundant, or that has harmful but unintended consequences… We also need values because otherwise we cannot distinguish between good and bad collective action… Finally, Civic Studies should offer strategies. It is insufficient to wish for better outcomes and determine that those outcomes are possible. We need a path to the desirable results. (Levine, 2011, pp. 5, 6)

Deliberation helps to create space for understanding and weighing factual information as well as value-based views, both of which are essential in deciding what strategies or approaches might be employed to address a public problem.

In the course described in this article, I developed a curricular experience for students that introduced them to materials that helped them to understand the intersection of deliberation and education as foundational elements of democracy as well as practical steps they could take to affect change. In short, the course served as a primer for both deliberative democracy and civic studies.

Creating a Course: Democracy, Deliberation, and Education

In the spring 2013 semester, I was afforded the opportunity to create an academic course that would align with and further develop previous efforts at a private university in the Midwest to support a community deliberative forum during the institution's annual all-day academic event recognizing and celebrating academic excellence in undergraduate and graduate education. In previous years, faculty members helped to organize deliberative forums but had relied exclusively on undergraduate students outside of a curricular setting. In many ways, as the chair of the department noted, "they were essentially an ad hoc group of students who came together and treated this … as a student organization experience."

The department chair was particularly instrumental in this work dating back to 2002 and 2003 when he partnered with a program officer at the Kettering Foundation to host forums for the surrounding community. It was after these experiences that a shift in thinking about deliberative forums as a way to help students prepare for active citizenship began to occur. In the chair's words:

> I, then in conversation with some of my other colleagues here in the department, became intrigued with the idea of using deliberative democratic forums as a way to prepare students for civic life, and as a way for students to, I think, gain a voice and have a level of student efficacy here on campus that they maybe didn't have outside of the deliberative forum. So we intentionally shifted to conducting deliberative forums that were relevant to, or dealt with issues that students really cared about, and that were really germane and timely to life at [the university] at that time. So we held a forum on how the university was using energy—we used, or we had a deliberative forum around the issue of the academic life here … and how we might bolster and strengthen the academic experience here. And we did these forums where we were actually working with a group of students to write the booklets—so literally, to start from scratch—to write the booklets, put the forum on, and then gather pre- and post-survey data, and present the survey data back to the campus, as a way of informing the conversations that were happening on campus at the time, about the topic, whether it's the academic life or the energy use or the environment.

The goal was to create a course on the theory and practice of deliberative democracy that would also oversee the organization and implementation of that year's deliberative forum.[1]

The course was offered as an elective in political science and in the Honors program, and it subsequently attracted students from a variety of disciplinary backgrounds. As a seminar with eight undergraduate students, the course could be framed around a robust experiment of implementing deliberative practices. Deliberative democracy was a new concept to the students, so they were introduced to the various schools of thought related to deliberative theory but also, more broadly, to concepts such as citizenship and democracy. They explored questions about different theories of democracy, acknowledging that a broad spectrum of interpretations of democratic theory and practice exists within the United States. This exploration led to other questions posed in the course syllabus:

> What role do citizens have in a democracy? What challenges do citizens face? What role or roles should/must (higher) education play? These questions invite each of us to think critically about what we mean by "democracy," "deliberation," and "education" and the work entailed in making sense of such deceivingly simple words. In this course, we will draw on diverse perspectives to help us make sense of their complexity.

Importantly, democracy and citizenship were framed not exclusively as the work of government or institutions but primarily as what "everyday people (citizens, broadly understood) can do to make our world, countries, states, cities, neighborhoods, universities, and organizations work better and more equitably— by utilizing education as a means to change what currently exists." Fundamentally, the course centered on three questions: What is, what should be, and how can we bridge the gap?

Structuring a Course Deliberatively

Although talking and reading about democracy and citizenship were semester-long aspects to this course, I decided explicitly to make the course itself as deliberative as possible. Since the seminar was small, this approach was practicable. One of the most intentional and striking examples of the deliberative nature of the course came during the first day of class when going over the syllabus.

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[1] On the use of deliberative forums in university settings see Pierce, Neeley, and Budziak (2008).

While a typical introductory process, reviewing the syllabus and the expectations of the course was not without a purpose. As a course designed to connect theory and practice in relation to deliberative democracy, I intentionally introduced deliberation by allowing the students to discuss openly with one another a central—and significant—aspect of the course: how they would be graded. The syllabus stated as follows:

> As a course designed around themes of democracy and deliberation, we will collectively discuss and decide how grading will occur for this course. Students will be evaluated based on the following course components:
>
> 1. Weekly reading reflections: Approximately a one-page reflection on the reading for that class. The weekly reflections will be graded high pass/pass/fail. Students can resubmit one failed reflection. (___ of total grade)
>
> 2. Class participation: Class discussion including class-led sessions, small group conversations, and team projects related to the community forum. Class participation is expected and essential. (___ of total grade)
>
> 3. Contribution to community forum: This course has a built-in project for everyone. Each student will be expected to contribute to the planning, coordination, advertising, and execution of the community forum. This collaborative project is central to experiencing and participating in the practice of democracy, deliberation, and education. (___ of total grade)
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> 4. Final paper: While the community forum is the embodiment of the practice of deliberative democracy, the final paper connects back to the course content and the theoretical dimensions of the class. More details on the final paper will be given later in the semester. (___ of total grade)

After the students had been together only a short while on the first night of the class, I left the room and let them, in their own way, determine what percentage of their total grades would be attached to each of the four course components. They took time determining how they wanted to weigh each of these expectations— and why. When they were finished, I returned to the room to talk about their decisions. As their first experience in the course with the ideas and practice of deliberation, students expressed an appreciation for the opportunity to have a say in how the course would transpire and what they would be expected to do.

At the end of the semester, each student offered self and peer evaluations based on what they had committed to doing during the initial class meeting. As they provided their assessments, the students took time to explain why they had evaluated their peers and themselves as they did. As the instructor, I stressed the importance of this process of evaluating their participation and contributions to the collective educational experience. Viewing students as collaborators was a theme stressed throughout the semester. At the heart of this course were theories, concepts, and practical questions about deliberative democracy.

Articulating, Defining, and Challenging Ideas: Topics for Discussion

As a discussion-based seminar, the course was framed around thematic readings that began with a set of fundamental questions: What is democracy? What roles do deliberation and education play in a healthy democracy? What do you hope to learn about this semester? From there, the course immediately turned to the individuals comprising the seminar. The students were asked to write biographical statements about why those chose to pursue higher education at the university, why they were interested in this course, and what they hoped to do after graduation (regardless of where they were in their respective course of study). Asked to reflect on why he chose to enroll in this course, one student wrote:

> I have always known that my academic and personal interest, no matter what shape it would take, would be tied in some way to the enormous impact storytelling has on the human experience. I became deeply fascinated with stories at a very young age, and in small ways in large, my lifelong endeavor to understand stories has informed my decisions, shaped my character, and helped construct my worldview. When a … faculty member recommended that I enroll in a seminar entitled "Democracy, Deliberation, and Education" in the spring of 2013, "storytelling" was not the first word that sprang into my head. I was caught up in the word "seminar," and imagery of intense discussions about political philosophy, dissections of current events and a small, intimate classroom setting immediately popped into my head. I subsequently registered for the course and moved on with my day, not knowing how much it would impact my view of education, social relationships, and the way we construct our own stories each and every day.

> The idea that exists at the heart of what I learned about deliberative democracy from our seminar can be found in the very first reading on the

syllabus. In *The Truth About Stories,* the writer and historian Thomas King concludes his reflection on stories about native peoples with the observation that the reader can do whatever he or she wants with his story, and even discard it; what the reader cannot do, however, is "say in the years to come that you would have lived your life differently if only you had heard this story. You've heard it now" (King, 2003, p. 66). From this quote onward, I learned—or more appropriately, remembered what I knew intuitively as a lover of stories—that the affirmation of personal experiences and the insights they bring on public issues is crucial to understanding the spirit of deliberative democracy. [The professor] inserted this lesson into the very makeup of the class throughout the entire semester. The nine of us—eight students and one professor—began the year by writing a brief version of our own personal stories, and how we ended up in [the university] and in our small seminar room on an upper floor of [this academic building] for the deliberation seminar. By beginning the class in this way, it became apparent that what we brought to the table as individuals would shape the course of our class experience.

Similar to Palmer's (1987) desire to foster a sense of community in the classroom, I attempted to create a space that helped to re-conceptualize the teacher-student relationship; ideally, weekly seminars were more about exploring questions and challenging the week's readings than thinking that the topics discussed were somehow settled and that students only needed to listen to an instructor lecture on a given topic. Drawing from the scholarship of Brookfield and Preskill (2005), I approached this discussion-based course an as "alternately serious and playful effort by a group … to share views and engage in mutual and reciprocal critique." In a seminar about democracy, deliberation, and education, discussion must be central because it remains an "indispensable part of democratic education." Discussion teaches individuals about dispositions and practices, "provides us with the opportunity to serve and connect with others, and tests our ability to confront the most difficult of problems and think them through collaboratively" (pp. 6, 20).

As part of this initial introduction to each other, students were asked to reflect on the following questions, respond to them, and then share those responses with me and with the other students. The questions included:

- How do you define democracy?

- How do you conceptualize education?

- What challenges do educators face?

- How might you—and those you work with—overcome these challenges?

The responses to these personal questions represented a diversity of understanding and experience. One first-year student defined democracy as:

> a way of organizing a community in a way that everyone's opinions are free to be heard. I do not think that I would consider it something in which everyone gets everything they want. I believe that democracy is a method of protecting the best interests of the community as a whole through the collective discussion of the community.

A senior defined democracy as:

> a form of government that allows citizens an equal say in government decisions and values the views and opinions of all. Democracy is not perfect, as I have come to learn, but at its core it strives to allow all an equal chance. I realize, however, that democracy does not always succeed in its endeavors.

Still another student wrote about the roles of both elected officials and ordinary citizens:

> I think my definition of democracy is similar to most people, and that is: government for the people, by the people. However, the way I think about what that actually means is different than some that I have heard. I think that democracy is a fragile thing and needs to be nurtured always. We cannot be lazy in the maintenance of our freedom. We can't depend on the people we put in office to take care of this by themselves, we need to work just as hard as them. This can be done through many things, but the biggest one for me is individual responsibility. I think that only when every individual tries to be the best versions of themselves that America (or any democratic state) can be the best version of itself.

In more artistic language, another student wrote about his "working definition" of democracy as that of a mural that is constantly shifting, "with colors and shadows that fade and blur." He continued:

> This mural is comprised of the opinions, decisions, ideals, and ideas from all the people that make up a community, regardless of any member's background or personal narrative. Democracy gives government a stable, fair framework to exist by; however, it only works if its constituents are active, aware, and respectful of the enormous task and responsibility that the rule of the people entails.

In richly diverse ways, students defined democracy as a way to organize a community, as something fragile needing nurturing, and as something that requires people to be active, aware, and respectful of their responsibility as citizens.

Written reflections captured the range of views held by students, but interviews were also conducted with students after the conclusion of the course to gain further insight into how they came to understand the content discussed during the seminar. One student spoke about his definition of democracy prior to taking this course:

> So pre-seminar, I mean, I would probably say what a lot of other people would say—democracy is about majority rule, and everybody gets a vote, and taking that vote of the majority and going with that decision. I mean, that's democracy—just voting, taking the majority, and moving on.

However, the same student, when asked about his understanding of deliberative democracy, talked about the development of his thinking over the course of the semester:

> So, over the course of the semester, the two terms I definitely understood well ... deliberative democracy came to be, really, seeing them together; the idea that deliberation is done anywhere, anytime, anyhow, with any number of people on any type of issue…. It's just a really generic way of trying to get through a problem, and resolving with different viewpoints and different people trying to achieve different values. And … the point with democracy is understanding that, you know, there is a majority rule, and eventually, you have to make some type of decision; and so, a lot of times it's just easier to go with that majority rule, but the idea that the deliberation could play a role, and potentially changing people's viewpoints so they vote for

something different. Not necessarily changing how you make the decision, but, you know, deliberating about it and trying to get people either to join your conversation or maybe think of a different way that they can look at it, and vote differently, so maybe it's in your favor, you know, if one of the viewpoints is maybe just trying to get people to talk about it.

This idea of getting people to "talk about it" was paramount to the course, not only in relation to content but also to structure. The reference to stories from one of the students in the course referred to the second week of the semester during which students read about the different ways in which individuals can conceptualize themselves and their world, even when they are working with the same resources to inform their thinking (see Cronon, 1992). The idea that people are constantly confronted by different and sometimes competing ways of knowing the world became a hallmark of the course as terms such as "democracy" and "education" were considered.

Thematically, discussion topics tackled fundamental issues such as deliberative democracy, community politics, higher education, diversity, technocracy and expertise, complex problem solving, citizenship, and public work. While readings came from a variety of sources, there were two main texts for the class, both relatively recent edited volumes (i.e., Barker, McAfee, & McIvor, 2012; Nabatchi et al., 2012). They offered an introduction to the growing field of study related to deliberation, both in theory and practice, to students otherwise unfamiliar with this literature.

Each week, students wrote short reflections about their thoughts, reactions, and connections made based on the readings. The reflections also offered opportunities for students to raise questions with their peers. For this reason, each weekly reflection was collected the day before class and compiled into a single document. For the first 20 minutes of each two-and-a-half-hour class, students would read all of the reflections, allowing each individual's response to inform the discussion during class rather than writing only for me, the instructor. After the start of each class, discussion would last for more than hour. After a robust discussion, however, we would shift to the practical dimensions of the class organizing and planning a deliberative forum to be held at the end of the semester.

Practicing the Theory

As a group, the eight students worked together to complete all the planning, organization, and training needed to conduct a forum for the university community and those beyond campus. Participating in deliberative forum trainings in accordance with the National Issues Forums Institute (NIFI) model, the students were paired together for the forum as moderators and recorders. The topic for our forum was shaped, in large part, by a nationwide push by various organizations to convene campus communities around the role of higher education utilizing the NIFI issue guide *Shaping Our Future: How Should Higher Education Help Us Create the Society We Want?*[2] This topic, while still larger and beyond the scope of power for students participating in the one-time deliberative event, was much closer to the deliberative body (in this case, students and other university community members) than other issues. One critique of public deliberation is that it is "just talk" (Polletta, 2008, p. 1), but a first step in addressing a complex problem is understanding the nature of that complexity and engaging others with diverse views on that topic to help inform one's own views well before taking action in response.

Partnering with the provost's office, the university library, and the political science department, students learned about the importance of advertising events, coordinating logistics and supplies, and then successfully moderating deliberative forums with diverse populations. They utilized Twitter and Facebook to advertise, and created a YouTube video to encourage student participation. They learned, in short, about the multifaceted aspects of planning a large-scale event for a diverse group of students, university faculty, and staff, as well as broader community members.

"Working Through" Together

When training as moderators for the deliberative forum, students were introduced to Yankelovich's *Coming to Public Judgment* (1991) and the concept that one looks beyond public opinion polls and creates opportunities for citizens to better understand complex issues and to engage in what he called public judgment. In *Toward Wiser Public Judgment* (Yankelovich & Friedman, 2010), a follow up to *Coming to Public Judgment*, Yankelovich lays out three stages of learning and public judgment: consciousness raising, "working through," and resolution. It is the

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[2] For more information, see https://www.kettering.org/wp-content/uploads/Shaping-Our-Future.pdf.

working through of public issues that requires the most time as people wrestle with tensions and trade-offs.

In their own ways, students experienced a sense of working through the challenges of being introduced to new concepts and ideas, making sense of how to work with others in the organizing of a deliberative forum, and then writing a final paper on their own topic of interest—whether that was the role of social media in deliberation, disability and inclusion issues in deliberation, or the civic culture of a university.

In the first assignment for the course, in which students provided definitions for terms such as democracy and education, many defined education as a lifelong process that transcends formal settings. In a post-seminar interview, one student talked about how he had learned to approach problems differently and how deliberation had become integrated into such a view. When asked if he felt there were any lasting impacts from participation in the course, he stated:

> I think a big change would be how to approach problem solving. After some of my other courses, we've learned to identify different types of problems, and one of the types of problems is what we would classify as adaptive challenge. It's not … technical, per se, that there's an answer out there that is known and you can apply that answer to the problem, but the adaptive challenge is that something is going to have to change, whether it's in the values, peoples' behaviors, or what is hoped to be attained … and so, deliberative democracy can really help bring about some of that understanding by working through the different values that people have, different perspectives, and different desires that people have, and trying to find either a common ground or a work around that is feasible for everybody.

> As I look forward to being a manager someday at a business, how can I take that ability of problem solving and working with, whether it's employees, fellow co-workers, or employers—you know, people that I would consider my boss—and how can we work with those skills of deliberative democracy to challenge problems that aren't technical, that are more in depth on the idea that values and behaviors are going to have to change, that's gonna take time … that's, you know, a little bit more. So, I definitely hope to use what—some of the skills that I have, but just the idea

that deliberative democracy is a very distinct way of problem solving that can be applied to certain situations.

The importance of understanding and addressing problems transcends discussions about deliberative democracy. As expressed in the last quotation, the applicability of problem-solving skills, which require engaging and working with others about problems that "are more in depth" and beyond technical challenges, has a relevance in diverse settings—civic, corporate, or otherwise.

Conclusion

In thinking about deliberative pedagogy, I return to the question posed at the beginning of this article: In what ways can deliberative pedagogy cultivate deliberative democracy in both the classroom and in the life and culture of a college or university? Deliberative pedagogy invites faculty members (and other educators) to rethink their roles and relationships with learners. A different degree of ownership emerges when decisions are made in collaboration with students as they define their own learning experiences.

Additionally, deliberative pedagogy opens up the possibility that classes might be viewed more as "free spaces" where discussion and learning take place, reflecting the type of intellectual community noted by Palmer and Preskill (Evans, 2010; Evans & Boyte, 1992). Free spaces develop "when participants in civic sites have a significant measure of ownership and opportunities to develop public capacities" (Boyte, 2015, p. 4). If "the fate of higher education and the larger democracy itself is inextricably tied to the way those of us in higher education understand citizenship, practice civic education, and convey our purposes to the larger society," then pedagogical approaches such as deliberative pedagogy play a role in the broader work of higher education being a "crucial *anchoring institution of citizenship*" (Boyte, 2015, pp. 1, 3). As the higher education engagement movement asks how it can play a more explicit role in communities, institutions must actively address concerns about the ways they convene people around public issues and how deliberative practices can inform and shape such processes (Higgins, 2015; Hodges & Dubb, 2012).

Finally, faculty must interrogate their pedagogical practices and how they approach their work as educators. As a conceptual framework, civic studies helps cultivate a space within the academy where scholars and students can draw from a range of disciplines for thinking about the question "What should you and I do?"

and offering responses and paths forward to address the fact that there is "much less scholarship than we need that combines facts, strategy, and values that deals with the human scale of politics" (Levine, 2011, p. 7). Inviting students to not only wrestle with questions about the role of education and deliberation, but also to co-create the space in which they engage with such topics is a deliberative and intentional act that more scholars should embrace. If higher education is preparing young people to be engaged citizens, it should start now.

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