

THE EFFECT OF PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING  
ON THE PROVISIONING PROCESS

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ABSTRACT

The hypothesis of this dissertation is that as more of us become actively engaged in deliberations concerning local economic/political issues, the happier, more tolerant, and more understanding we can become. This is a philosophical dissertation because PB's potential benefits are researched by examining the works of relevant American social philosophers who wrote about these benefits. The research uses scientific methodology to examine social policy, as advocated by John Dewey. Foster's theory of institutional adjustment explains what is needed for PB to realize its potential benefits. Dewey's insight on internal deliberation explains how individuals can change to think of themselves as part of the community, to meet one of Foster's three principles of change.

The Iroquois Confederation is an example of an egalitarian democratic society with an oral constitution. The earliest settlers in New England are reviewed to learn about their Congregationalist policy, which empowered each church congregation to govern themselves.

Next, Thomas Jefferson's motivation for his ward system proposal seems to have been directed toward increasing public happiness through public participation. Then, three transcendentalist writers are analyzed. Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, and

Walt Whitman advocated the power of self-reflection to teach people that they have unlimited potential, the importance of using one's voice and the importance of equality.

Next is consideration of the pragmatic political thought of John Dewey and of C. Wright Mills. Dewey believed that improving the methods of public communication was a key to improving democracy, which should also help people become more tolerant. Mills, like Dewey, believed that small publics could help individuals as well as the community. The vision of participation of the Port Huron Statement inspired social movements in the 1960s. Alfred Schutz studied how people can come to understand each other through face-to-face communication. And finally, Robert Putnam's social capital is explored to learn why people get more done together than separately.

Finally, two suggestions are made for PB in NYC, to test the hypothesis of this dissertation: First, improving public deliberation within PB, and second, suggesting PB reach out to additional social justice organizations. This could help PB grow, which should help the participants as well as our political system.

## APPROVAL PAGE

The faculty listed below, appointed by the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies, have examined a dissertation titled "The Effect of Participatory Budgeting on the Provisioning Process," presented by George Robert Bateman, Jr., candidate for the Doctor of Philosophy degree, and certify that in their opinion it is worthy of acceptance.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

This dissertation is an investigation into the ways that the Participatory Budgeting (PB) process affects the provisioning process. Economics is embedded in society and cannot be separated from it (Polanyi, 2001). We are all social beings. Society can be viewed as the sum of all social relationships. Social relationships can be viewed as actions to safeguard our social interests, which include our social standing, our social claims, and our social assets (Polanyi, 2001). Understanding the social relations behind human activities helps one to understand them. In this dissertation, the provisioning process refers to all the relationships, organizations, and customs that go toward the production and distribution of all the goods and services that are used to satisfy human needs, including the fundamental tangible needs, such as food, clothing, and shelter, as well as intangible needs. These needs may or may not be exchanged through the market (Dugger, 1996; Power, 2004). This study includes a comprehensive review of the ways PB affects the economy, from a provisioning perspective. The hypothesis of this dissertation is that as more of us become actively engaged in deliberations concerning local economic/political issues, the happier, more tolerant, and more understanding we can become. The PB process provides a mechanism for citizens to get together in neighborhood assemblies to make decisions about a portion of their municipal budget. A more comprehensive definition of PB is given in this section. This research contributes to understanding the benefits that individuals and society receive as a result of the PB process.

Not only does the PB process participate in the provisioning process by distributing public goods and services in a more equitable manner, but, through its deliberation

component, PB transforms it via changes in the interactions of people in the PB assemblies. It will be shown that, in addition to distributing goods and services more equitably, increased deliberation in the PB process can also meet the human needs for increased public happiness, good governance, and equality. Increased deliberation in PB can promote empathy, counter inequality, and clarify, inform, and foster collaboration (Heller & Rao, 2015).

The factors that cause the PB process to have a positive effect on the distribution of the public goods and services portion of provisioning include specific design decisions of PB that have been seen to increase participation. The greater the participation in a PB process, the greater the percentage of the public will be voting on how to allocate the public goods and services that city officials have authorized the PB process to distribute. This means that the distribution of public goods and services will more closely reflect the will of the people. Thus, as PB participation increases, the PB process approaches the fairest way to distribute public goods and services. Since PB has a more equitable impact on provisioning at high levels of participation, the factors that increase participation are examined.

There are also less apparent benefits from PB, such as an increase in public happiness. Thomas Jefferson believed that one result of active participation in local political decision-making was increased public happiness. Happiness is a need satisfied by the PB process. Another benefit of widespread use of PB is a better functioning representative democracy, as explained by John Dewey's pragmatic social philosophy. The PB process teaches people how to deal with political issues through discussion and debate. These are skills that help the democratic process function better. By definition, a well-functioning government gets more done and satisfies more human needs than a dysfunctional

government. Thus, better political governance is another need that is met by PB. Alfred Schutz, in his search for social equality, discovered an ethical value of ultimacy: the single individual wishing to make his personal opinion heard and appreciated (Barber, 2004). Schutz reasoned that overcoming political anonymity was needed to foster equality of opportunity. His solution was that individuals needed to have their personal opinions heard and appreciated in small publics, such as families or discussion groups (Barber, 2004). The PB process provides such a public forum for individuals to be heard and appreciated. Thus, movement toward equality of opportunity is another need met by PB. Also, individuals who are not encumbered with discrimination will be happier and more productive than individuals who encounter discrimination on a daily basis.

### **Why Is this Study Important?**

In the *General Theory*, Keynes wrote that the two faults of capitalism are an unequal distribution of income and wealth and the occurrence of unemployment (Keynes, 1964). These fundamental flaws of capitalism result in poverty even during the boom times. People living in poverty must rely more heavily on government programs to meet basic needs, which means that governments, including local governments, always have an important role to play in the provisioning of the people.

In the current global climate of austerity, nearly all governments have reduced their spending. Reduction of government spending has the effect of slowing down the economy (Lerner, 1947). During times of slow economic growth, it is critical that public spending be distributed in the fairest possible manner, since more people depend on it. And increased participation in the PB process can help accomplish this goal.

The PB process is a worldwide movement that was invented in Brazil in 1989. PB is now used in over 1,500 cities around the globe (Baiocchi & Ganuza, 2012). The rapid growth of PB has resulted in a variety of rules and procedures being used with a corresponding assortment of results. It is important to know which practices encourage participation. It is useful to examine not only which rules and practices increase participation, but also why the public deliberation of PB has proven to be so popular.

Why has public deliberation motivated social agency in such a dramatic way? In addition to examining what increases participation, this study also examines the philosophical foundations behind the enthusiasm for PB. By examining the appeal of public deliberation, it may be possible to incorporate design features into PB that will increase its popularity and its participation rates.

As stated previously, higher participation leads to a more just provisioning of the public goods and services that PB is authorized to allocate. This is important because it means that the budget under the control of PB is being spent in the fairest possible manner. Studying the PB process and the popularity of public deliberation reveals the essence of what makes this process work and why it has become a worldwide movement.

One way to increase participation in the PB process would be to attribute all of the contributions that the PB process makes to the provisioning process. In addition to distributing public goods and services in the fairest manner, the PB process contributes toward many human needs such as public happiness, good governance, and equality. If people understood the impact PB could have on their community, more might chose to participate in existing PB processes or start new PB processes.

This study looks more closely than other studies at some of the needs that are satisfied by participating in the PB process. A philosophy of PB is needed because without such a foundation, the contribution PB makes to the provisioning process cannot be properly evaluated. Without such an understanding of PB, it is likely that the PB process will receive less enthusiastic support than it deserves. It is important to attribute all the benefits of the PB process in order to determine its impact on the economy, to justify building new PB processes, and supporting existing ones.

I would argue that once the significance of the results of the PB process are known, the popularity of PB could substantially increase. This could lead to transformative changes in the way people view their role in democracy. The synthesis of the relevant social philosophies of Jefferson, Dewey, Schutz, and others leads to the conclusion that developing an individual's capacity to achieve their full potential in the public forum, also helps society achieve its full potential. The PB process is a way of life that could start a virtuous cycle leading not to a perfect world, but to a better world where the priorities are human happiness, cooperation, and the willingness to do the work of negotiating solutions to local political and economic questions.

Peter Lichtenstein wrote that the economic theories that were an alternative to neoclassical theory, and in the classical tradition, defined the economic problem to be both physical and social. “The social problem is that of designing appropriate institutions which can cultivate the higher needs of human society while at the same time providing for society’s subsistence needs” (Lichtenstein, 1983, xiii). The PB process is an institution whose participants are able to satisfy higher needs while distributing public goods and services.

The higher needs of human society include equality and a sense of belonging in the community. PB could be a precursor to the fulfillment of Harold Cruse's challenge to Black economists to create new economic forms to develop the Black Economy. Due to widespread ethnic and racial residential segregation, PB can help minorities build a sense of belonging in their own communities. Traditionally disenfranchised groups are given economic and political power by voting for projects within their communities. Also, disadvantaged communities receive more investment through the social justice aspect of PB. Cruse saw the need to "organize, mobilize, and educate the Black community toward "group rather than individualistic solutions" and a "certain community point of view" that Cruse (1967/1984) saw as necessary to "condition the climate" for Black economic development" (Cruse, 1967/1984, as cited in Tauheed, 2008, p. 721). The education for PB is training in how to deliberate, which is reviewed in chapter 5.

### **What is PB?**

Organizations other than local governments have used the PB methodology to formulate their budgets. Universities, housing authorities, state governments, and other organizations have used PB practices for their budgets as well (Lerner, 2011). This study focuses on PB used for municipal budgets, which is by far the largest implementation of PB.

There are two related ways that PB transcends the traditional liberal concept of democracy. The first is that by participating, people are engaging in a learning process during which some of their preferences will likely change, because they come to see issues from the perspectives of others. Second, as people develop their skills in debate and compromise, they experience a desire to do more (Marquetti, da Silva, & Campbell, 2012).

As people become better negotiators, they become more effective, which increases their satisfaction and their desire to do more.

## **History**

PB is not a completely new concept. There is a long tradition in New England and elsewhere for small town residents to get together in town hall meetings to make decisions about the local budget. Larger cities, too, often hold consultation meetings to get citizen guidance on budget priorities (Lerner, 2011). For the PB process to work well, the local municipalities must be committed to helping it work by providing expert advice and providing the information needed for the assemblies to make informed decisions.

In 1989, the Workers' Party in Porto Alegre, Brazil invented PB. The purpose of PB was to include traditionally disenfranchised populations, such as low-income people, in the political process. PB has spread to hundreds of cities throughout the world (Marquetti et al., 2012). The PB process gives city residents a say in setting priorities for portions of their city's budgets and assumes that they know what is best for their own neighborhoods.

## **How It Works**

PB helps to build the social fabric of a community by encouraging residents to discuss, debate, and decide capital improvement budget issues. Putnam referred to social networks as social capital, which can be used to help individuals and groups (2000). These social ties can be used to help people in the community accomplish goals. When it works well, a virtuous cycle can be created which will further strengthen the social networks and thus further helps community members. PB transforms society's idea of democracy from a passive to an active concept (Heller, 2001). Instead of watching the local news to see what their local government has done, citizens take an active role in government by building

social networks for the purpose of deciding how portions of the city budget will be spent. PB provides the space people need to make connections with each other and build the social networks needed to accomplish local political goals.

The heart of the PB process is the neighborhood assembly, in which the government provides information about the portion of the budget that is available for the PB participants to allocate. This is where participants brainstorm ideas through discussions and debates. There is a wide variation in how the PB process is implemented in different parts of the world. In Brazil, the municipality is divided into regions, with several neighborhood assemblies in each region. Delegates are elected to go to the regional assemblies. The number of representatives sent to the regional meetings is based on the turnout at the neighborhood meetings. Final votes are taken at the regional level. Committees are formed at the regional level to develop concrete proposals that can be put to a vote. The committees spend four to six months meeting with the appropriate city agencies to estimate the costs and time frames needed to implement the proposed projects. In some cities, bus caravans are organized for the regional representatives to help them become familiar with various projects in the city. In Brazil, each city devises a formula for a quality of life index, which is used to distribute more resources to regions with higher poverty, less infrastructure, and denser populations. Each region elects two representatives to the Municipal Budget Council, which oversees the municipal PB process and makes a final budget recommendation to the city. Since PB is not a legislative body, any projects approved through the PB process have to be voted on by elected representatives in the traditional way. The final piece of the PB process is for designated neighborhood committees to monitor the implementation of the

approved projects and report back to the Municipal Budget Council, which gives the PB process a self-improving aspect (Wampler, 2007b).

This description is a very high level overview of how PB works in Brazil. There are almost as many variations and permutations of the original Porto Alegre model as there are implementations of the PB process. Every municipality writes its own rules and procedures based on its perceived needs and historical experiences. In Brazil, PB contains a strong social justice aspect. A Quality of Life index is used to redistribute resources to the neighborhoods most in need. Outside of Latin America, it is unusual for PB processes to have a strong social justice aspect.

The PB process is new to the United States. It has been implemented in parts of Chicago and New York City, in several communities on the west coast, and in a few other cities. Each city writes its own rules concerning exactly how the process works, such as what projects are eligible and the timing of the annual budget cycle. In Chicago, each alderman has a discretionary budget for capital infrastructure projects which is used to provide funding for PB<sup>1</sup>. Of course, the same restrictions that apply to the alderman, such as the type of projects that may be funded, also apply to the PB process. The neighborhood assemblies are where brainstorming sessions for possible projects occurs. Budget committees are formed for each thematic area such as public safety, transportation, and parks. The delegates to the budget committees are self-selected from the participants in the assemblies. Each committee works with the appropriate city agencies for four months to develop concrete budget proposals from the ideas generated in the assemblies. The proposals

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<sup>1</sup>In New York City, some city council members allow PB to use their discretionary capital budget for their district.

are summarized on poster boards and displayed for public viewing with members of the budget committees available for questions. The community votes on the proposals, and the most popular ones are funded. In an effort to increase participation, people need not be registered to vote, nor do they need to be United States citizens. They just need to live in the community and be at least 16 years of age (Lerner, 2014).

### **Civil Society**

Civil society is important, because it can help to institutionalize the means for citizens to engage in a deliberative process of deciding economic/political issues – issues that are usually decided within the political society. Civil society organizations can help by being willing and able to engage in both cooperative and contentious forms of politics in order to extend the scope of authority of the PB process (Wampler, 2007a). Organized groups need to continue to advocate for the PB process, even after a PB process has been established, to ensure that the PB process will succeed in the face of changing circumstances and changing power dynamics. Civic society can provide the space needed for the PB process to operate and possibly expand.

In *The Roots of Participatory Democracy* (Williams, 2008), the phrase “civil society” is used in two ways. First, civil society is the sphere of social organizations that is separate from, but connected with the state and the economy. Second, civil society is the sphere of voluntary associational activity where a great deal of daily life is experienced (Williams, 2008). It is important to recognize that civic society is not formally part of government and economic institutions and that it can remain relatively free of their influences and control. Civic society thus can remain free to advocate for neighborhood

interests. The fact that civic society is entwined in daily life is the source of its potential power.

In order for the PB process to function well, it is important to achieve an appropriate balance between the aggregate reasoning of political society and the deliberative reasoning of civil society. There is a divide in the democracy literature between aggregating individual preferences which are taken as given and deliberative theorists who believe “people will modify their perceptions of what society should do in the course of discussing this with others” (Milner & Katzenelson 2002, p. 237). Neoclassical economic theory takes individual preferences as given. Also, many scholars in Political Science believe that the role of government is to aggregate individual preferences. However, taking individual preferences as given does not allow for changing priorities and instead tends to lock in a snapshot of preferences. Deliberative theorists are concerned with getting people to engage each other with the goal of converging to the common good (Milner & Katzenelson, 2002). Society’s values and preferences change over time. And deliberative theorists believe encouraging people to deliberate is the best way to discover these preferences. Finding a balance between aggregating individual preferences and continuous public deliberation of preferences would maintain stability while providing a mechanism to clarify and define changing values and priorities, in light of new information and better perception.

The aggregate reasoning of political society and the deliberative reasoning of civil society may not always be mutually reinforcing, but may be in tension with each other. The political establishment may not wish to share their power. Or the public may not be willing or able to work within the existing political system. The capacity of citizens can be understood by examining the relationship between political and civil society (Heller, 2009).

The capacity of citizens may be increased by ensuring effective deliberation in the PB process. Effective deliberation has the tendency to reduce inequality. Pervasive inequality may prevent some groups from effectively engaging with the government. This certainly excludes some groups from deliberating in the PB process (Heller, 2009). “A high degree of consolidated representative democracy as we find in India and South Africa should not be confused with a high degree of effective citizenship” (Heller, 2009, p. 125). The ineffectiveness of their civil societies prevents them from being able to overcome this obstacle. The legal rights of people should not be confused with the capacity to participate in political or civil society.

Baiocchi and Ganuza (2012) believed the success of PB in being designated as an international “best practice,” by the World Bank and the United Nations, has led to less reliance on civil society. This was the source of strength for the initial implementations of PB. As was mentioned previously, an important role of civil society is to advocate for the PB process. The lack of an engaged civil society results in PB processes that have less authority. “In Europe, for example, most experiences are advisory with the exception of Spain” (Baiocchi & Ganuza, 2012, p. 9). Of course, that is not to say that these new PB processes do not benefit the participants or the communities. However, the most successful PB processes have combined the institutional capacities of the state with the associational resources of civil society (Heller, 2001). Civil society involvement results in a more robust PB process.

### **Deliberation in the PB Process**

Before focusing on the values of public deliberation, it may be useful to briefly review the other ways policy is determined in a democracy.

Deliberation represents one of three decision-making mechanisms in a democratic society: voting, bargaining, and arguing (deliberation) (Elster, 1998)....[F]or both voting and bargaining, actors' preferences are seen as exogenous to the process itself. In contrast, deliberation relies on the endogenization of preferences. (Heller & Rao, 2015, p. 5)

In other words, neither voting nor bargaining affects individuals' preferences, which could be taken as given. But deliberation can change individuals' preferences, which can converge during the course of deliberation.

Deliberation is at the heart of the PB process. It is what can happen in the PB assemblies after experts have informed the citizens about the specifics of a local issue which is on the agenda to be discussed. Jane Mansbridge defines deliberation in the public sphere as "mutual communication that involves weighing and reflecting on preferences, values, and interests regarding matters of common concern" (2015, p. 29). Mutual means two or more people need to be actively involved in communicating. The weighting and reflecting portion of the definition means careful thought is needed to reach a decision. The last portion of the definition, matters of common concern, specifies that the matter involve the entire group. Mansbridge (2015) says this is a minimalist definition because it does not include the standards to judge the quality of a deliberation, such as using persuasion and not coercion and showing mutual respect.

Deliberation is important for the creation and modification of societal values, which is important since we are constantly evolving based on new circumstances and new information.

Public debates and discussions, permitted by political freedoms and civil rights, can also play a major part in the formation of values. Indeed, even the identification of needs cannot but be influenced by the nature of public participation and dialogue. Not only is the force of public discussion one of the correlates of democracy...but its cultivation can also make democracy itself function better. (Sen, 2001, p. 158)

When democracy functions better, the government is more responsive to the needs of the people. And these needs are more clearly defined due to deliberation.

Deliberation may not lead to consensus, but it can bring us closer to an agreement, in the following four ways.

First,...it can reduce the degree to which manipulation, deception, and propaganda inevitably seep into any communicative situation. ...

Second, deliberation can provide new information ...

Third,...it can facilitate coordination....

Fourth,...as participants gain greater understanding of others, they are more likely to take others' preferences or moral worldviews into account. (Heller & Rao, 2015, p. 7)

Thus, deliberation can clarify, inform, foster collaboration, and promote empathy.

Another reason that deliberation is important is that the procedures needed to make deliberation work are a good way to counteract inequality.

But even if formal political equality prevails in many democracies in the developing world, inequalities of agency and associational capacity remain the norm. In thinking through the possibilities for deliberation, one has to begin from a position of skepticism: making deliberation work calls for specific processes, practices, and institutional designs that can level or at least neutralize associational inequalities. (Heller & Rao, 2015, p. 15)

Doing the work of enabling deliberation gives voice to those who have had no voice. This is true not only for developing countries, but for developed countries as well. "This is a challenge that is faced both by well-established democracies such as the United States (especially with the differential participation of diverse racial groups) and by newer democracies" (Sen, 2001, p. 159). Inequality is pervasive around the world, and deliberation

is a good counter measure. In chapter 5, changes to the rules, procedures, and practices of PB are proposed that should encourage more deliberation.

### **How Can PB Facilitate Change?**

Before the benefits of active involvement in the PB process are examined, it would be useful to examine how PB can facilitate change. Foster's theory of institutional adjustment is examined to learn how PB can change to be able to realize its potential benefits. In particular, his principle of recognized interdependence, which is part of his theory of institutional adjustment, is reviewed. In the case of PB, once people develop the habit of thought that they are part of their community, they learn how interdependent we all are with each other. Once people see themselves as part of the community, they should be willing to put in the time and energy to make the PB process work. Then, Dewey's insights on how impulses and internal deliberation interact are reviewed in order to learn how people change their habits of thought – in the case of PB, changing from thinking of themselves as individuals to thinking of themselves as part of the community. Next, Taplin's ethnographic study is used to see how opinions most often change in the PB process and how Dewey's insights may help explain it.

### **Foster's Theory of Institutional Adjustment**

Foster published very little; instead, he chose to focus on passing knowledge on to his students in the classroom, as part of the oral tradition. In 1981, the *Journal of Economic Issues* published several of his previously unpublished papers, with introductory passages written by Baldwin Ranson.

Foster's theory of institutional adjustment was part of his search for the unification of the concepts of economics (Foster, 1981a). In the introduction to "The Theory of Institutional Adjustment," Ranson wrote,

Unification was necessary and could be approached, Foster maintained, through the theory of institutional adjustment. Such a theory is a particular application of a unified theory of value, which in turn is a particular application of the theory of knowledge on which science must be erected. (Foster, 1981a, p. 923)

Foster's theory of value was based on the Veblenian dichotomy which analyzes our patterns of behavior, thought, and valuing (Sturgeon, 2010). The dichotomy consists of the institutional and the technological (Foster, 1981a). Institutions are habits of thought and behavior that come from myths, legends, and traditions. Institutions are social traditions and beliefs that are passed from generation to generation. The Institutional part of the dichotomy is resistant to change. Technology refers to learned behaviors and patterns of thought associated with the machine process and the scientific method. The machine process dictates the most efficient way to use tools. Technology means behavior that is instrumentally verifiable. But it is not just about using tools; it is about approaching life with a scientific curiosity and gaining knowledge. Technology is the dynamic side of the dichotomy that promotes change. Veblen did not believe in eternal truth. He believed that cultural change is the result of a scientific point of view.

Foster refined the dichotomy to ceremonial behavior – instrumental behavior. This helped, because for many people technology was all about tools and their use. Using instrumental behavior in place of technology emphasized that the process was more than just about tools. Instrumental behavior was about intelligent behavior. "Foster's ceremonial-instrumental dichotomy is such a significant refinement of the institution-technology

dichotomy that it can be considered qualitatively different" (Waller, 1982, p. 764).

Clarifying the terminology made the dichotomy more useful in analyzing human behavior.

The dichotomy helps us to understand and explain change. One of the few constants in modern life is change. It is driven by the instrumental behavior of constantly seeking and applying new knowledge. This causes stress with ceremonial resistance and forces change upon us. Human behavior can be broken down and examined by using the dichotomy (Sturgeon, 2010).

Now that Foster's theory of value has been defined, we can examine Foster's theory of institutional adjustment. In the introduction to Foster's "The Theory of Institutional Adjustment," Ranson wrote, "Foster considers a real economic problem to exist whenever there is disrappor among human activities that are supposed to be correlated in continuance of the productive process" (Foster, 1981a, p. 924). Replacing "productive process" with "provisioning process," as previously defined, would make this definition of a real economic problem inclusive of all economic activity and applicable to the scope of this study. Foster introduced the concept of institutional adjustment as an alternative to the concept of institutional evolution. After the three principles of institutional adjustment are met, adjustment takes place.

The first principle is instrumental primacy (Sturgeon, 2010, p. 48).<sup>2</sup> Some tension, or stress, needs to have been added. Before any institutional adjustment can take place there must be some stress within the institution's value structure. This stress increases over time when the instrumental experience of value increasingly differs from the ceremonial set of

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<sup>2</sup> Foster's term was technological determinism. In Sturgeon's 2010 paper, he renamed it instrumental primacy. "The latter [instrumental primacy] is more in line with terminology used to define the Veblenian dichotomy and in light of contemporary usage of technological determinism, is less likely to be misunderstood."

values. Part of this principle is recognizing the difference between “what is being done” and “what ought to be done” (Foster, 1981b). In the case of PB, it is clear that better results for individual participants and the community could be achieved. Later chapters will make policy recommendations for how this could be done.

The second principle is recognized interdependence (Foster, 1981b). People in the institution who will be affected must recognize how their relationships will be modified, and they need to accept the new pattern. This principle identifies what is needed to get from “what is” to “what ought to be” (Foster, 1981b). This may be the most important principle for the PB process. Once people recognize that they are part of a community, they should be more willing to take an active role in the PB process. “The principle of recognized interdependence is simply that the immediate pattern of any institutional adjustment is specified by the pattern of interdependencies recognized by the members of the institution” (Foster, 1981b, p. 933). In the case of PB, this means that people recognize their interdependence with others in the community. They see themselves as part of the community.

The third principle is minimal dislocation (Foster, 1981b). Adjustments in one institution may cause related adjustments to occur in other institutions. This principle states that changes required of another institution cannot be greater than that institution is able to do. This principle can set limits to the extent or speed of an adjustment. For PB, this would refer to changes that city agencies need to make in order to be available for the PB budget committees. Also, some individual participants will need to make big time commitments to help make PB work. Of course, the PB process, for the individual citizen, is voluntary. People will only get involved to the extent that they have the time to do it. As people start to

see the benefits of their involvement, they can slowly increase their time and emotional commitments.

The three principles are necessary and sufficient to explain the process of social adjustment. They address what is needed for an institution to perceive that an adjustment is needed, how the people in the institution need to respond, as well as defining the limitations of the adjustment. Once each PB process is able to satisfy these principles, PB should be able to realize its potential benefits.

### **Dewey's Insights on Internal Deliberation**

One of Dewey's insights was that habits govern nearly everything that we do on a daily basis. Even our thought is submerged in habit (Dewey, 2002). "Without habit there is only irritation and confused hesitation" (Dewey, 2002, p. 180). Habits allow us to brush aside thoughts of little decisions we are faced with each day while we do our jobs, interact with our friends and family, and perform our necessary chores.

And once habits are formed, by definition they tend to persist. "Habits once formed perpetuate themselves" (Dewey, 2002, p. 125). Habits become comfortable and allow us to live our lives.

The question is how we change our habit of thinking of ourselves primarily as individuals, as opposed to thinking of ourselves as primarily part of the community. Dewey wrote, "impulse operates as a pivot, or reorganization of habit" (Dewey, 2002, p. 156). It is a way to temporary interrupt the routine.

The release of some portion of the stock of impulses is an opportunity, not an end. In its origin, it is the product of chance; but it affords imagination and invention their chance. The moral correlate of liberated impulse is not immediate activity, but reflection upon the way in which to use impulse to renew disposition and reorganizing habit. (Dewey, 2002, p. 170)

The release of impulse allows us time to reflect and possibly act in a new way. This new response may become a new habit.

Our social institutions help shape our social customs. Dewey writes that “social customs are not direct and necessary consequences of specific impulses, but that social institutions and expectations shape and crystallize impulses into dominant habits” (Dewey, 2002, p. 122). If impulses were released during PB assemblies, the PB assembly could help shape new habits of community discourse.

The interruption of habit is due to “an excess of preferences, not natural apathy or an absence of likings” (Dewey, 2002, p. 193). This could be due to being presented with new ways of thinking about community issues during PB assemblies. Or it could be due to hearing about the plight of the less fortunate in the community. The bus caravans were organized by PB in Brazil to help budget delegates become familiar with projects outside of their own neighborhoods. It can help change a delegate’s habit of only voting for projects in her neighborhood, if another neighborhood is more in need. Emotions can lead to good and reasonable decisions. “The conclusion is not that the emotional, passionate phase of action can be or should be eliminated in behalf of a bloodless reason. More ‘passions,’ not fewer, is the answer” (Dewey, 2002, pp. 195-196). Passions that conflict with our habits cause us to pause and reflect on staying with a habit of thought, or a habit of doing, versus changing a habit of thought or a habit of doing something.

### **Opinion Change in PB**

Talpin found in his ethnographic research that opinion change can be the result of deliberation.

The speakers of the two or more conflictive positions hardly change their mind in that case – I did not observe it – but, again, the audience, having weak preferences, can go on one or the other side.... The vote of the non-speakers (there were in general few abstentions) indicated that they had made up their mind in the course of the discussion. (Talpin, 2011, p. 151)

The people actively engaged in deliberation are seldom, if ever, swayed from their original positions. However, the people listening to the deliberation do change their opinions.

Talpin (2011) found that the most common type of discourse in PB assemblies was monological sequences where arguments are voiced but not answered and do not result in collective discussions.

Monological sequences...can have an influence on silent participants (those with weak preferences on the issue at stake, therefore remaining silent), helping them to form an opinion on an issue they did not know or care about before. In that case, it is argumentation rather than deliberation that made the audience change (or make up) its mind. (Talpin, 2011, p. 151)

Thus, in some cases, new information delivered in a public forum can help to change or form opinions.

How do these two forms of discursive communication relate to Dewey's insights? Face-to-face interactions among people can be emotional. This could be part of the effectiveness Putnam found in social capital, which is where people form social networks to advance community projects. "The theory of social capital can be summed up in a short formula: relationships matter" (Talpin, 2011, p. 13). Social relationships could provide the passion needed to trigger reflection, which could lead to changing a habit of thought.

This may lead to people thinking of themselves as part of the community, which would meet Foster's second principle of recognized interdependence – which, once the other two principles are addressed, will enable PB to realize its potential benefits. Once PB

realizes its potential benefits, it should grow, which should help the participants as well as the community.

### **Arguments against PB**

There are many positive aspects of the PB process. However, its detractors should be given fair consideration. There seem to be three main objections to PB. The first is that elected officials are better qualified and better informed. Thus, they should be allowed to do the job for which they were elected without interference from PB assemblies. The second argument is that the management of the city and its neighborhoods should be left to the experts. The third objection is that public deliberation is too time consuming. People are busy and can make better use of their time. Each of these concerns will be addressed and evaluated.

#### **Elected Officials Are Better Qualified**

The first argument against PB is that elected officials should be allowed to do their job because they are best able to do it. This argument is based on the belief that our current pluralist democracy is working well. The argument for pluralism “starts from two basic assumptions” (Greenberg, 1983, p. 31). The first assumption is that the citizens of the United States are not up to the task of getting directly involved. In other words, “citizens of the United States do not measure up to the standards set by theorists of democracy” (Greenberg, 1983, p. 31).

Contemporary social science research demonstrates that most Americans are uninformed about politics and are neither overly interested nor particularly sophisticated about political events. Most Americans feel little compulsion to lend their energies to public affairs given the attraction of private pursuits. (Greenburg, 1983, p. 31)

Even if most Americans wanted to participate directly, most Americans do not have the knowledge to make well informed decisions.

The second assumption supporting the idea of a pluralist democracy is that our current political system works. “It [the American political system] not only provides for a peaceful transfer of power between ruling groups but for a method whereby the voices of all groups with interests in government policy are heard and considered” (Greenburg, 1983, p. 32). The system seems to work well enough.

If the two assumptions are correct, then political apathy fulfills a needed function in our society. If most people actively participate, the voice of the people will likely supersede the influence of the special interests, who are informed and interested in the system. Our political system would be influenced by people who are largely uninformed and disinterested. “We should be thankful for this [political apathy], because it is primarily among the mass public that we find intolerance and extremism” (Greenburg, 1983, p. 32). If most people did actively participate, we could be in worse shape.

A counterargument to the first assumption is that people can develop an interest in local politics and can learn about policy proposals during public deliberations. Also, public deliberation with trained PB facilitators should help people to arrive at reasonable solutions by helping to ensure that everyone is heard and by encouraging deliberation to take place. This is based on the belief that people want what is best for their own communities.

Concerning the second assumption, while it is true that our current pluralist democracy allows special interest groups to have a say in government, the hypothesis of this dissertation is that as more of us become actively engaged in local governance, the happier, more tolerant, and more understanding we can become. This would enrich our democracy by

encouraging participation and cooperation. Later chapters will explain the historic development of governing practices leading to these intangible benefits. Chapter 5 outlines changes to PB's rules, practices, and procedures which are expected to prove the hypothesis, which should increase participation. Also, it is assumed that governance will improve as more people deliberate policy issues. At the least, governance should more closely reflect the will of the people.

In addition to these arguments, we should address gridlock, which is commonplace and works against the idea that the current system is functioning as intended. The roots of the current political polarization of politics in the United States can be traced back to Newt Gingrich, who became the House Speaker during the Clinton presidency (Mann & Ornstein, 2016). Gingrich sought “to unite his Republicans in refusing to cooperate with Democrats in committee and on the floor, while publicly attacking them as a permanent majority presiding over and benefiting from a thoroughly corrupt institution” (Mann & Ornstein, 2016, p. 33). Of course, compromise is critical to ensure our political system functions smoothly. “He [Gingrich] was able to convince his party to vote en masse against major Clinton initiatives” (Mann & Ornstein, 2016, p. 39). But perhaps one of the most divisive practices promoted by Gingrich was the social separation of politicians in Washington D. C. based on party membership. “At the urging of Gingrich and other leaders, most [elected Republican politicians] left their families in their districts and spent as little time in Washington as possible” (Mann & Ornstein, 2016, p. 40). This prevented politicians from getting to know their fellow politicians in the other party. It is much easier to demonize and refuse to compromise with people you do not know. A well designed PB process brings people of all political persuasions together in face-to-face discussions and meetings, where they are

honestly trying to arrive at mutually agreed upon solutions. Later chapters examine how this tends to break down barriers between people. It's harder to demonize people that you have gotten to know.

### **Local Management Should Be Left to Experts**

The second objection to PB is that we should leave the management of our cities and neighborhoods to the experts. The logic of this argument is easy to see. "The important governmental affairs at present, it may be argued, are also technically complicated matters to be conducted properly by experts" (Dewey, 1954, p. 123). Dewey explains why many issues require experts: "The questions of most concern at present may be said to be matters like sanitation, public health, healthful and adequate housing, transportation, planning of cities....These are technical matters" (1954, p. 124). At least for the most technical public issues, it makes sense that experts need to play a role within democracy. For example, PB allows experts to explain technical issues before participants deliberate and set their priorities.

Dewey tried to reason why, among some, there may be a tendency to move from rule by democracy toward expert rule, when he wrote:

It may be argued that the democratic movement was essentially transitional. It marked the passage from feudal institutions to industrialism, and was coincident with the transfer of power from landed proprietors, allied to churchly authorities, to captains of industry....The essential fallacy of the democratic creed, it is urged, is the notion that a historic movement which effected an important and desirable release from restrictions is either a source or a proof of capacity in those thus emancipated to rule, when in fact there is no factor common in these two things. The obvious alternative is rule by those intellectually qualified, by expert intellectuals. (1954, pp. 204-205)

Just because the masses have emancipated themselves from feudal restrictions, it does not mean that the people have the qualities or capacities needed to share in governing the state.

However, there are logical reasons for democratic governance.

The strongest point to be made in behalf of even such rudimentary political forms as democracy has already attained, popular voting, majority rule and so on, is that to some extent they involve a consultation and discussion which uncover social needs and troubles. (Dewey, 1954, p. 206)

The democratic process is a good way to discover what is most needed. And as was pointed out, and will be covered in greater detail, the PB process can and does expand the capacities of those who participate.

In the United States, there is an ideology that is closely related to expert rule. “Managerialism is an ideology, one that emphasizes technique and process above all else....Its thrust is toward efficiency and objectivity” (Skidmore, 1993, p. 191). And democracy, especially deliberative democracy, is very time consuming. Thus, democracy is inefficient. And of course, politics is messy.

The Progressive reformers saw managerialism as a way to clean up local governments.

The Progressive reformers sought to break the power of the bosses. Because the support of the voters was the source of a boss’s power, it followed that it was necessary to restrict the rule of the voter, at least of the voter who was likely to support the boss. (Skidmore, 1993, p. 212)

This ideology, which seeks to separate administration from policy, has proven to be popular.

Merit-based bureaucracies to administer government service reflect the ideology, at least to some extent. Such bureaucracies are widespread, especially in industrial countries. Moreover, in the United States the highly popular council-manager form of city government is an attempt to ensure city administration by expert professionals. Initially at least, the council-manager movement also was an explicit attempt to remove entire governments as far from politics as possible. (Skidmore, 1993, p. 196)

But many times it may be impossible to separate administration from policy. “In fact, the contention that policy and administration may be separated dates from the early theorists of

public administration, and modern theory recognizes that it is impossible to separate the two completely” (Skidmore, 1993, p. 195). Thus, the result, of managerialism is that we become less democratic, which means that the people are no longer involved in decisions about many issues that directly affect their lives.

The question, at this point is, will managerialism continue to be popular, or will it evolve into a more democratic form?

With good will and effort, bureaucracy, technology, and an emphasis upon efficiency can be made compatible with human values. When and if this occurs, they will have proved a boon to humanity. If it fails to occur, managerialism will have prevailed and will have contributed greatly to the development of a dehumanized society. (Skidmore, 1993, p. 217)

An extreme type of managerialism would be the appointment of one person who does not answer to the voters or to local elected officials to run a city government.

Several states have passed laws that enable the governor to appoint an emergency manager, in the case of a fiscal emergency, to run a city. We will look at what happened in Flint, Michigan, where the lead contamination of water was a result of an emergency manager law.

Worried that ailing cities were a threat to the state’s credit rating, the Michigan legislature passed the Local Government and School District Fiscal Accountability Act. The Act allows cities to be placed in receivership if their economic health indicators are sufficiently dismal....Once the city is in receivership, the Act invests the receiver – what the law terms the “emergency manager” – with nearly unlimited authority....Perhaps the most troubling aspect of the law is that the receiver is free to continue in his position in his position until he alone is satisfied that the financial emergency has receded. (Kossis, 2012, p. 111)

The idea is that one person, not responsible to the voters, can get things done that an elected mayor and city council were unable to do. “Most receivers do things that were previously debated and rejected by the city, such as cutting services, raising taxes, or firing public

employees" (Kossis, 2012, p. 1135). The perception, apparently, is that the solutions to a city's financial troubles are always known, and it just takes a complete outsider from city politics to have the courage to take the unpopular, but needed, actions.

However, we need to keep in mind that the democratic process, at both the national and local levels, have pragmatic benefits. In *Development as Freedom*, Sen wrote,

No substantial famine has ever occurred in any independent country with a democratic form of government and a relatively free press. Famines have occurred in ancient kingdoms and contemporary authoritarian societies, in primitive tribal communities and in modern technocratic dictatorships, in colonial economies run by imperialists from the north and in newly independent countries of the south run by despotic national leaders or by intolerant single parties. But they have never materialized in any country that is independent, that goes to elections regularly, that has opposition parties to voice criticisms and that permits newspapers to report freely and question the wisdom of government policies without extensive censorship. (Sen, 2001, pp. 152-153)

This points to the value that the democratic process places on human life. "In a democracy, people tend to get what they demand, and more crucially, do not typically get what they do not demand" (Sen, 2001, p. 155). Of course, no one wants a famine.

In Flint, Michigan, the emergency manager, isolated from local accountability, decided to save money by changing the source of the city's water supply from the Detroit water system to corrosive river water, which leached lead from the pipes.

Flint, led at the time by an emergency manager who was appointed by the state to help solve the city's fiscal woes, switched water supplies in April 2014 – in part to save money, which the emails [emails released by the governor's office 1/2016] showed amounted to \$1 million to \$2 million a year. (Bosman, Davey & Smith, 2016, p. 3)

The emergency manager risked the lives of Flint residents by making this decision. He chose to move toward balancing the budget in spite of the risk to human life. A democratic process

would, most likely, have insisted on extensive multiple studies to guarantee the safety of the drinking water. The safety of the children would have been given priority over the budget.

It seems clear that a democracy may avoid crisis situations, such as famine at the national level or unsafe drinking water at the local level, which other forms of governance are not able to avoid. The people should be allowed to demand that which is most important to them.

### **PB is Too Time Consuming**

The third objection to PB is that public deliberation is too time consuming. People are busy and can make better use of their time. PB is a voluntary process. No one is compelled to participate. The suggested changes to PB's rules, practices, and procedures listed in chapter 5 are designed to increase participation by increasing the intangible benefits of PB for individuals. Once people learn that these intangible benefits are the result of the PB process, it is anticipated that more people will volunteer.

The second response to the objection that the PB process is too time consuming is that, for many people, it is time well spent because there are many benefits to both the individual participant and the community:

It [PB] is a tool for educating, engaging, and empowering citizens and strengthening demand for good governance. The enhanced transparency and accountability that participatory budgeting creates can help reduce government inefficiency and curb clientelism, patronage, and corruption.

Participatory budgeting also strengthens inclusive governance by giving marginalized and excluded groups the opportunity to have their voices heard and to influence public decision making vital to their interests. Done right, it has the potential to make governments more responsive to citizens' needs and preferences and more accountable to them for performance in resource allocation and service delivery. In doing so, participatory budgeting can improve government performance and enhance the quality of democratic participation. (Shah, 2007, p. 1)

As was stated previously, empowering citizens by allowing them to participate in deciding local issues helps to increase their public happiness, makes them better citizens, and improves the quality of governance.

The deliberative aspect of PB also helps to form our values and identify our needs. Our values and needs are clarified and refined whenever we publicly express and defend them.

### **Problem Statement and Hypothesis**

Dewey believed that social inquiry, as well as the physical sciences, could use the scientific method to guide research. There are additional challenges in the social sciences to using the scientific method. “One obvious source of the difficulty lies in the fact that the subject-matter of the later [social inquiry] is so “complex and so intricately interwoven that the difficulty of instituting a relatively closed system...is intensified” (Dewey, 1938, p. 487). It’s not really possible to isolate a particular social interaction from other social interactions. “All inquiry proceeds within a cultural matrix which is ultimately determined by the nature of social relations” (Dewey, 1938, p. 487). Thus, in social inquiry, it is harder to prove cause and effect.

The first step is to define the problem statement. Dewey wrote, “the ultimate end and test of all inquiry is the transformation of a problematic situation (which involves confusion and conflict) into a unified one” (1938, p. 491). As was stated previously, there are dozens, if not hundreds, of different implementations of PB around the world. These differences are due to different rules, procedures, and practices for the various PB processes. Of course, these differences produce a corresponding number of effects on PB’s potential benefits. There seems to be some confusion concerning what the practical goals of PB should be or

could be. One way to evaluate the potential benefits would be to use Foster's instrumental theory of value. It has been explained how the potential benefits of PB are good for people by promoting good governance, equality, fairer distribution of public goods, increased deliberation, and public happiness. Thus, trying to realize these potential benefits would be instrumental behavior.

Since there is disrappor among PB processes that should be correlated in continuance of the provisioning process, a real economic problem exists<sup>3</sup>. The problem statement is how can the potential benefits of PB, for both individuals and society, in addition to the provisioning of public goods and services, be realized? This study isolates the variables that could help the potential benefits of PB emerge. These variables are the rules, procedures, and practices of each PB process. Then, specific rules, procedures, and practices of PB are proposed that may result in these potential benefits being achieved. Thus, the hypothesis is the following: It is proposed that as more of us become actively engaged in deliberations concerning local economic and political issues, within the PB process, the happier, more tolerant, and more understanding we can become.

## **Methods**

This is primarily an emergent philosophical study of PB. This is a philosophical study because it uses historical ideas developed prior to the invention of PB, pertaining to the potential benefits of PB, in order to develop a philosophy of PB. It is emergent in the sense that PB is an emerging phenomenon that is constantly changing and evolving due to the changing political and economic dynamics affecting each individual PB process. An

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<sup>3</sup> Derived from Foster's definition of a real economic problem, as described above.

awareness of the relevant philosophies is needed in order to better understand the potential benefits of PB so that recommendations can be made which will permit PB's potential benefits to be realized. Broadly speaking, the effect PB has on the Political Economy is examined.

In this case, Political Economy is used in the classical sense. The classical economists considered areas outside the scope of current orthodox economics, such as social, political, and historical processes (Forstater, 2004). PB's potential effects on politics are explored by reviewing the relevant writings of Thomas Jefferson, John Dewey, and others. By using the Political Economy methodology, this study explores all the effects PB has on society. "Political economy considers society as a whole; ethical values are prominent and are embodied in specific institutions, and historical considerations are important" (Bortis, 1999, 17). The ethical implications of PB are examined in the relevant writings of Alfred Schutz.

Thus, this study is interdisciplinary because it includes the disciplines of both Economics and Political Science. This study involves Economics because it focuses on the effect PB has on the provisioning of society in fulfilling human needs. Political Science is addressed by closely examining the PB process, which is an innovative method of local governance that empowers the people to make decisions about a portion of municipal budgets. The social phenomena which are the potential benefits of PB for both individuals and the community are studied.

These social phenomena are the result of historical processes moving through time within specific cultural contexts. "Every social phenomenon, however, is itself a sequential course of changes, and hence a fact isolated from the history of which it is a moving

constituent loses the qualities that make it distinctively social" (Dewey, 1938, p. 501). This is one reason why it is helpful to do a philosophical study that examines the history of these social phenomena. By studying the philosophies of PB's potential benefits, we can better comprehend how they occur and we can better perceive their effect on individuals and society.

A philosophy of PB is developed by synthesizing the relevant writings of Jefferson, Dewey, Schutz, and others. These social philosophers create a foundation for a philosophy of PB that explains the far-reaching effects a successful PB process can have on a local municipality, which may include a just distribution of public goods and services, increasing public happiness, increasing political cooperation, and removing barriers that stand in the way of equal opportunity. And as was pointed out, increased deliberation in PB may promote empathy, counter inequality, and clarify, inform, and foster collaboration (Heller & Rao, 2015). Both the individual and social benefits of the PB process are discussed.

The PB process is a new phenomenon that is difficult to explain for several reasons. First, almost every PB process is different, in some way, from every other. PB processes are different due to motivations of local politicians in supporting PB, strength (or weakness) of local civic groups, degree of support from local governments, and different histories of local communities. Also, it is well known that the PB process is popular, but it is hard to quantify exactly why. The philosophy of PB that is developed in this study provides an explanation of why PB is popular by explaining how different human needs are satisfied. Different implementations of PB will satisfy these needs to different degrees. Or in the case of a poorly designed PB process, these needs may not be satisfied and may lead to a failure.

Dewey proposed a scientific methodology for social inquiry that I will use to gain a better understanding of how to adjust the PB process. Dewey wrote, “facts have to be determined in their dual function as obstacles and as resources” (1938, p. 499). The dual function of facts is related to the social phenomenon being studied. Facts can either impede the movement toward a social phenomenon or facts can help a desired social phenomenon occur. For PB, the facts are the rules, procedures, and practices of each PB process.

These facts can be obstacles to, or create favorable conditions for the social phenomena, which are PB’s potential benefits. In chapter 5 it is shown how an ethnographic study of three European PB processes, described in *Schools of Democracy* (Talpin, 2011), helps to identify the consequences of PB rules, procedures, and practices.

The rules of PB include what types of projects PB may consider, amounts of money available, who is eligible to participate in PB, and the timing of the annual budget cycle. Enough money needs to be available for projects that are important to people in order to help get them excited about participating. The procedures of PB include the seating arrangement of participants and the use of facilitators. Procedures can either encourage or discourage deliberation. Practices in the PB process may include how PB reaches out to traditionally disenfranchised groups within the community as well as inviting specific individuals to neighborhood assemblies in order to encourage deliberation.

It is important to understand how the facts of this study relate to the social phenomena being studied. For example, when the rules, procedures, and practices of PB empower participants to make decisions affecting their community, the participants can experience public happiness. Also, when participants learn citizenship skills, such as public speaking and compromising, they can help contribute to good governance either indirectly

or directly, by becoming politicians. These relationships are explored in the following chapters.

In chapter 5, specific rules, practices, and procedures will be proposed that may result in the desired social phenomena. In this study, the social phenomena are the potential benefits of PB which include public happiness, good governance, fair distribution of public goods, equality of opportunity, and increased deliberation. These social phenomena are intertwined and tend to reinforce each other.

Scientific methodology requires that the results of any experiment be examined. Dewey wrote:

that policies and proposals for social action be treated as working hypothesis, not as programs to be rigidly adhered to and executed. They will be experimental in the sense that they will be entertained subject to constant and well-equipped observation of the consequences they entail when acted upon, and subject to ready and flexible revision in the light of observed consequences. (1954, pp. 202-203)

It should be expected that changes may need to be made in the light of observed consequences. And even if things are going as expected for a period of time, changing political and economic forces may affect the PB processes in unexpected ways. For social inquiry, it is also important to keep in mind Dewey's means-end-continuum. The means-end-continuum refers to the fact that ends are the means to future ends; and, means are the ends of prior actions. Thus, they both have consequences.

The sole alternative to the view that *the end* is an arbitrarily selected part of actual consequences which as "the end" then justifies the use of means irrespective of the other consequences they produce, is that desires, ends-in-view, and consequences achieved be valued in turn as means of further consequences. (Dewey, 1972, p. 42)

The end does not justify the means. Any additional consequences of the means, as well as consequences of the end should be continuously evaluated so that decisions can be made

concerning possible future adjustment of the means used or possible future adjustment of the originally proposed end.

## Outline

The structure of this dissertation is as follows: first, we examine the philosophical history of the potential PB benefits by looking at the work of several social philosophers. Then, the history of PB is explored. Next, we see how the insights of the social philosophers explain why a deliberative PB is important and how the hypothesis of this dissertation could be proved true. The New York City PB (PBNYC) is used as an example of how this could be accomplished.

In chapter 2, we examine the philosophical history prior to the twentieth century of PB's potential benefits. We start by looking at the early Iroquois and the early New England town hall meetings. Then we examine Jefferson's ward system proposal. Next, a few Transcendentalist Writers, such as Emerson, Thoreau, and Walt Whitman, are reviewed.

Chapter 3 studies the philosophical history from the twentieth century of PB's potential benefits. We look at pragmatic political thought, including Dewey's *The Public and Its Problems* and *The Political Writings*. Also included is C. Wright Mills' analyses of the causes of alienation in modern society; his suggested solution is briefly reviewed. The significance of the Port Huron Statement and its ties to Dewey and Mills is explored. Alfred Schutz's ethical democracy is also be reviewed. And finally, Putnam's notion of social capital is briefly examined.

Chapter 4 contains the history of PB starting with its invention in Brazil in 1989 and its rapid expansion throughout Latin America. Then PB's worldwide expansion, including

the role of the United Nations and the World Bank, is examined. And finally, PB's introduction and rapid expansion in the United States is reviewed.

Chapter 5 looks at how the social philosophers reviewed in previous chapters point to the need to develop a deliberative PB process. Some of these social philosophers show how public deliberation can prove the hypothesis of this dissertation. Specific recommendations are made for PBNYC to make it more deliberative. After deliberative PB is achieved, possible future directions are briefly reviewed. This dissertation concludes with a very brief review of why public deliberation is important.

## CHAPTER 2

### GOVERNING PRACTICES PRIOR TO THE TWENTIETH CENTURY WHICH COULD BE MORE FULLY INCORPORATED INTO THE DESIGN OF THE PB PROCESS

This chapter explores the early philosophical history of the potential benefits of PB.

Understanding the historical development of these ideas is needed because our ideas and philosophies are historically contingent and evolve over time. Gaining a better understanding of public happiness, government by consensus, principles of democracy, unlimited potential of people, importance of conscience, equality, and how democracy could evolve will help motivate us to look into ways that PB's rules, procedures, and practices could be used to promote these benefits.

The first section is "The Ward System Proposal and its Antecedents" and is about Jefferson's proposal, after he left office, to create a ward system in the United States to provide a foundation for our representative democracy. His vision was that this proposal would benefit individuals, the local communities, and the federal government by increasing public happiness, among other things. Jefferson's proposal was inspired by the American Indians and the New England townships, which comprise the first two parts of this section.

The next section is "Transcendentalism," which refers to a loosely bound group of American writers in the mid-nineteenth century. The work of Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, and Walt Whitman are briefly reviewed to explore how they contributed to pragmatism, provided philosophical support for local direct democracies, and provided a vision of an improved democracy.

## **The Ward System Proposal and Its Antecedents**

Thomas Jefferson is best known for being the author of the Declaration of Independence. Of course, he was also the third President of the United States. Jefferson was a great thinker with a wide variety of interests and viewpoints. After he left office, Jefferson proposed in letters to various people that a ward system be created in the United States. Each ward would be small enough so every resident could meet in town hall-type meetings to decide community issues. Each ward would be like a little republic which would maintain the roads, run the schools, be responsible for police protection, and take care of the poor (Jefferson, 2011). Jefferson wrote, “I am not among those who fear the people. They, and not the rich, are our dependence for continued freedom” (Jefferson, 2011, p. 1400). Jefferson felt that putting faith in the people was the best way to guarantee our freedoms. In Jefferson’s vision, everyone would become an acting member of the government.

The ward-republics seem to be patterned both on the New England townships and on the American Indians’ tribal councils (Matthews, 1986). Jefferson was an admirer of American Indians and their way of life. And in a letter to Joseph Cabell, he acknowledged the power of the New England townships concerning their opposition to an embargo. Jefferson wrote, “I felt the foundations of the government shaken under my feet by the New England townships” (Jefferson, 2011, p. 1381). Jefferson knew from prior experience with New England townships that the proposed ward system would have great political power, and he knew that the tribal councils worked well for the American Indian.

Jefferson studied and wrote about American Indians. In ‘Notes on the State of Virginia’ Jefferson wrote: “the Powhatans, the Mannahoacs, and Monacans, were the most powerful [confederations of tribes in Virginia]” (Jefferson, 2011, p. 219). He created a chart

of the Indians that lived in Virginia that listed the tribes and their locations (Jefferson, 2011).

Jefferson also studied how American Indians interacted with each other, including how they governed themselves. “Their [American Indians] only controls are their manners, and that moral sense of right and wrong, which, like the sense of tasting and feeling, in every man makes a part of his nature” (Jefferson, 2011, p. 220). Jefferson admired the way that American Indian tribes were able to live in peace and without coercive government, which was more than the civilized Europeans had achieved (Jefferson, 2011). Within each tribe and within each confederation, the American Indians lived in peace.

Of course, there were Indian wars between confederations and between tribes that were not part of the same confederation. “Indian wars were usually begun for defense or revenge. Because of the common practice of *blood revenge*, it was hard to end a war” (Barrett, 1946, p. 111). The blood revenge custom made it practically impossible to stop an Indian war, after it began.

These frequent wars were the cause which brought into use the Indian Confederacies and Leagues of Nation, such as the Iroquois League in the northeastern United States, the Creek Confederacy in the southeast, [and] the Sioux or Dakota Confederacy in the middle west. (Barrett, 1946, p. 116)

As will be noted in the next section about the Iroquois League, sometimes these confederations would expand to include additional tribes.

Of course, the other type of Indian war were the wars between American Indians and European settlers.

After European settlers came wars between the Indian tribes gradually grew less frequent until they may be considered a thing of the past, but wars between Indians and whites multiplied during the post-Columbian period [after Columbus discovered America]. Foremost among the causes of wars with Indians was the seizing of lands by the white colonists. (Barrett, 1946, p. 117)

It is not clear if the reduced warfare among Indian tribes was due to increased confederation activity, or if the reduced warfare among Indian tribes was due to the greater danger of the European settlers. Perhaps both had the effect of reducing warfare among the Indian tribes.

In part, it seems tribal society may have been a model for the ward system. Jefferson did not believe that coercive government was needed to force people to live together in peace. "Jefferson bases his theory on sociability, not on individuality" (Matthews, 1986, p. 64). Tradition, custom, friendship, and clans allowed American Indians to live in peace within confederations of tribes. Everyone had a say in Indian tribes, which were ruled by consensus.

First the Iroquois Indians' way of life is briefly examined. Then, the earliest New England town hall meeting will serve as a contrast to the American Indian consensus form of government. Finally, Jefferson's ward system and its philosophical foundations are reviewed.

### **Iroquois Indians**

There was an established democracy in North America long before the first colonialists landed in New England. The League of the Iroquois, or Haudenosaunee, also known as the Five Tribes (Senecas, Onondagas, Oneidas, Mohawks, and Cayugas), until the Tuscaroras tribe became the sixth tribe to join the confederation, had a functioning democratic government for perhaps hundreds of years before the Mayflower set anchor at Plymouth Rock in 1620.

A wide range of estimates exist for the founding date of the confederacy. Iroquoian sources, using oral history and recollections of family ancestries (the traditional methods for marking time through history), have fixed the origin date at between 1000 and 1400 A.D.; Euro-American historians have tended to place the origin of the Iroquois league at about 1450. (Johansen, 1982, pp. 21-22)

Whatever the date of the founding, the purpose was to put an end to war between the tribes by agreeing to an oral constitution, known as the Great Law of Peace. Around 1880, the Great Law of Peace was translated and written in English (Johansen, 1982).

Under the new law, the blood feud was replaced with the Condolence Ceremony (Grinde, 1977). Indians no longer had the right to avenge a murder by taking the life of the murderer. The victim's family now had to accept strings of wampum from the murderer's family (Grinde, 1977). "The League of the Iroquois arose out of the desire to resolve the problem of the blood feud" (Grinde & Johansen, 2008, p. 28). The Iroquois' constitution put an end to the clan law that required blood revenge (Grinde, 1977). Peace was the goal.

Any decision, such as going to war, had to be unanimous among all the tribes (Johansen, 1982). The chiefs had no power except to persuade. "Indian chiefs would refuse to make decisions without discussing it in council and then gaining approval of most if not all the people" (Grinde, 1977, p. 60). This method of government is time consuming but it encourages widespread participation. "The Iroquois' law and custom upheld freedom of expression in political and religious matters, and it forbade the unauthorized entry of homes" (Johansen, 1982, p. xiv). The League of the Iroquois protected the rights of the people by allowing the people to govern themselves.

How was the League of the Iroquois able to maintain such a system of governance? First, the behavior of individuals was influenced by a strong sense of belonging.

Instead of formal instruments of authority, the Iroquois governed behavior by instilling a sense of pride and belonging to the group through common rituals and the careful rearing of children. Iroquois youth were trained to enter a society that was equalitarian, with power more evenly distributed between male and female, young and old, than was common in Euro-American society. Iroquois culture could be loosely called a "shame culture" because of its emphasis on honor, duty, and collaborative behavior, while European culture was more "guilt-oriented," since it

emphasized an authoritarian hierarchy and advancement through the acquisition of property, status, and material possessions. (Grinde & Johansen, 2008, pp. 27-28)

If the Iroquois failed to do their duty and behave in an honorable fashion, they would feel a strong sense of shame. Another important reason for the success of the League of the Iroquois was their system of checks and balances.

The deliberative process of the League of the Iroquois was designed to ensure that no one was left out of the discussions and that no mistakes were made in their decision. First, the Council of the Mohawks divided into three groups.

The third party is to listen only to the discussion of the first and second parties and if an error is made or the proceeding is irregular they are to call attention to it, and when the case is right and properly decided by the two parties they shall confirm the decision of the two parties and refer the case to the Seneca Lords for their decision. When the Seneca Lords have decided in accord with the Mohawk Lords, the case in question shall be referred to the Cayuga and Oneida Lords on the opposite side of the house. (Grinde, 1977, p. 149)

After the Cayuga and Oneida Lords agreed, the matter was referred to the Onondaga for deliberation and decision (Grinde, 1977). Every tribe had to agree before a decision was reached.

Another component that contributed to the success of the League of Iroquois was that it was designed such that clans overlapped tribal boundaries within the confederacy (Johansen, 1982). “The clan structure and the system of checks and balances kept one nation from seeking to dominate others and helped to insure that consensus would arise from decisions of the council” (Johansen, 1982, pp. 28-29). It was important that people had ties with each other that transcended their tribal nations.

The Europeans and American colonists were very impressed with the culture of the American Indians. “The American Indian was believed to have found many of the answers”

(Johansen, 1982, p. 120). Many of the ideas in the Declaration of Independence may have come, at least in part, from Jefferson's views of American Indian society. "The "pursuit of happiness" and the "consent of the governed" were exemplified in Indian polities to which Jefferson...often referred in his writings. The Indian in Jefferson's mind...served as a metaphor for liberty" (Johansen, 1982, p. 102). The "pursuit of happiness" was the primary motivation for Jefferson's proposal for a ward system. The American Indians influenced our culture in many ways.

On September 16, 1987, the Senate of the United States passed Concurrent Resolution 76 to acknowledge the contribution of the Iroquois Confederacy. One clause of the resolution reads: "Whereas the confederation of the original Thirteen Colonies into one republic was explicitly modeled upon the Iroquois Confederacy as were many of the democratic principles which were incorporated into the Constitution itself" (United States Senate, 1987, p. 74). In many ways the Iroquois Confederacy was ahead of its time. Its model of governance is an example of humanity at its best.

### **Earliest New England Town Hall Meetings**

The New England town hall meeting is another method of governance that appears to be the other major influence on Jefferson's proposal for a ward system. Town hall meetings bring residents of a community together to discuss and decide issues that are of concern to the community. The first New England town meeting was held the summer of 1622 in Plymouth. The Pilgrims of Plymouth Colony were a religious separatist group seeking religious freedom by founding a new colony at Plymouth. Their first winter had been a disaster. "Though the Pilgrims intended a community on Plato's model, sowing common land the spring of 1621, only a third of the people survived their first winter"

(Burton, 1989, pp. 5-6). The purpose of the first town meeting was to divide the land among the families in order to increase productivity (Burton, 1989).

The Pilgrims of Plymouth Colony were a small group of Separatists, who were Congregationalists. They fled England to the Netherlands before setting sail in the ship Mayflower (Skidmore, 1998). “Having no charter from their government, they concluded the Mayflower Compact, which became the constitution of the new colony” (Skidmore, 1998, p. 19). This compact exemplifies the democratic principle of contractualism. And because the male passengers signed it, the compact is also an example of the democratic principle of free consent. This compact is an illustration of the Congregationalist principle of local control. Congregationalists believed the members of each church should determine how their church was run.

The Massachusetts Bay Puritans were another group of early colonists who settled in the New England area. “The Puritans, or Presbyterians, asserted that elected leaders, not the king of England, should hold power within the church” (Skidmore, 1998, p. 10). They believed in central control of local churches by their elected church leaders. “The Massachusetts Bay Company represented a powerful group of Puritans who had not only ample finances but also the security of a royal charter....The main group of Puritans arrived in America in 1630 to settle in Boston and nearby” (Skidmore, 1998, p. 20). However, the majority of Puritans who settled in the new world were not Presbyterians.

In spite of the beliefs of their financial backers, most Puritan colonists were Congregationalists at heart.

They had set sail across the ocean only after decades of denunciation of bishops and synods as dead historical husks of Christianity to be peeled away before the churches could regain their primitive vitality, only after decades of disagreement with the

Established Church, and the Presbyterian dissenters, over the scope of central surveillance of the churches of the realm. (Zuckerman, 1970, p. 10)

The fact that the Puritans had a charter may have slowed implementation of some of their preferences for Congregationalist policy. “But deliberate effort and the traditional shape of thought held the tendency to decentralization in some degree of control so long as the colony continued under its original charter” (Zuckerman, 1970, p. 16). However, the charter did not prevent the Puritans from doing what they believed to be right. “Despite their ostensible devotion to the Presbyterian principle which favored centralization of church authority, the Puritans soon adopted many practices of the Congregationalists, who favored local control of church affairs” (Skidmore, 1998, p. 20). The Puritans were true believers, and they had to try to do what they believed was right.

The Massachusetts Bay Puritans believed in their religion enough that they were willing to uproot their families and move to the new world in order to practice it. “Both towns and churches claimed the right to exclude those who they believed were morally unfit for membership” (Miller, 1991, p. 58). The Puritans believed that only the worthy should be allowed membership. The first town meetings dealt with land that had been granted to the group and divided it into space for a village green, a meeting house, and a school. The meetings also distributed land to families (Labaree, 1962). “These institutions, and particularly the church, gave the town a nucleus strong enough to withstand for a surprisingly long time the centrifugal forces that constantly threaten its dissolution” (Labaree, 1962, p. 166). The church was the core of these communities around which everything revolved.

A primary goal of the Puritans was harmony and consensus. “The strictures against contention which he heard from the pulpit on Sunday were echoed in the quest for consensus which he saw in town meeting a few days later” (Zuckerman, 1970, p. 50).

For whatever the stated business written in the warrant, the real business of a public meeting was always the consolidation of the community....Rather than risk contention, men preferred to put their differences aside so they could attempt to arrange an accord in the interval before the meeting was reconvened. (Zuckerman, 1970, pp. 184-185)

Harmony was valued over deliberation. There were many reasons for this attitude. First, they were living in a wilderness and they felt they needed to band together in order to survive. Also, the early colonists had no effective law enforcement. Thus, they tried to reach a consensus on all matters. “In the towns of Massachusetts peace was a preoccupation for the strikingly simple reason that there were no other adequate agencies of enforcement” (Zuckerman, 1970, p. 85). They had no choice but to keep the peace: “The town meeting solved the problem of enforcement by evading it” (Zuckerman, 1970, p. 93). They would postpone discussing an item if a consensus had not already been reached. People followed the teachings of their local church, even if it may have been at odds with centralized church authority.

The church in England was concerned about how church affairs were being handled in the new world.

In 1643, the Westminster Assembly convened in London to define beliefs and a system of church order, advancing a Presbyterian form of discipline. That same year, Parliament established the Commissioners for Plantation, a board empowered “to provide for, order, and dispose all things” in the colonies....Ultimately, the Massachusetts clergy would strongly reaffirm Congregationalism and would codify the system in the *Cambridge Platform* of church government – but not before lay people made clear that they would tolerate no other alternative. (Cooper, 1999, p. 68)

The laity had made it clear that they would not give up their role in governing local churches.

As important as the *Platform* was in codifying Congregational principles of limited authority, free consent, and lay participation, its significance for churchgoers extended far beyond its constitutional status. All along, the laity had been taught that their church practices represented biblical ordinances, not creations of men. The ratification and adoption of the *Cambridge Platform* served only to strengthen churchgoers' commitment to the inviolable biblical nature of the New England Way. (Cooper, 1999, p. 84)

Thus, the Puritans were Congregationalists who believed that each church should handle their own affairs. "The Puritans believed that the model for their church system could be found in the New Testament" (Miller, 1991, p. 59). The laity had an important role in the church. "Moreover, they made their decisions on the basis of principles such as limitations on authority, higher law, accountability, and popular consent" (Cooper, 1999, pp. 44-45). These principles contributed to democratic institutions as they subsequently developed.

The laity had an important role. "The records do confirm that throughout the colonial era virtually all congregations elected ministers and lay officers, held their leaders accountable to higher laws, and reached church decisions by popular consent" (Cooper, 1999, p. 10).

These are all related to important democratic principles. Additionally, the covenant was a contract people had to sign to become church members. Thus, it reflected the political principles of contractualism and free consent (Cooper, 1999). It would seem that the early Puritan church contained many elements that encouraged the development of democratic principles in the community.

However, the early Puritans were not democratic. By signing the covenant, men gave up their liberty. In a 1645 speech, Winthrop (governor of Massachusetts Bay Colony) stated

that by joining a covenant, men renounce their ability to do anything except that which has been agreed to (Winthrop, 1956). They were bound to follow the church in all matters. “The covenant, then committed men to conformity” (Zuckerman, 1970, p. 55). All had the liberty to follow the agreed upon interpretation of the Bible. “They [Puritans] did not believe in privacy or individual rights such as freedom of speech” (Miller, 1991, p. 61). And it was the duty of church members to monitor other members’ behavior and, if needed, to help correct it.

Puritans believed that the Bible provided answers to all questions. The Puritans therefore expected that reasonable men would be able to agree on *the* meaning of any passage, and that expectation compelled them to call dissidents unreasonable men if they persisted in their opinions after having been shown the light. (Zuckerman, 1970, p. 52)

Bible passages could be debated. But once the meaning was agreed upon, there should be no further reason for disagreement.

The Puritan lack of tolerance was, in part, a result of the seriousness with which they took ideas. They believed that their own ideas about the correct form of worship were true, and they defined liberty as the right to put those ideas into practice. (Miller, 1991, p. 61)

As discussed, Congregationalism contained the genesis of many democratic principles. However, the leaders of the community kept their use limited and tightly controlled.

Then there is the question of suffrage as defining membership in a community. “The Puritans restricted their membership to those who publicly proclaimed support for principles of the community” (Miller, 1991, p. 71). Miller wrote that for local direct democracies, perhaps the Puritan method of restricting membership made sense because people in a direct democracy would have more power than in a representative democracy. Thus, the character of the people would be much more important in a direct democracy (Miller, 1991).

However, it is possible that if local direct democracy were available to everyone, people would begin to see and experience the benefits of actively participating, such as public happiness and better governance, and begin to change and publicly support their communities.

The Puritans believed that the nature of man is evil, and thus mankind needed authority to control and restrain liberty (Winthrop, 1956). However, the Iroquois Indians, as described previously, showed what mankind could accomplish with the freedom of self-government and without the authority to control and restrain liberty.

### **Jefferson's Ward System Proposal**

Jefferson conceived of ward-republics to give everyone a voice in government. This was an innovative and original idea for implementing representative democracy. Through the system of wards, the government would be assured of keeping in touch with the concerns and the needs of the people. The people who live in the community are best qualified to govern the community (Jefferson, 2011). In addition to providing the best possible local governance, the ward-republics would continuously be providing experience and training that people could use to interact with or serve in the county, state, or federal government. This system would help train people to be good citizens in our representative government by providing a space where they could practice debating and compromising.

Jefferson believed the best way to protect our rights was to obtain the greatest degree of popular participation (Jefferson, 2011). “Through daily action in the ward-republics, then, Jefferson thinks he has found a permanent check to tyranny” (Matthews, 1986, p. 87). Jefferson had complete faith in the people, as a whole, to follow their conscience and do the right thing. In an 1819 letter to Spencer Roane, Jefferson wrote: “Independence can be

trusted nowhere but with the people in mass. They are inherently independent of all but moral law” (2011, p. 1426). Because Jefferson had a very positive view of human nature, he believed local direct democracy would work.

Jefferson incorporated the notion of local direct democracy with modern representative government.

His species of republicanism must be identified with a pyramid, starting from wards, nestled directly in the midst of the people, to counties, states, and the central Federal Government. The democratic impulse, starting with its home-made lessons in the “pure republics” at the base, travels up the various levels of the pyramid, its strength at each successive level depending upon the purity and force of the original impulse. (Koch, 1964, p. 164)

The mass of people at the base is the force that drives the system. The desire to participate, the desire for social interaction, and the desire for public happiness are what would inspire the mass of people.

Public happiness seems to be what motivated Jefferson to promote this ward system proposal. Jefferson’s choice of “pursuit of happiness,” in the Declaration of Independence, is interesting because he did not specify if he meant private happiness or public happiness. It seems reasonable to conclude that he meant both.

This freedom they called later, when they had come to taste it, “public happiness,” and it consisted in the citizen’s right of access to the public realm, in his share in public power – to be “a participator in the government of affairs” in Jefferson’s telling phase [2011, p. 1380] – as distinct from the generally recognized rights of subjects to be protected by the government in the pursuit of private happiness even against public power. (Arendt, 2006, p. 118)

In order to be happy, people needed to live up to their potential of being fully engaged in their communities. This included being actively involved with their neighbors in governing their own communities to be able to achieve public happiness.

If individuals do not exercise their right to public happiness and publicly participate in government, they become powerless and must be protected from the potential misuse of public power.

It [freedom] resides no longer in the public realm but in the private life of the citizens and so must be defended against the public and its power. Freedom and power have parted company, and the fateful equating of power with violence, of the political with government, and of government with a necessary evil has begun.  
(Arendt, 2006, p. 128)

By giving up our right to public happiness through participation we are creating a government that we must be protected from. By default, government must take up the slack by relying on its monopoly on violence to enforce its actions. The political parties and politicians take the power that was not claimed by the people. Inaction of the people results in their loss of public happiness, loss of power, and the creation of a government that the people must be protected from.

Government need not be a necessary evil which must be endured. Through public participation the people reclaim their power and freedom from coercive government. By becoming active in governing their communities the people become the government. Through the mouth of Theseus, the legendary founder of Athens and hence her spokesman, what it was that enabled ordinary men, young and old, to bear life's burden; it was the polis, the space of men's free deeds and living words, which could, endow life with splendor. (Arendt, 2006, p. 173)

Most importantly, public participation fills a need we have to be socially active.

The pursuit of happiness is the basis of Jefferson's ward system because it would guarantee a space where people could pursue public happiness through their participation in their community.

The basic assumption of the ward system, whether Jefferson knew it or not, was that no one could be called happy without his share in public happiness, that no one could be called free without his experience in public freedom, and no one could be called either happy or free without participating, and having a share, in public power.  
(Arendt, 2006, p. 247)

The ward system was meant to provide the means for the people to fulfill their desires for happiness and freedom. At the same time, it would create a much stronger nation that was much more flexible and responsive to the people.

By creating a public space where everyone could deliberate, the ward system would maintain the spirit of revolution. In a letter to James Madison in January 1787, Jefferson wrote, “I hold that a little rebellion now and then is a good thing, and as necessary in the political world as storms in the physical....It is a medicine necessary for the sound health of government” (2011, p. 882). Revolution is a time when everything is reexamined. Old ideas can be swept aside to make room for new innovative solutions.

The fact that revolutions do not create institutions to perpetuate the revolutionary spirit is a paradox. The goal of revolutions has been to create a new concrete and permanent foundation for society. And the revolutionary spirit is by definition constantly changing and evolving. It is ironic that freedom is the price paid for the foundation (Arendt, 2006).

Jefferson proposed the ward system because he perceived “that the Revolution, while it had given freedom to the people, had failed to provide a space where this freedom could be exercised” (Arendt, 2006, p. 227). A truly successful revolution would make the revolution permanent, without continuous violence, by creating space where the people could exercise their freedom. The founders, other than Jefferson, may have taken the revolutionary spirit for granted.

It was precisely because of the enormous weight of the Constitution and of the experiences in founding a new body that the failure to incorporate the townships and the town-hall meetings, the original springs of all political activity in country, amounted to a death sentence for them. Paradoxical as it may sound, it was in fact under the impact of the Revolution that the revolutionary spirit in America began to wither away, and it was the Constitution itself, this greatest achievement of the

American people, which eventually cheated them of their proudest possession. (Arendt, 2006, p. 231)

The Constitution failed to create the most important thing – a space for the participation of the people that would help ensure their freedom and happiness.

### **Transcendentalism**

During the mid-19th century, a loosely bound group of writers challenged the values of their world. They became known as Transcendentalists, and the period of their activity is sometimes referred to as the American Renaissance.

The transcendentalists contended that ideas could be innate. By this they meant that human beings possessed ideas and understanding that came neither through the senses nor from reasoning but rather from divine inspiration – or from God's presence in the world. (Skidmore, 1998, p. 142)

Thus, they argued that people should follow their conscience, "The transcendentalists did not rely solely upon reason. The emphasis instead was upon a consciousness of the absolute, the result more of intuition than of reason" (Skidmore, 1998, p. 143). The Transcendentalists believed that consciousness could reveal wisdom. "The goal of the transcendentalist was no less than the perfection of the world" (Skidmore, 1998, p. 143). We will see that they were, at least partially, successful in their efforts.

The influence of three Transcendentalists is briefly examined in this section. Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, and Walt Whitman are briefly reviewed to learn about their major contributions. This verse by Daisaka Ikeda celebrates these writers' influence.

As they grappled with / The realities of their times, / Emerson, Thoreau, and Whitman / Never silenced their leonine roar, / The crisp clarity of their call / Aroused long – stagnant minds / Urging a complacent society / Toward vibrant transformation. (Bosco, Myerson, & Ikeda, 2009, p. xv)

The Transcendentalists argued for justice, liberty, and equality. The Transcendentalists' focus on individualism was from the perspective that everyone needs to be aware of his or her potential and work toward accomplishing that which is achievable.

### **Ralph Waldo Emerson**

Emerson's primary goal was to encourage people to realize their full potential. "Emerson based his thought on the individual, not on institutions, which he considered at best to be necessary evils" (Skidmore, 1998, p. 147). He believed that individuals were the most important component of society. "I believe that Emerson was concerned more than anything with helping people gain awareness of and bring to full flower their limitless potential" (Ikeda, as cited in Bosco et al., 2009, p. 112). The focus of his work was to help people expand their consciousness. In "Nature," Emerson wrote, "Know then, that the world exists for you. For you is the phenomenon perfect" (1983, p. 48). This encouragement of people to consider self-improvement is seen throughout his work.

Emerson saw the process of self-improvement as being an ongoing necessity. In "Self-Reliance," Emerson wrote, "A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds...With consistency a great soul has simply nothing to do" (1983, p. 265). Consistently improving one's self results in constant change within one's self,

Emerson explained in "Nature" why self-improvement was so important. "The reason why the world lacks unity and lies broken and in heaps is because man is disunited with himself" (1983, p. 47). Emerson was going to the root of the problem by advocating for and helping people improve themselves, so that they could become united with themselves. "The only basis for a social and political order that made good government possible was the morality and goodwill of the individual" (Skidmore, 1998, p. 147). As people improved

themselves, their government would also be able to improve. “Governments have their origin in the moral identity of men” (Emerson, 1983, p. 566). The morality of men expresses itself in the formation of their governments.

If people failed to improve themselves, their government would suffer. “The transcendentalist believed that an unjust state depended upon the existence of a slavish people and that each person had not only the right but the duty to resist an unjust state” (Skidmore, 1998, p. 148). Thus, resistance to injustice was also part of transcendentalism.

For Emerson, another important part of self-development was morality. “The aim of Emersonian cultural criticism...is to expand powers and proliferate provocations for the moral development of human personalities” (West, 1989, p. 37). Morality was always an important part of the individual development. Emerson wrote in *His Journals*, “I have the belief that of all things the work of America is to make the advanced intelligence of mankind in the sufficiency of morals practical” (1982, p. 536). Provocation was a method used by Emerson to influence people, or as West put it, “The primary aim of Emerson’s life and discourse is to provoke” (1989, p. 25). Emersonian provocation would be directed at encouraging people to think and reflect.

Emerson wanted people to reflect because he believed that only individual reflection, not authority, would be able to make people understand the truth. “Emerson, like all transcendentalists, was concerned with authority and recognized only the authority of the individual conscience that could grasp the truth through an intuition that transcended reason” (Skidmore, 1998, p. 148). Self-reflection was key to the Transcendental approach. It would enhance not only the individual, but also the community and the nation. This follows naturally the Transcendentalist view that the individual is the foundation of society. “In

*Nature*, ‘The American Scholar,’ and the ‘Divinity School Address,’ Emerson called on people to break through old-fashioned formality, look within themselves once again, and return to the origins of humanity to establish a new way of life” (Ikeda, as cited in Bosco et al., 2009, p. 107).

A constant theme in Emerson’s works is that self-reflection is a necessity for the peace and happiness of the individual, and also for the society in which he or she lives. Emerson believed that every individual has a goodness within. When man opens his mind, as Emerson said, in the “Divinity School Address,” “He [man] learns that his being is without bound; that, to the good, to the perfect, he is born, low as he now lies in evil and weakness” (1983, p. 76). This shows that Emerson had a positive view of human nature.

Perhaps because of the tremendous project that Emerson set for himself, that of helping people to look within, he remained optimistic. He believed that any questions people could ask would be answerable. He wrote, “Undoubtedly we have no questions to ask which are unanswerable....Every man’s condition is a solution in hieroglyphic to those inquires he would put” (1983, p. 7). People would just need to search for and be able to decipher the answer. Every person has reason for hope because of unlimited potential.

Policy issues as a rule were not Emerson’s primary concern. Nevertheless, an impulse toward helping others have hope and address injustices did lead him to address matters of policy, to a limited extent.

He [Emerson] was drawn to politics, but only reluctantly. He spoke against the hideous treatment of Indians and against slavery...but he was never at home in politics....His greatest importance was as an inspiration to others who contributed more to politics directly than he did, but who might not have done so without his example. (Skidmore, 1998, p. 148)

It bears repeating that, despite his usual detachment, Emerson tried to inspire people with his writings and speeches.

A specific example of Emerson's work intended to inspire was *Representative Men*, in which he wrote about six people whom he considered to be "great men." They were persons who might motivate others to try to become heroes or geniuses. "All men were partial men, facets of perfect men. When anyone surrendered to himself, when he reflected his unique share of divinity, he was a hero, but not a perfect one" (Conkin, 1968, p. 167). Emerson believed that all men should aspire to be better because he believed that all men could better themselves by looking inward and reflecting on truth. "Emerson was recommending not that we worship or pattern ourselves on his subjects but that we use them as mirrors to take a new look at ourselves" (Ikeda, as cited in Bosco et al., 2009, p. 111). He believed that greatness is within each person. "The young man reveres men of genius, because, to speak truly, they are more himself than he is" (Emerson, 1983, p. 448). Emerson not only hoped to inspire people to achieve their full potential, but was confident that it was feasible.

Emerson's influence goes beyond those who have read his work. His work had an influence on the future development of the philosophical approach known as pragmatism. "Emerson's dominant themes of individuality, idealism, voluntarism, optimism, amelioration, and experimentation prefigure those of American pragmatism" (West, 1989, p. 35). Thus, assuredly Emerson helped to lay the groundwork for pragmatists such as John Dewey, C. Wright Mills, and others.

## **Henry David Thoreau**

Henry David Thoreau was also a Transcendentalist. “Thoreau believed man must be allowed to cultivate the soul within him, and if allowed to do so, will bring enlightenment not just to the individual but to all” (McIntyre, 2008, p. 8). He believed that everyone could arrive at the same truth that is revealed through intuition. Thoreau believed that “we are spiritual beings, born of the same divine source and our actions must be guided by our conscious connection to that source and not by the laws of government” (McIntyre, 2008, p. 9). He believed that an individual’s conscience should take precedence over any authority.

Thoreau lived at Walden Pond for over two years in order to be better able to develop and follow his conscience. He wrote, “I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately...and see if I could not learn what it had to teach” (Thoreau, 1968b, pp. 100-101). He wished to see how well he could live by living simply while searching for truth. Thoreau was hopeful that other people would be able to develop and follow their consciences. However, he knew that most people did not take the time to do so, and he stressed that they should find their own ways and not copy his.

For example, in *Walden*, Thoreau wrote, “The mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation” (Thoreau, 1968b, p. 8). This is because most people resigned themselves to the lives in which they found themselves. “Most men, even in this comparatively free country, through mere ignorance and mistake, are so occupied with the factitious cares and superfluously coarse labors of life that its finer fruits cannot be plucked by them” (Thoreau, 1968b, p. 6). People get so caught up in their day-to-day lives that they lose sight of what is most important, and thus make it impossible to find full development.

In another example, in *Walden*, Thoreau explains how easy it is for people to fall into destructive physical and mental habits.

It is remarkable how easily and insensibly we fall into a particular route, and make a beaten track for ourselves....The surface of the earth is soft and impressible by the feet of men; and so with the paths which the mind travels. (Thoreau, 1968b, pp. 355-356)

People are susceptible to forming habits in the daily routes we take as well as forming habits in the way we think about things.

On the other hand, Thoreau was optimistic about the ability of people to improve their lives. He wrote, “I know of no more encouraging fact than the unquestionable ability of man to elevate his life by a conscious endeavor” (1968b, p. 100). He suggests a path people could take to elevate their lives when he defines the value of a true friend. “A friend is one who incessantly pays us the compliment of expecting from us all the virtues in us. It takes two to speak the truth – one to speak, and another to hear” (Thoreau, 1986a, p. 283).

Thoreau seems to recognize that this type of friendship is not commonplace when he writes, “In our daily intercourse with men, our nobler faculties are dormant and suffered to rust” (1986a, p. 284). Thus, a true friend would help to drive people to keep improving their lives.

In addition to friends, Thoreau also recognized the need for good neighbors. In *Walden*, in his discussion about building his cabin, he wrote, “At length, in the beginning of May, with the help of some of my acquaintances, rather to improve so good an occasion for neighborliness than from any necessity, I set up the frame of my house” (1986b, p. 49).

Thoreau believed that neighborliness should be an important goal regardless of whether the neighbors are actually needed to be included in a particular project. Also, in “Resistance to Civil Government,” Thoreau wrote, “I have never declined paying the highway tax, because

I am as desirous of being a good neighbor as I am of being a bad subject" (Thoreau, 1996, p. 17). He was more concerned with being a good neighbor than with being a good citizen, as defined by the government.

Thoreau advocated breaking any laws passed by the government which required an individual to violate his conscience. In "Resistance to Civil Government," he wrote, "How can a man be satisfied to entertain an opinion merely and enjoy it" (Thoreau, 1996, p. 8)? People have a responsibility to themselves to act in harmony with their conscience.

Action from principle, – the perception and the performance of right, – changes things and relations; it is essentially revolutionary, and does not consist wholly with any thing which was. It not only divides states and churches, it divides families; aye, it divides the individual, separating the diabolical in him from the divine. (Thoreau, 1996, p. 8)

In order to better themselves, in matters of importance people need to act on their principles, regardless of the consequences.

Of course, many people fear the consequences of disobeying the State, for themselves and their families. A consequence of Thoreau's not paying the poll-tax, in order to protest slavery, was jail. After one night there, he was released when someone "interfered" and paid his past due taxes (Thoreau, 1996). Thoreau wrote,

if I deny the authority of the State when it presents its tax-bill, it will soon take and waste all my property, and so harass me and my children without end....It costs me less in some sense to incur the penalty of disobedience to the State, than it would to obey. (Thoreau, 1996, pp. 12-13).

Thoreau felt it was more important to be true to one's own self and protest an unjust law than to obey an unjust law.

Of course, in Thoreau's time, slavery was the most egregious practice supported by the government. In "Resistance to Civil Government," Thoreau wrote,

if it is of such a nature that it requires you to be the agent of injustice to another, then, I say, break the law. Let your life be a counter friction to stop the machine. What I have to do is to see, at any rate, that I do not lend myself to the wrong which I condemn. (Thoreau, 1996, p. 9)

For Thoreau, this was a line which he would not cross regardless of the consequences. And in 1850, the Fugitive Slave Law required people in northern anti-slave states to cooperate in returning escaped slaves to their masters, which made everyone who obeyed the law agents of injustice.

This led Thoreau to write in “Slavery in Massachusetts,” that, “The majority of the men of the North, and of the South, and East, and West, are not men of principle” (Thoreau, 1996, p. 131). People of principle would not support the national or state governments because they all actively supported slavery. As a rule, Thoreau opposed violence. He did admire John Brown, however. Brown was hanged for treason after he and his supporters raided an arsenal at Harper’s Ferry, Virginia, in an attempt to inspire a slave revolt. In “A Plea for Captain John Brown,” Thoreau wrote, “He was a superior man. He did not value his bodily life in comparison with ideal things” (Thoreau, 1996, p. 147). Some ideals are worth risking your life, by directly opposing the government.

Thoreau’s views about government seem to be a paradox. He seems to favor democracy and yet he advocates that people everywhere follow their conscience. He definitely does not favor having no government. “But, to speak practically and as a citizen, unlike those who call themselves no-government men, I ask for, not at once no government, but at once a better government” (Thoreau, 1996, p. 2). Thoreau did see the need for government.

To a certain extent, Thoreau actually did appreciate the United States political system.

Seen from a lower point of view, the Constitution, with all its faults, is very good; the law and the courts are very respectable; even this State and the American government are, in many respects, very admirable and rare things, to be thankful for,... but seen from a point of view a little higher, they are what I have described them; seen from a higher still, and the highest, who shall say what they are, or that they are worth looking at or thinking of at all? (Thoreau, 1996, p. 18)

Thoreau appreciated that Constitutional representative government was a tremendous improvement over earlier forms of government. However, he also could see the need for improvement of representative democracy.

He was concerned that representative government did not represent the best qualities of human nature. “We talk about a *representative* government; but what a monster of a government is that where the noblest faculties of the mind, and *whole* heart, are not *represented*” (Thoreau, 1996, p. 150).

It would seem that a regional or local government by consensus might meet Thoreau’s expectations. “The rights of the individual are paramount to Thoreau, and the only government he could respect would be one that comes about naturally through a consensus of conscience-driven individuals” (McIntyre, 2008, p. 8). Government by consensus would not be possible for large numbers of people. However, as discussed previously, the Iroquois Confederacy was able to govern by consensus by using small political units (tribes). Some have said that Thoreau’s political ideas require decentralization into small political units (Jenco, 2003; McWilliams, 1974). Thus, local direct democracies where decisions are made by a consensus of the community might meet Thoreau’s expectations.

## **Walt Whitman**

Walt Whitman was a Transcendentalist writer who expressed his convictions, thoughts, and emotions in both poetry and prose. Whitman's major themes were equality and democracy. His goal seems to have been equality for all human beings in all aspects of life.

One way Whitman advocated equality was by saying that we are all the same. In “Song of Myself” he wrote, “In all people I see myself, none more and not one a barleycorn less. / And the good or bad I say of myself I say of them” (1982, p. 45). Whitman believed that none of us are any better or worse than anyone else, because he can see himself in everyone else. By writing about himself, Whitman was writing about everyone. In “Song of Myself,” he wrote, “I celebrate myself, /And what I assume you shall assume, / For every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you” (Whitman, 1982, p. 27). In celebrating himself, he is celebrating everyone. Kateb offered a possible definition for atom in the verse when he wrote, “An atom is a potentiality, I think” (2014, p. 23). Thus, in “Song of Myself,” Whitman says that we all have the same potentials and it is only our cultural settings that determine who we are and what we become (Kateb, 2014). In other words, we could look at anyone and say “there but for the grace of God, go I.”

Given Whitman’s conviction that we are all the same, it is understandable that he would stand up for the rights of others. In “Song of Myself,” he wrote, “I will not have a single person slighted or left away...” (1982, p. 44). Whitman left no doubt that he considered slaves to be like any other person, when he wrote, “I am the hounded slave .... I wince at the bite of the dogs (1982, p. 65). He felt the pain of others, including slaves and convicts in prison. In “Song of Myself,” he wrote, “I become any presence or truth of

humanity here, / And see myself in prison shaped like another man, / And feel the dull unintermittent pain" (Whitman, 1982, p. 70). Prisons shape people and make them different. But, were we there, we would be shaped in the same manner.

Whitman was also a defender of women's rights. In "Song of Myself," he wrote,

I am the poet of the woman the same as the man,  
And I say it is as great to be a woman as to be a man,  
And I say there is nothing greater than the mother of men. (1982, p. 46)

Whitman saw the goodness in all people, regardless of sex, and was able to identify with all people.

Whitman also foreshadowed the homosexual rights movement. In the Calamus series of poems in *Leaves of Grass*, he wrote about homosexual love. "Whitman insistently pursues these themes [sexual and bodily themes] throughout his career, holding that the appropriate conception of democratic love cannot be articulated without forging a new attitude toward both the body and its sexuality" (Nussbaum, 2014, p. 97). Whitman broke away from the Puritan tradition of hiding sexuality and not talking about it. In "I Sing the Body Electric" Whitman wrote, "If life and the soul are sacred the human body is sacred" (1982, p. 124). Since the body is sacred, there is no reason to be ashamed of any part of it. In "By Blue Ontario's Shore," Whitman wrote, "Underneath all is the Expression of love for men and women" (1982, p. 481). Whitman felt that love is fundamental to human life. Thus, it needs to be considered – even to be written about.

Another major theme in Whitman's work was democracy. Whitman understood that for a democratic government to function best, there needed to be a reconciliation between the individual and society. In "Democratic Vistas," he wrote,

But the mass, or lump character, for imperative reasons, is to be ever carefully weigh'd, borne in mind, and provided for. Only from its proper regulation and potency, comes the other, comes the chance of individualism. The two are contradictory, but our task is to reconcile them. (1982, pp. 940-941)

Only a supportive society will encourage the development of individualism. Whitman further commented on the reconciliation of individualism and mass society when he wrote,

I have no doubt myself that the two will merge, and will mutually profit and brace each other, and that from them a greater product, a third, will arise. But I feel that at present they and their oppositions form a serious problem and paradox in the United States. (1982, p. 941)

Whitman anticipated that this reconciliation would benefit both the individual and society as well as producing additional benefits.<sup>4</sup>

Whitman's treatment of death seems to be a way to encourage reconciliation. He helps us accept death by saying that life never really ends. In "Song of Myself," he writes, "And I know I am deathless" (1982, p. 46). He writes that people are reborn after they die. "And as to you life; I reckon you are the leavings of many deaths, /No doubt I have died myself ten thousand times before" (1982, p. 86). Whitman helps us to accept death as not being final. This leads "to an acceptance of mortality, finitude, and loss, to enable us to mourn and therefore adequately to love" (Nussbaum, 2014, p. 122). Because everyone "capable of mourning, can let go of hate, and disgust, and pursue a truly inclusive love" (Nussbaum, 2014, p. 124). Death can be a new beginning not only for the dying, but also for those left behind. This can be seen in the poems Whitman wrote to honor the memory of President Lincoln. In "When Lilacs Last in the Door Yard Bloom'd," he wrote,

O what shall I hang on the chamber walls?  
And what shall the pictures be that I hang on the walls,

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<sup>4</sup> Perhaps Jefferson's ward system proposal, as explained in the previous section, would have been a means to this reconciliation. In which case, public happiness would be the additional benefit produced from such a reconciliation

To adorn the burial-house of him I love?  
Pictures of growing spring and farms and homes ...  
And all the scenes of life and the workshops, and the  
workmen homeward returning. (Whitman, 1982, p. 462)

He felt that the best memorial to President Lincoln would be pictures representing life, harmony, and love. Whitman believed that love undergirded everything.

Another way Whitman encouraged reconciliation among people was to stress that there are limits to our knowledge, and that the unknown is not to be feared. In “Song of Myself,” he wrote,

And I call to mankind, Be not curious about God,  
For I who am curious about each am not curious about God,  
No array of terms can say how much I am at peace about God and death. (1982, p. 85)

For Whitman, the unknowable should be accepted. In “A Song of the Rolling Earth,” he wrote, “I swear I see what is better than to tell the best, /It is always to leave the best untold.... The best of the earth cannot be told anyhow” (1982, p. 367). Whitman did not attempt to explain the unknown.

Whitman did not try to explain the unknown because he knew that faith could interpret it. In “Democratic Vistas,” he wrote, “Faith, very old, now scared away by science, must be restored, brought back by the same power that caused her departure – restored with new sway, deeper, wider, higher than ever” (1982, p. 988). Whitman felt that faith was important because it tends to complement realism. In “Democratic Vistas,” he wrote, “let us take our stand, our ground, and never desert it, to confront the growing excess of arrogance of realism” (1982, p. 983). Whitman believed that there is a moral purpose in life that realism is insufficient to explain. In “Democratic Vistas,” he wrote,

The librarian of Congress in a paper read before the Social Science Convention at New York, October, 1869, [said] “The true question to ask respecting a book, is, *has it help'd any human soul?*” This is the hint, statement, not only of the great literatus, his book, but of every great artist. (1982, p. 987)

The moral purpose of life is to help another human soul. In particular, Whitman believed that any artistic work should be judged by this standard.

Whitman believed that every individual had a moral sense within, and that it was the duty of great literature to help people discover and develop this moral sense. In “Democratic Vistas,” he wrote,

That which really balances and conserves the social and political world is not so much legislation, police, treaties, and dread of punishment, as the latent eternal intuitional sense, in humanity, of fairness, manliness, decorum, &c. Indeed, this perennial regulation, control, and oversite, by self-suppliance, is *sine qua non* to democracy; and a highest widest aim of democratic literature may well be to bring forth, cultivate, brace, and strengthen this sense in individuals and society. (1982, p. 989)

Whitman believed that both individuals and society had a moral sense which democratic literature needed to reveal and support.

Walt Whitman was a strong supporter of democracy. In “Democratic Vistas,” he wrote:

The purpose of democracy – supplanting old beliefs in the necessary absoluteness of establish'd dynastic rulership, temporal, ecclesiastical, and scholastic, as furnishing the only security against chaos, crime, and ignorance....*This*, as matters now stand in our civilized world, is the only scheme worth working from, as warranting results like those of Nature's laws, reliable, when once establish'd, to carry on themselves. (1982, p. 942)

The reason for democracy is to replace rule by elite families, rule by the educated, the church, or secular authority. Also, Whitman maintains that democracy provides the only real security for the people, because the people make the decisions.

In addition to security, Whitman asserts, again in “Democratic Vistas,” that democracy tends to bind people together. “And, topping democracy, this most alluring record, that it alone can bind, all nations, all men, of however various and distant lands, into a brotherhood, a family” (Whitman, 1982, pp. 948-949). This would, of course, give the individual a sense of belonging,<sup>5</sup> as well as allowing the masses to work more smoothly together.

Another benefit of democracy is that it is a cure for generalized discontent. Again, in “Democratic Vistas,” Whitman said:

the theory of a wider democratizing of intuitions in any civilized country, much trouble might well be saved to all European lands by recognizing this palpable fact, (for a palpable fact it is), that some form of such democratizing is about the only resource now left. *That*, or chronic dissatisfaction continued, mutterings which grow annually louder and louder, till, in due course, and pretty swiftly in most cases, the inevitable crisis, crash, dynastic ruin. (1982, p. 950)

The choice is between democratizing intuitions or chronic dissatisfaction of the people which may lead to eventual crisis.

Whitman saw the democracy in the United States as proceeding in stages, with each stage building on the previous stage(s). “The first stage was the planning and putting on record the political foundation rights of immense masses of people” (Whitman, 1982, p. 976). This stage included the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution and its amendments, and the provisions for increased suffrage (Whitman, 1982). “The second stage relates to material prosperity, wealth, produce, labor-saving machines” (Whitman, 1982, p. 977). The second stage had arrived by the time of Whitman’s work.

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<sup>5</sup> In the previous section, it was noted that one way the League of the Iroquois was able to maintain its system of governance was by instilling a strong sense of belonging.

The third stage of democracy is what Whitman said is needed to support and encourage the American spirit.<sup>6</sup>

The third stage, rising out of the previous ones, to make them and all illustrious, I, now, for one, promulge, announcing a native-spirit, getting into form, adult, and through mentality, for these States, self-contain'd, different from others, more expansive, more rich and free, to be evidenced by original authors and poets to come, by American personalities, plenty of them, male and female, traversing the States, none excepted – and by native superber tableaux and growths of language, songs, operas, orations, lectures, architecture – and by a sublime serious Religious Democracy sternly taking command, dissolving the old, sloughing off surfaces, and from its own interior and vital principles, reconstructing, democratizing society. (Whitman, 1982, p. 977)

Whitman saw the need to go beyond a democratic government toward a democratic society.

He saw good literature as the way to bring people together. Perhaps his reference in the quote to Religious Democracy can best be explained by the following quote from “Democratic Vistas”:

The climax of this loftiest range of civilization...is to be its development from the eternal bases, and the fit expression, of absolute Conscience, moral soundness, Justice. Even in religious fervor there is a touch of animal heat. But moral conscientiousness, crystalline, without flaw, not Godlike only, entirely human, awes and enchants forever. (Whitman, 1982, p. 982)

Whitman believed that a democratic society is possible when the American spirit is reflected in great literature which will encourage the development of our individual and collective moral conscientiousness.

Whitman saw democracy as an evolutionary process. And, as such, it still has room for improvement. Later chapters will suggest ways to encourage broader participation and greater happiness in the democratic process. In the 1855 preface to “Leaves of Grass,” Whitman wrote, “For the eternal tendencies of all toward happiness make the only point of

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<sup>6</sup> Perhaps Whitman’s idea of American spirit could be equated with Jefferson’s idea of public happiness which he hoped would transform American citizens and American governance.

sane philosophy” (1982, p. 18). Increased happiness is an important purpose for the suggested changes in PB’s rules and procedures, which are found in a later chapter.

## **Conclusion**

In the introduction to the Transcendentalists section, it was noted that the Transcendentalists wanted to change the world for the better. We should consider whether they had any lasting influence. Emerson helped lay the groundwork for pragmatists such as John Dewey, C. Wright Mills, and others. Concerning Thoreau, “Mohandas Gandhi, the architect of Indian Independence, had read Thoreau and made use of many of his ideas. Martin Luther King, Jr., in turn read Gandhi and through him was attracted to Thoreau” (Skidmore, 1998, p. 153). Thus, Thoreau helped influence the Indian Independence and the American civil rights movement. Perhaps the most significant effect of the Transcendentalists, however, can be seen in Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address.

Lincoln was influenced by the Transcendentalists’ way of thinking. “They [Transcendentalists] saw the permanent ideal shining through the particulars of nature....Lincoln was bound to be affected by the rhetoric, assumptions, and conscious ideals of the men who shaped his culture” (Wills, 1993, p. 103). In the Gettysburg Address. “In 272 words, Lincoln portrayed the Declaration of Independence as America’s founding document, with the Constitution as an imperfect instrument designed to approximate the Declaration’s ideal” (Skidmore, 2008, p. 11). For example, the Declaration of Independence addressed the need for human equality and yet the Constitution condoned slavery. “He [Lincoln] was a Transcendentalist without the fuzziness” (Wills, 1993, p. 146). Lincoln was very clear about which values are the foundation of the United States.

## CHAPTER 3

### GOVERNING PRACTICES IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY WHICH COULD BE MORE FULLY INCORPORATED INTO THE DESIGN OF THE PB PROCESS

This chapter explores the recent philosophical history of the potential benefits of PB. As in the previous chapter, an understanding of the historical development of these ideas is needed because our ideas and philosophies are historically contingent and evolve over time. Gaining a better understanding of good governance, solutions for apathy, solutions for social inequality, and how people are able to build social networks to benefit their communities and themselves will help us to look into ways that PB's rules, procedures, and practices could be designed to better promote PB's potential benefits, which will be done in a later chapter.

The first section is "Pragmatic Political Thought." The relevant work of Dewey and Mills will be examined, as well as the significance of the Port Huron Statement, in order to better understand the scope and importance of pragmatic political thought. The political essays of John Dewey emphasize the importance of face-to-face political discussions among people who are honestly trying to reach a solution. The work of C. Wright Mills provides a better understanding of political apathy and how it might be overcome. And the significance of the Port Huron Statement, which was inspired by pragmatic political thought, is explored.

The next section reviews Alfred Schutz's ethical democracy. Following the Brown vs. Topeka Board of Education Supreme Court case, Schutz reasoned that people need to be heard in small publics, such as discussion groups, in order to help provide equality of opportunity.

In the last section, Robert Putnam's concept of social capital is briefly reviewed. Putnam's research found that people working together on community projects formed social networks that helped individuals as well as the community accomplish their goals.

### **Pragmatic Political Thought**

Pragmatism, perhaps more so than other philosophical schools, is concerned with practical consequences of our actions.

One of the central ideas of the philosophical movement known as pragmatism, which Dewey founded together with Charles Sanders Peirce and William James, is that it is the conceivable consequence of an idea, and not its source, that constitutes meaning. (Hickman, as cited in Garrison, Hickman, & Ikeda, 2014, p. 7)

Pragmatists believe that the purpose of thought is to guide our actions, based on the consequences of those actions. “The popular impression that pragmatic philosophy means that philosophy shall develop ideas relevant to the actual crises of life, ideas influential in dealing with them and tested by the assistance they afford, is correct” (Dewey, 1993a, p. 5). Testing the anticipated consequences with the actual consequences is an important part of pragmatism.

Pragmatism does not have a preconceived idea about how things should work. “Pragmatism itself is a comprehensive attack upon idealism of all kinds” (Morris & Shapiro, 1993, p. xii). Thus, pragmatic political thought does not give any weight to political parties' ideologies.

It is often said that pragmatism, unless it is content to be a contribution to mere methodology, must develop a theory of Reality. But, the chief characteristic trait of the pragmatic notion of reality is precisely that no theory of Reality in general, *überhaupt*, is possible or needed.... Pragmatism is content to take its stand with science; for science finds all...events to be subject-matter of description and inquiry – just like stars and fossils, mosquitoes and malaria, circulation and vision. It also takes its stand with daily life, which finds that such things really have to be reckoned with as they occur interwoven in the texture of events. (Dewey, 1993a, p. 2)

Thus, pragmatic political thought is like the scientific method, because both recognize the interdependence of events in our everyday lives, and they both take things as they are.

We will see how Dewey extends the scope of the scientific method to include moral judgments. Everyone is socialized with morals that tell us what we should do. Dewey proposed we use the same scientific rigor for social/political/moral goals that we use for the physical sciences, such as physics.

### **Political Philosophy of John Dewey**

This section will examine Dewey's political philosophy. Specifically, Dewey's philosophy of democracy is reviewed, including his ideal of democracy, how it would function using the scientific method, and the morality upon which it would be based. And finally, it is proposed that a properly designed PB process could be the political vehicle to get us from here, our current situation, to there, Dewey's democratic ideal.

To understand Dewey's work better, it will help to gain a better comprehension of Dewey's worldview. Dewey wrote, "Progress means increase of present meaning, which involves multiplication of sensed distinctions as well as harmony, unification" (2002, p. 283). Dewey realized that we are all social beings, and thus social interaction is what has meaning. During social interactions we can acknowledge our differences as well as acknowledging how we are really the same, and in harmony with one another. "An activity has meaning in the degree in which it establishes and acknowledges variety and intimacy of connections" (Dewey, 2002, p. 293). The quality of our relationships is determined by the degree of their familiarity and closeness while recognizing our differences. "Without openhearted dialogue, the human spirit stops growing and withers away. Without intellectual and spiritual exchange, society rigidifies and grinds to a halt. Dewey clearly pointed out the

path to the unfettered development of humanity and society” (Ikeda, as cited in Garrison et al. 2014, p. 1). Honest communication among people searching for common ground is what gives meaning to life.

Social interaction is how individuals develop their potential. “He [Dewey] argues that liberalism’s original and justly enduring values such as autonomy and self-realization are best served now...by organization and ‘social action’: thinking, working, and pursuing our social and political ideals together” (Morris & Shapiro, 1993, p. xiii). Working together is how we work on improving ourselves.

The development of the individual is the solution to the ethical problem of the relationship of the individual to the state (Dewey, 1993b). “Such a development of the individual [realization of capacities] that he shall be in harmony with all others in the state, that is, that he shall possess as his own the unified will of the community” (Dewey, 1993b, p. 59). Public communication serves the dual purpose of helping individuals as well as helping the community. There is no real conflict between individuals’ interests and communities’ interests.

Discussion and deliberation within the community can not only help develop an individual’s capacities, it can also help bring the individual’s interests and community’s interests into alignment, including ethical standards.

Democracy, in a word, is social, that is to say, an ethical conception, and upon its significance is based its significance as governmental. Democracy is a form of government only because it is a form of moral and spiritual association. (Dewey, 1993b, p. 59)

Having a shared perception of right and wrong helps to give direction to a democratic government.

Morals are lessons we learn as children; and they are concepts we refine as we grow older. “Morals are social” (Dewey, 2002, p. 319). It makes sense that the more we engage in discussion and deliberation within our community, the more our morals are fine-tuned and converge. What is important are the actions we take as a result of our morals. “Morality resides not in perception of fact, but in the use made of its perception” (Dewey, 2002, p. 298). This is a reflection of the character of people. “Dewey offers not a program, but rather a political morality – an ethic of self-government and self-realization through collective life” (Morris & Shapiro, 1993, p. xii). People are able to improve themselves by working with others on community problems. Democracy provides people the opportunity to express their morality.

Democracy allows for the expression of the character of the people. “The democratic faith in human equality is belief that every human being, independent of the quantity or range of his personal endowment, has the right to equal opportunity with every other person for development of whatever gifts he has” (Dewey, 1993c, p. 242). Society’s belief in human equality is an example of individual’s character defining the community’s character.

It [equality] denotes effective regard for whatever is distinctive and unique in each, irrespective of physical and psychological inequalities. It [equality] is not a natural possession but is a fruit of the community when its action is directed by its character as a community. (Dewey, 1954, p. 151)

The character of the community is revealed through relationships among community members.

Direct personal relationships, the affections and services of human companionship are its [moral equality] most widespread and available manifestations....No contact of this human sort is replaceable; with reference to it all are equal because all are incommensurable, infinite. (Dewey, 1993c, p. 79)

Moral equality is a result of the widespread social interaction in a democratic society.

Dewey wrote that democracy is based on a belief and faith in “the potentialities of human nature” (1993c, p. 242). Dewey’s understanding of human nature has implications beyond voting for political representatives.

Dewey believed that democracy could be, and should be, a way of life. “Democracy is a way of personal life controlled not merely by faith in human nature in general but by faith in the capacity of human beings for intelligent judgement and action if proper conditions are furnished” (Dewey, 1993c, p. 242). Dewey promoted the idea of democracy as being a way of life because he knew that for our democracy to work as it was intended, people needed to become actively involved. In “Creative Democracy – The Task Before Us,” Dewey wrote,

If what has been said is charged with being a set of moral commonplaces, my only reply is that is just the point in saying them. For to get rid of the habit of thinking of democracy as something institutional and external and to acquire the habit of treating it as a way of personal life is to realize that democracy is a moral ideal and so far as it becomes a fact is a moral fact. It is to realize that democracy is a reality only as it is indeed a commonplace of living. (1993c, p. 244)

Democracy can become more than the democratic institutions which were established in our constitution. Dewey wrote in “Creative Democracy – The Task Before Us” that “we acted as if our democracy were something that perpetuated itself automatically; as if our ancestors had succeeded in setting up a machine that solved the problem of perpetual motion in politics” (1993c, p. 241). It takes more than voting every two years or every four years to ensure that democracy lives up to its potential.

Dewey wrote that democracy requires more from its citizens. It requires an ongoing active interest.

I am inclined to believe that the heart and final guarantee of democracy is in free gatherings of neighbors on the street corner to discuss back and forth what is read in uncensored news of the day, and in gatherings of friends in the living rooms of houses and apartments to converse freely and with one another. (1993c, p. 243)

Ongoing discussions and deliberations within the community are a necessity and constitute part of Dewey's "proper conditions" for democracy to flourish.

On the other hand, lack of open and honest communication in a community invites intolerance. "An anti-humanist attitude is the essence of every form of intolerance" (Dewey, 1993d, p. 227). Communication reminds us that we are all the same; we are all human beings.

Intolerance, abuse, calling of names because of differences of opinion about religion or politics or business, as well as because of differences of race, color, wealth or degree of culture are treason to the democratic way of life. For everything which bars freedom and fullness of communication sets up barriers that divide human beings into sets and cliques, into antagonistic sects and factions, and thereby undermines the democratic way of life. (Dewey, 1993c, p. 243)

Ongoing discussions with everyone in the community is the antidote for intolerance. "Dewey was convinced that the local, face-to-face community is necessary to form and sustain any public" (Garrison et al., 2014, p. 160). Face-to-face communication tends to break down barriers between people.

Dewey referred to associations of people where such face-to-face interactions occurred as publics. "This [the public], for Dewey, is an entity as real and present as 'the individual,' with acute interests of its own, and possessing resources of intelligence, deliberation, and control for realizing those interests" (Morris & Shapiro, 1993, p. xiii). Of course, a public is any group of people who have decided to get together in order to discuss, deliberate, and resolve disputes.

A public can be virtually anything. But, there are two aspects of a public that he [Dewey] thought were important. First, a public must have a clear idea about what it wants to do, its own goals and purposes. Second, it should relate well to other publics. (Hickman, as cited in Garrison et al., 2014, p. 161)

Publics need to be able to communicate well with other publics, in part, because it helps to achieve their public policy goals.

In *The Public and Its Problems*, Dewey identifies the single greatest problem of publics: “The essential need, in other words, is the improvement of the methods and conditions of debate, discussions, and persuasion. That is *the* problem of the public” (1954, p. 208). Improving public communication will improve the results of the work of publics.

Thus, the key to improving the quality of democracy is improving the quality of public discussion and public debate.

Regarded as an idea, democracy is not an alternative to other principles of associated life. It is the idea of community life itself. It is an ideal in the only intelligible sense of an ideal; namely, the tendency and movement of some thing which exists carried to its final limit, viewed as completed, perfected. (Dewey, 1954, p. 148)

Democracy is community or associated life. Democracy is a result of cooperation in communities. “In its deepest and richest sense a community must always remain a matter of face-to-face intercourse” (Dewey, 1954, p. 211). Such face-to-face interaction helps to align an individual’s interests with the interests of others. And according to Dewey, the ideal of democracy is a community acting on its morals (1993b).

The quality of local governance is improved when the morals of the community are debated, which results in the public morals being refined and shaped to more closely match the morals of the individuals in the community. Thus, the political morality, as practiced by government, more closely reflects the will of the people. Of course, public morality is reflected in who is elected as well as which policies are enacted. “That government exists to

serve its community, and that this purpose cannot be achieved unless the community itself shares in selecting its governors and determining their policies“ (Dewey, 1954, p. 146).

Thus, individuals must take responsibility, not only for helping to define political morality and electing politicians, but also for the policies which are meant to reflect the community morals.

In order to help communities develop and refine policies, Dewey proposed expanding the scope of the scientific method from the physical sciences to the social sciences, to be able to address social issues in a systematic fashion. Using the scientific method would improve the communities' method of inquiry, which helps resolve what Dewey identified as the primary problem of the publics.

As explained in chapter one, the first step is identification of the problem statement and the hypothesis. Dewey warned:

It is commonly assumed that the problems which exist are already definite in their main features. When this assumption is made, it follows that the business of inquiry is but to ascertain the best method of solving them. The consequence of this assumption is that the work of analytic discrimination, which is necessary to convert a problematic situation into a set of conditions forming a definite problem, is largely foregone. (1938, p. 495)

A problem must be studied before proceeding to the next step. Dewey's solution is straightforward. “The lesson, as far as method of social inquiry is concerned, is the prime necessity for development of techniques of analytic observation and comparison, so that problematic social situations may be resolved into definitely formulated problems” (Dewey, 1938, p. 494).<sup>7</sup> The careful study of the problematic social situation will reveal the “facts,” as explained in chapter 1, which either help or hinder the movement toward the desired

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<sup>7</sup> This dissertation relies, in part, on the ethnographic research in *Schools of Democracy*.

social phenomenon. Then, the hypothesis can be formulated. Of course, the scientific methodology uses experiments to prove or disprove the hypothesis. Coincidentally, political democratic governance has often been referred to as a democratic experiment. Dewey said that public policies need to be viewed as experiments.

It is difficult to ensure in advance that any public policy will achieve its desired effect because social interactions are related to and influence one another, often in unexpected ways. This complicates the identification of causes and effects. Thus, all effects of any public policy need to be closely monitored, as explained in chapter 1. Then the results of monitoring need to be used to refine the public policy in question.

Dewey's "method of intelligence" aims at making indeterminate situations into determinate ones: his vision of the method of science thus focuses on social control through democratic institutions. An integral part of this process is making self-adjusting or self-correcting value judgements in addressing problematic situations. This is not only the essence of scientific method as it is practiced in experimental laboratories by chemists and physicists, according to Dewey, it is also the method of democracy or, at least, it is most compatible with democratic institutions. (Tillman, 1987, p. 1387)

The scientific methodology would seem to be compatible with and useful for democratic governance.

At the heart of Dewey's vision for the future of democracy, when democracy becomes a way of life for everyone, is his belief in the unlimited potential of people.

In a word, that expansion and reinforcement of personal understanding and judgement by the cumulative and transmitted intellectual wealth of the community...can be fulfilled only in the relations of personal intercourse in the local community....We lie, as Emerson said, in the lap of an immense intelligence. But that intelligence is dormant and its communications are broken, inarticulate and faint until it possesses the local community as its medium. (Dewey, 1954, pp. 218-219)

Dewey believed that when nearly everyone participates in local publics, in which deliberation is improved and the scientific method is used for social issues, an immense intelligence will become empowered and become a realization.

Democracy will come into its own, for democracy is a name for a life of free and enriching communion. It had its seer in Walt Whitman. It will have its consummation when free social inquiry is indissolubly wedded to the art of full and moving communication. (Dewey, 1954, p. 184)

Like Whitman, Dewey was able to see the evolution of democratic governance into a democratic society where everyone is equal, in spite of differences, and all are encouraged to fulfill their potentials.

Dewey was able to envision that a democratic society would contain local publics where all voices could be heard. However, Dewey did not propose exactly how we could get to that point. “The long-term democratization of American life awaits a political technology and vehicle not yet fully in view” (Tillman, 1987, p. 1396). I propose that PB, redesigned and expanded, could be just such a political vehicle. In chapter 5, I propose changes in rules, procedures, and practices that will focus on encouraging deliberation and participation by everyone in the community. And in chapter 5, I will show how PB’s current responsibilities for allocating a small portion of a city’s budget could be expanded to include many community issues. Thus, we may yet be able to make Dewey’s vision a reality.

### **Modern Society of C. Wright Mills**

In this section, Mills, who published most of his work in the 1950s, will be briefly introduced, along with his ideal of democracy. Then Mills’ worldview of modern society, which includes increasing moral insensibilities, increasing bureaucracy, the plight of the modern worker, the mass media, and the power elite, is reviewed. Next, Mills’ ideas of how

individuals and society can move forward and overcome political apathy are explored. And finally, Mills' vision of his ideal society is examined along with how PB might begin to move toward it.

Mills was a pragmatist and a sociologist who addressed the big structural changes taking place in the country. "Mills admired what he called the 'classic tradition' of social science. In that tradition the questions asked are generally of a wide scope, concern total societies and the studies are 'soaked in history'" (Sigler, 1966, p. 32). Many of Mills' ideas were outside of mainstream thought. "C. Wright Mills was an academic gadfly whose writings served as both an inspiration and an irritant to a whole generation of social scientists" (Sigler, 1966, p. 32). Many of Mills' ideas related directly or indirectly to political science. He was a strong proponent of democracy.

Mills' conception of democracy was not controversial. "In essence, democracy implies that those vitally affected by any decision men make have an effective voice in that decision" (Mills, 2000b, p. 188). Mills believed in this democratic ideal as a foundation for society. Furthermore, Mills wrote, "We should take democracy seriously and literally....The thing to do with civil liberties is to use them" (Mills, 1958, pp. 140-141). Like Dewey, Mills believed in the importance of participation which would, among other things, help maintain and create values for both the individual and the community.

Mills believed our values, for both individuals and society, were in decline, due to several causes.

There are many reasons for this banalization of old values and the failure to create new and viable ones. There is the recent growth of big cities, where men live without local roots and relations are impersonal, individualist and blasé. There is the residential and business movement from state to state and city to city which further weakens the close, informal controls of personal relations and deeply-felt

communities of interest. There is the shrinkage in family life....This is, in short, the great unsettling of many people without personal ties, family continuity, or community relations. (Mills, 1979, p. 333)

There are many troubling consequences to the loss of values among individuals and communities, including an increasing priority to make money. “The pursuit of the moneyed life is the commanding value, in relation to which the influence of other values has declined, so men easily become morally ruthless in the pursuit of easy money and fast estate-building” (Mills, 1979, p. 334). This can lead to a generalized immorality throughout society.

The lack of a moral foundation can result in a moral insensibility. Mills, in *The Causes of World War Three*, gave the following definition of moral insensibility: “By moral insensibility, in short, I mean the incapacity for moral reaction to event and to character, to high decision and to the drift of human circumstance” (1958, p. 77). In other words, we lose our sense of moral outrage and moral praise.

This lack of moral direction is aggravated by the rise of large organizations which affect our ability to reason. As Mills wrote, in *The Sociological Imagination*,

Great and rational organizations – in brief, bureaucracies – have indeed increased, but the substantive reason of the individual has not. Caught in the limited milieu of their everyday lives, ordinary men often cannot reason about the great structures – rational and irrational – of which their milieu are subordinate parts. (2000a, p. 168)

Even though a bureaucracy may directly affect our lives, if it is outside of our direct experiences, we may not be able to make sense of it. Mills wrote, “The growth of such organizations, within an increasing division of labor, sets up more and more spheres of life, work, and leisure, in which reasoning is difficult or impossible” (2000a, p. 168). Thus, the trend seems to be a decreasing capacity for human reasoning and its resultant consequences.

Historically, human reasoning has been a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for human freedom. In *The Sociological Imagination*, Mills wrote that liberalism and socialism are our two major inherited orientations. “These two ideologies came out of The Enlightenment, and they have in common many assumptions and values. In both, increased rationality is held to be the prime condition of increased freedom” (2000a, p. 166). Thus, decreased capacity to reason creates a problem of freedom.

The ability to reason is fundamental for freedom and democracy to flourish.

It is not too much to say that in the extreme development the chance to reason of most men is destroyed, as rationality increases and its locus, its control, is moved from the individual to the big-scale organization. There is then rationality without reason. Such rationality is not commensurate with freedom but the destroyer of it. (Mills, 2000a, p. 170)

When control of organizations is moved outside the scope of individuals’ influence and understanding, the freedom of individuals is in jeopardy.

Mills’ definition of bureaucracy went beyond governmental agencies. Mills used bureaucracy to refer to corporations as well as government agencies (Mills, 2002). He defined bureaucracy: “Descriptively, bureaucracy refers to a hierarchy of offices or bureaus, each with an assigned area of operation, each employing a staff having specialized qualifications” (2002, p. 78). Mills wrote that as corporate bureaucracies grow, government bureaucracies increase their staff in an attempt to control the corporate bureaucracies. Then the corporate bureaucracies respond by hiring government officials and placing their members on governmental commissions and agencies (2002). Thus, there seems to be no end to the growth of bureaucracies,

In addition to looking at the impact bureaucracies have on the ordinary citizen, Mills reasoned that the effect bureaucracies have on many of their workers is alienation. This is

due to the noted circumstances, which led, at best, to an indifference because the workers not only do not have say in the bureaucracies' goals, they may not even understand why they are doing their jobs. In *The Sociological Imagination*, Mills explained the dilemma in which these workers find themselves.

He gears his aspirations and his work to the situation he is in. In due course, he does not seek a way out; he adapts....Alienated from production, from work, he is also alienated from consumption [because consumption is also being rationalized], from genuine leisure. This adaptation of the individual and its effects upon his milieu and self results not only in the loss of his chance, and in due course, of his capacity and his will to reason; it also affects his chances and his capacity to act as a free man. Indeed, neither the value of freedom nor of reason, it would seem, are known to him. (2000a, p. 170)

The dilemma that these workers seem to face is the choice between their freedom and making a living. Mills wrote, "The society in which this [alienated] man, this cheerful robot, flourishes is the antithesis of the free society – or in the literal and plain meaning of the word, of a democratic society" (2000b, p. 172). Mills believed the distraction or influence of the mass media might be a reason that some workers do not seem to directly address this issue (1979, 2002).

Mass media have the effect of being a distraction in modern life, which is compounded by the issue of moral insensitivity in modern life. "But regardless of the reasons, the absence of any moral order of belief exposes us to the influences of a commercial culture, the mass media manipulations of frenzied entertainment and distraction" (Mills, 1979, pp. 333-334). We are ready to accept alternative moral codes presented in popular culture.

Commercial jazz, soap opera, pulp fiction, comic strips, the movies set the images, mannerisms, standards, and aims of the urban masses. In one way or another, everyone is equal before these cultural machines; like technology itself, the mass media are nearly universal in their incidence and appeal. They are a kind of common

denominator, a kind of scheme for pre-scheduled, mass emotions. (Mills, 2002, p. 333)

The mass media define our heroes, which we try to emulate, and the cultural myths, which we accept. “The truth is as the media are now organized, they expropriate our vision” (Mills, 2002, p. 333). Mass media also distorts coverage of political news.

Regarding mass media reporting political issues, Mills wrote in “Letter to the New Left,” “Their power to outrage, their power truly to enlighten in a political way, their power to aid decision, even their power to clarify some situation – all that is blunted or destroyed” (2008, p. 256). Mills wrote that “reasoning collapses into reasonableness” (2008, p. 256). He goes on to explain that many times, “arguments and facts of a displeasing kind are simply ignored” (2008, p. 256), and when arguments and facts are acknowledged, “they are neither connected with one another nor related to any general view. Acknowledged in a scattered way, they are never put together: to do so is to risk being called, curiously enough, ‘one-sided’” (2008, p. 256). Mills goes on to examine the consequences of such reporting:

This refusal to relate isolated facts and fragmentary comment with the changing institutions of society makes it impossible to understand the structural realities which these facts might reveal; the longer-run trends of which they might be tokens. In brief, fact and idea are isolated, so the real questions are not even raised, analysis of the meanings of fact not even begun. (2008, p. 256)

Thus, the role of the mass media contributes to the decline of our capacity to reason.

Mass media has had much to do with the emergence and maintenance of mass society. In *The Power Elite*, Mills wrote, “In a mass society, the dominant type of communication is the formal media, and the publics become mere media markets: all those exposed to the contents of given mass media” (2000b, p. 304). Mills saw a trend away from a community of publics toward a mass society.

In the United States today, media markets are not entirely ascendant over primary publics. But surely we can see that many aspects of the public life of our times are more features of a mass society than of a community of publics. (Mills, 2000b, p. 304)

Mills used publics in much the same way as Dewey: a group of people getting together to resolve one or more community issues through public deliberation. Mills distinguished publics from masses by the type of communication taking place in each, including the degree of autonomy from institutions they had in the formation of individuals' opinions. A public forms opinion by discussion with a great deal of independence from institutions; while masses are strongly influenced by the mass media. Other distinguishing factors include the portion of people giving opinion, social action resulting from opinion, and who is allowed to speak. In general, in publics everyone is allowed to speak, and once agreement is reached, social action is likely to occur; while in masses, hardly anyone has a chance to speak and social action is less likely (Mills, 2000b, pp. 303-304).

People in a mass society are alienated because they feel powerless. Mills wrote, "Men in masses have troubles, but they are not usually aware of their true meaning and source; men in publics confront issues, and they usually come to be aware of their public terms" (2000a, p. 187). By engaging in community discussions, people increase their capacity to understand and act.

The rise of mass society is intertwined with the rise of the current power structure in the United States. "The rise of the power elite...rests upon, and in some ways is part of, the transformation of the publics of America into a mass society" (Mills, 2000b, p. 297). The rise of mass society reduces the capacity of people to understand and act on the social phenomena occurring in society. This allows the power elite to make the decisions.

Mills saw the power elite as being composed of the top decision makers within the political, economic, and military spheres of authority (2000b). “The power elite...also rests upon the similarity of its personnel, and their personal, and official relations with one another, upon their social and psychological affinities” (Mills, 2000b, p. 278). The power elite has similar socio-economic and educational backgrounds. Mills found that it is not unusual for men in these positions to move from one sphere of power to another. Mills wrote in *The Power Elite*, “between these higher circles there is an interchangeability of position, based formally upon the supposed transferability of ‘executive ability,’ based in substance upon the co-optation by cliques of insiders” (2000b, p. 287).

Mills’ conception of the power elite has its critics. The power elite is an unproved hypothesis. Mills wrote, “the very top of modern society is often inaccessible” (2000b, p. 382). But, in *The Power Elite*, Mills wrote, “we cannot allow the impossibility of rigorous proof to keep us from studying whatever we believe to be important” (2000b, 382). Mills proceeds with his studies “by the use of his heuristic concept of the power elite” (Sigler, 1966, p. 39). The problem of finding out what the power elite knows is complicated by their control of the mass media (Sigler, 1966). “In the *Power Elite* Mills describes a public which is substantially powerless to resist the mass media and these media are largely in the hands of the ‘power elite’” (Sigler, 1966, p. 42). Mills used his power elite hypothesis to analyze the power structure of modern society.

Mills wrote that the power elite’s authority has been increasing as “the means of oppression and exploitation, of violence and destruction, as well as the means of production and reconstruction, have been progressively enlarged and increasingly centralized” (2000b, p. 23). This transfer of power is also aided by the changeover from publics to mass society.

Mills saw the increasing concentration of power, the increasing feelings of helplessness of the people, and the rise of the mass media as reasons for the loss of publics, where everyone has a voice.

We are losing our sense of belonging because we think that the fabulous techniques of mass communication are not enlarging and animating face-to-face public discussion, but are helping to kill it off. These media – radio and mass magazines, television and the movies – as they now generally prevail, increasingly destroy the reasonable and human interchange of opinion. They do not often enable the listener or the viewer truly to connect his daily life with the realities of the world, nor do they often connect with his troubles. (Mills, 2008, pp. 90-91)

By not engaging in face-to-face public discussions, people lose their sense of belonging.

This translates into a loss of power for the people, because as Mills wrote,

They [the people] lose their will for decision because they do not possess the means of decision; they lose their sense of political belonging because they do not belong; they lose their political will because they see no way to realize it. (1958, p. 34)

People need a space where they can engage in deliberations about issues that are important to their lives.

Mills reasoned that publics, where people deliberate face-to-face about real issues that affect them, are needed. Mills wrote in *The Causes of World War Three*, “It [political structure] requires not only that such a public as is projected by democratic theorists exist, but that it be the very forum within which a politics of real issues is enacted” (1958, p. 118).

Mills goes on to clarify functions that these publics should perform, “And democracy certainly requires, as a fact of power, that there be free associations linking families and smaller communities and publics on the one hand with the state, the military establishment, the corporation on the other” (1958, p. 119). This linking is needed in order to enact policy in a democratically responsible manner where everyone has a voice.

In *The Sociological Imagination*, Mills spelled out what he felt each social scientist should do, in order to help build a more democratic society.

It is the political task of the social scientist – as of any liberal educator – continually to translate personal troubles into public issues, and public issues into the terms of their human meaning for a variety of individual....And it is his purpose to cultivate such habits of mind among men and women who are publicly exposed to him. To secure these ends is to secure reason and individuality, and to make these the predominate values of a democratic society. (2000a, pp. 187-188)

This will help promote creation of and continued demand for publics on issues relevant to the people. Mills believed that democratization should expand beyond political governance into the corporate economy.

Above all, the privately incorporated economy must be made over into a publically responsible economy....This corporate economy, as it is now constituted, is an undemocratic growth within the formal democracy of the United States....[It] represent[s] a concentration of economic power over economics which makes the medieval feudal system look like a Sunday School party. (1958, p. 120)

This proposed expansion of democracy is due to the rapid expansion of the influence that corporate America has on the lives of ordinary citizens.

Mills' insight in his call to social scientists to link the daily lives of ordinary citizens with policy issues will be considered in chapter 5, where changes to PB's rules, procedures, and practices are proposed. And Mills' conviction that the scope of democracy should be expanded to include all major aspects of the modern economy, in particular the corporate economy, will be addressed in chapter 5, where it is proposed that the scope of neighborhood assemblies could be incrementally expanded. This is in keeping with Walt Whitman's and John Dewey's vision of democratic governance evolving into an egalitarian democratic society.

### **The Port Huron Statement**

Tom Hayden wrote the original draft of the Port Huron Statement for the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS). The result is generally considered to be the manifesto of the New Left. “[T]he Statement represents the collective thought of the inspirational founding Convention of SDS, held in Port Huron, Michigan, June, 11-15, 1962” (Hayden, 2005, p. 43). The conference attendees rewrote the original draft and published it as SDS’s founding document to express their beliefs about social change. The statement’s central theme is using participatory democracy to overcome apathy and effect social change. “Despite the eclectic and even diffuse character of the Port Huron Statement, it expressed a central idea embodied in the phrase ‘participatory democracy’” (Flacks, 2015, p. 225). As Hayden later wrote, “We were rebelling against the experience of apathy not against a single specific oppression” (2005, p. 4). The SDS wanted to connect all of the issues of their time.

These students could see the possibilities of addressing all the issues of the day if the people could be awakened from their apathy and engage the moral issues. “Their [SDS’s] immediate hope was to enable students engaged in the civil rights struggle to see a common political agenda with those concerned with ending the Cold War” (Flacks, 2015, p. 225). These two political fights are connected with several social justice issues. In the Port Huron Statement, they wrote,

The fight for civil rights is also one for social welfare for all Americans; for free speech and the right to protest; for the shield of economic independence and bargaining power; for the reduction of the arms race which takes national attention and resources away from the problems of domestic injustices. (Hayden, 2005, p. 162)

The SDS saw participatory democracy as empowering people to make moral choices. Because the Port Huron Statement focused on people making moral choices, the “values” section is first, after the introduction. Hayden wrote,

We chose to put “values” forward as the first priority in challenging the conditions of apathy and forging a new politics. Embracing values meant making choices as morally autonomous human beings against a world that advertised in every possible way that there were no choices. (2005, p. 5)

One of the values put forward in the Port Huron Statement is that people have unfulfilled potential. In the “values” section, they wrote, “We regard men as infinitely precious and possessed of unfulfilled capacities for reason, freedom, and love” (Hayden, 2005, p. 51). A little further on, they wrote, “Men have unrealized potential for self-cultivation, self-direction, self-understanding, and creativity” (Hayden, 2005, p. 52). Of course, people who have these capacities would be able participate in democratic governance as well as participating in a broader democratic society.

The Port Huron Statement agreed with both Dewey and Mills in asserting that both the individual and the community would benefit from participatory democracy. In 2015, Hayden wrote,

It [participatory democracy] was a way of empowering the individual as autonomous but interdependent with other individuals, and the community as a civic society. Without this empowerment on both levels, the Statement warned, we were living in “a democracy without publics,” in the phrase of C. Wright Mills, the rebel sociologist who was one of our intellectual heroes. (2015, p. 21)

In addition to Dewey and Mills, the North American tribal governance, Thomas Jefferson, and Henry David Thoreau were part of the legacy that the Port Huron Statement was built upon (Hayden, 2005). Hayden, in 2005, wrote,

Perhaps the most compelling advocate of participatory democracy, however, was Henry David Thoreau, the nineteenth-century author of *Civil Disobedience*, who opposed taxation for either slavery or war.... Thoreau’s words were often repeated in the early days of the sixties civil rights and antiwar movements. (2005, p. 6)

There is a long tradition in the United States supporting participatory democracy.

Concerning Dewey, Richard Flacks, one of the participants in the conference where the Port Huron Statement was written, ,wrote,

[I]nsofar as the U.S. New Left stressed the need to learn from and respond to lived experience, to be experimental and non-dogmatic about issues of strategy, to be open and heterodox ideologically, to emphasize the educative character of social action, to refuse any large-scale theory of history, to question authority, to maintain organizational fluidity, to emphasize face-to-face decision making, to stress personal growth as a measure of political validity, it was John Dewey's project that was being implemented. (2015, pp. 237-238)

Dewey's writings influenced the writing of the Port Huron Statement. "Perhaps nowhere did Dewey's ideals echo more resoundingly than in the 'Port Huron Statement' (1962)" (Westbrook, 1991, p. 549). An important goal for Dewey was a truly deliberative society.

In addition to examining the philosophical foundations of the Port Huron Statement, it is useful to look at events immediately preceding and coinciding with writing the Port Huron Statement. "It is generally accepted that the New Left arose out of mobilization on behalf of Civil Rights" (Tarrow, 2016, p. 812). The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) was an inspiration to many young people, including the some of the founders of the SDS, who wrote the Port Huron Statement.

SNCC grew out of a lunch counter sit-in by four African American students in Greensboro, South Carolina. Hayden and Paul Potter, another SDS founder, went to Mississippi to help organize along with SNCC activists and were badly beaten and jailed by local whites. (Xenos, 2016, p. 814)

People involved in the struggle for civil rights were willing to risk their lives for the sake of social justice.

Everyone involved in the civil rights movement struggle knew the importance of human dignity. Hayden wrote, "For virtually every early member of SDS, the rural, southern African American movement as exemplified in SNCC was both political model and moral

exemplar” (2005, p. 6). The SNCC’s use of direct action, such as the lunch counter sit-in, was an important method that was used by the SDS. In 2005, Hayden wrote, “participation in direct action was a method of psychic empowerment, a fulfillment of human potential, a means of curing alienation, as well as an effective means of mass protest” (2005, p. 7). Both the SNCC and the SDS knew the importance of direct action, as a way of learning by doing.

The other important method used by the SNCC was consciousness-raising, which involved raising individuals’ awareness of their right to make decisions (Hayden, 2005). Consciousness-raising is done in small group discussions. In writing about how activists from that time period did their work, Hayden wrote,

The idea was to challenge elite authority by direct example on the one hand, and on the other to draw “ordinary people,” whether apathetic students, sharecroppers, or office workers, into a dawning belief in their right to participate in decisions. This was the method – call it consciousness-raising – of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, which influenced SDS, the early women’s liberation groups, farm workers’ house meetings, and Catholic base communities, eventually spreading to Vietnam veterans’ rap groups and other organizations. Participatory democracy was a tactic of movement building as well as an end in itself. And by an insistence on listening to “the people” as a basic ethic of participatory democracy, the early movement was able to guarantee its roots in American culture and traditions while avoiding the imported ideologies that infected many elements of the earlier left. (2005, pp. 8-9)

Consciousness-raising describes individuals becoming aware of their own value and rights, by people listening to them and giving them a sense of empowerment. The values promoted by the Port Huron Statement and the SDS is why they were successful in promoting the civil rights movement, as well as being a foundation for movements started later in the 1960s, such as the women’s liberation movement. “The Port Huron preoccupations reflected the issues of the already emerging 1960s movements, and the manifesto then lent energy to the movements” (Piven, 2016, p. 809). As Hayden wrote in 2005, “The Port Huron Statement

called for a coalescing of social movements: civil rights, peace, labor, liberals, and students” (p. 14).

The Port Huron Statement helped lay the groundwork for the women’s liberation movement even though the Statement used only male pronouns and no mention was made of women’s rights. Ackelsberg and Shanley wrote,

Our own teaching and writing on gender justice, then, stemmed both from our having shared the conviction of the PHS [Port Huron Statement] authors that social change in the direction of greater justice and equality was possible, and from our increasing awareness that gender justice would have to be an essential aspect of any vision of social justice worth fighting for. (2016, p. 799)

The Port Huron Statement connected with the women’s liberation movement concerning the values and direction of society, as a whole.

Consciousness-raising is something else that the women’s liberation movement has in common with the SDS and the Port Huron Statement.

[T]he women’s movement grew out of the experiences of consciousness-raising, and argued that “the personal is political.” Members of consciousness-raising groups drew on their personal experiences in order to uncover shared experiences that – they/we came to recognize – arose from social norms and social structures.... Consciousness raising was an extremely important analytic tool, a valuable methodology for the shaping of feminist analysis and theory. (Ackelsberg & Shanley, 2016, p. 800)

It seems that the building of social movements have similar dynamics with one another.

The methodology of participatory democracy, in general, and consciousness-raising, in particular, were addressed toward the end of the “values” section. The Port Huron Statement examines how participatory democracy works by looking at its fundamental elements.

In a participatory democracy, the political life would be based on several root principles.

- [1] that decision-making of basic social consequence be carried on by public groupings;
- [2] that politics be seen positively, as the art of collectively creating an acceptable pattern of social relations;
- [3] that politics has the function of bring people out of isolation and into community, thus being a necessary, though not sufficient, means of finding meaning in personal life; that the political order should serve to clarify problems in a way instrumental to their solution; it should provide outlets for the expression of personal grievance and aspiration; opposing views should be organized so as to illuminate choices and facilitate the attainment of goals; channels should be commonly available, to relate men to knowledge and to power so that private problems – from bad recreational facilities to personal alienation – are formulated as general issues. (Hayden, 2005, pp. 53-54)

The part of the third point – about how important it is for people to be able to translate private problems into general issues – has been described, in part, as consciousness-raising. As will be shown later, a well-designed PB process, within the legal restrictions on the scope of issues, addresses the other principles of participatory democracy.

In addition to strongly supporting the Civil Rights movement and helping to inspire the women's liberation movement, the Port Huron Statement also helped other social movements.

The Civil Rights movement also helped to give birth to a sister movement of the minority poor in the northern cities that succeeded in forcing expansion of U.S. social welfare programs. And as the war in Southeast Asia escalated, the Port Huron thinkers became the intellectual leaders of the antiwar movement, whose repercussions eventually forced the American war machine to withdraw. So, Port Huron was important, and it was the movements to which the statement lent purpose, coherence, and élan that made it important. (Piven, 2016, p. 809)

Social movements have been an important force in advocating for progressive issues. The Port Huron Statement is able to support such seemingly diverse social movements because it focused on basic values, such as human dignity, and the direct participation of the people.

The legacy of the Port Huron Statement includes its support for the civil rights movement and its advocacy for participatory democracy, to overcome apathy and effect social change. The authors of the Port Huron Statement believed in the unlimited potential of people and their ability to make moral choices.

Mills, as noted in the previous section, wanted social scientists to give themselves the task of translating “personal troubles into public issues” (Mills, 2000a, p. 187), in order to provide publics with relevant issues that they could deliberate and decide. In the 1960s, this task was accomplished with consciousness-raising groups. The importance of translating personal troubles into general issues was noted in the Port Huron Statement, as a root principle upon which participatory democracy is based. The Port Huron Statement provided a passion that helped fuel the social movements of the 1960s.

### **Ethical Democracy of Alfred Schutz**

Alfred Schutz was a social philosopher who used phenomenological analysis and the general sociological methodology of Max Weber to explore the social world. “The intersubjective world of daily life, our social world, is the domain of action, and the analysis of action is a central theme of Schutz’s Phenomenology” (Natanson, 1968, p. 221).

He [Schutz] accepts Weber’s axiom that the social sciences must be value-free. He likewise accepts Weber’s methodological individualism, and his contention that social phenomena are properly to be understood in terms of ideal types. And he not only accepts but emphasizes Weber’s view that the social sciences are concerned essentially with social action, the concept “social” being defined in terms of a relationship between the behavior of two or more people, and the concept “action” being defined as behavior to which a subjective meaning is attached. (Walsh, 1967, p. xxi)

However, Schutz went beyond Weber’s work by looking closely at the definitions of some fundamental concepts.

Suffice it to say that, while agreeing with Weber that it is the essential function of social science to be interpretive, that is, to understand the subjective meaning of social action, Schutz finds that Weber failed to state clearly the essential characteristics of understanding (*Verstehen*), of subjective meaning (*gemeinter Sinn*), or of action (*Handeln*). (Walsh, 1967, p. xxi)

Schutz spent his career gaining a better understanding of the subjective point of view, which gives meaning to social action. The subjective point of view is a genuine understanding of the other person's point of view. Schutz believed it was possible to achieve a perception of another's subjective experiences (Walsh, 1967). As Walsh writes in the introduction to *The Phenomenology of the Social World*,

This does not mean that we can directly intuit another person's subjective experiences. What it does mean is that we can intentionally grasp those experiences because we assume that his facial expressions and his gestures are a "field of expression" for his inner life. This is what Schutz calls the "bodily presence" or "corporeal givenness" of the partner. The crucial factor here is simultaneity. We sense the other person's stream of consciousness is flowing along a track that is temporally parallel with our own. (p. xxv)

This allows us to gain an understanding of social action, which is needed to understand the social world.

For most of his career Schutz agreed with Weber, who limited the purpose of philosophy to value clarification as opposed to the discovery of value, and did not apply value judgments to social science (Barber, 2004). However, Schutz did come to embrace a normative stance. After the 1954 *Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka Supreme Court* case, which ended the doctrine of separate but equal, Schutz attended two conferences on equality and equality of opportunity.

The first conference, in 1955, was the Conference on Science, Philosophy, and Religion, which had the topic of equality. Schutz presented the paper: Equality and the Meaning Structure of the Social World. "Schutz's endeavor to disclose the hidden

subjectivity of the Other makes for good social science, but in the equality essay it also is an ally in the ethical struggle against racism” (Barber, 1991, p. 135). Schutz used his methodology to analyze what constitutes discrimination. The first sentence of Schutz’s paper on equality states, “The subject of the present paper is the theoretical analysis of various aspects of the notion of equality in the common-sense thinking of concrete social groups” (1976, p. 226). Schutz looked at the reasons why people treated others in their community as they did.

In this equality paper, Schutz starts to move away from his belief that value judgments should not be applied to social science research. “In “Equality and the Meaning Structure of the Social World,” Schutz employs terms laden with moral connotations such as “degradation,” “oppression,” “alienation,” and “deprivation of rights”” (Barber, 1991, p. 134). Evidently, Schutz felt that some human action, such as discrimination, is immoral. In “Equality and the Meaning Structure of the Social World,” Schutz writes:

But if he [anyone] is compelled to identify himself as a whole with that particular trait or characteristic which places him in terms of the imposed system of heterogeneous relevances into a social category he had never included as a relevant one in his definition of his private situation, then he feels that he is no longer treated as a human being in his own right and freedom, but is degraded to an interchangeable specimen of the typified class. He is alienated from himself, a mere representative of the typified traits and characteristics. He is deprived of his right to the pursuit of happiness. (1976, pp. 256-257)

If the typifications of the in-group become internalized into the subjective viewpoints of individuals who are part of the out-group, then discrimination, with disastrous consequences, will occur (Schutz, 1976). Lack of communication results in people not knowing or not caring how their attitudes affect others. In “Making Music Together,” Schutz wrote about “the “mutual tuning-in relationship” upon which alone all communication is

founded” (1951, p. 79). To the degree that we still have discrimination is the degree to which we do not understand the need to “tune-in” with others.

After the 1955 conference, speakers were asked to submit possible future directions to be taken. Schutz’s response was a seven-page paper, “In Search of the Middle Ground,” The term middle ground came from the discussions during the conference: “it seems that the term “middle ground” was used in a rather equivocal way by the various speakers, and frequently by the same speaker in various contexts” (Schutz, 1996, p. 148). Schutz wanted to define and analyze the different ways “middle ground” was used.

“Basically he [Schutz] demarcated three types of “middle ground”: a common language, a shared epistemology, and a unified pragmatic sense” (Barber, 2004, p. 185). Common language needed to be emphasized due to a wide variety of people participating in the conference, including theologians, philosophers, and academics and a corresponding number of different approaches to solving the problem. Concerning a shared epistemology, Schutz wrote, “It seems to me that this region of secularized common-sense thinking is indeed the ‘epistemological middle ground’ where ideas and ideals – transformed into taken-for-granted notions of social reality – become springs of social interaction” (1996, p. 150). Secularized common-sense is the transformation of the ideals of philosophers and theologians into the common-sense of the man-on-the-street. Secularized common-sense thinking frames our knowledge of the world.

The third type of middle ground Schutz identified is in the unified pragmatic sense. He wrote, “to convey our message to the common man and be understood by him we have to use his language and to translate our thoughts into the conceptual framework accepted by him” (1996, p. 151). Persuade people by using arguments that reinforce their worldview and

using familiar words. In this paper, “he [Schutz] assumed the role of sympathetic observer lending advice for whom active involvement is a personal and moral obligation” (Wagner & Psathas, 1996, p. 147). Schutz had moved away from his earlier value-free investigations of intersubjectivity in order to deal with racism. “Schutz envisioned the possibility that common sense, constituted by typifications and relevances shared by in-groups and out-groups, might serve as a possible locus in which the conference participants, with diverse theological or philosophical concepts of equality, might find a common ground” (Barber, 2004, pp. 184-185). Finding inclusive common sense requires understanding the subjective meaning of ideals and ideas.

In 1956, Schutz attended a follow-up conference (Embree, 1999) at the Institute of Ethics with the topic “equality of opportunity and the various barriers to it.” Schutz was assigned to a committee to discuss “barriers to equality of opportunity for the development of powers of social and civic judgement” (Barber, 2004). After two weeks of discussion, Lasswell and Schutz prepared a written report of the committee’s findings on June 14, 1956, which was slightly revised on July 5, 1956. Schutz said:

Therefore, what we call barriers – and call [them] whatever you please – they are of three different types: There are, first of all, barriers as to the free flux of information; we have, secondly, barriers as to the free formation of motivations; and we have the third barrier, that the individual citizen, himself, might at least be heard as a competent authority to make the decisions or, if possible, to influence others in the sense of this decision. (Schutz, as cited in Embree, 1999, p. 273)

Of course, good information is needed for good judgment. Also, in “The Well-Informed Citizen,” Schutz wrote, “It is the duty and privilege, therefore, of the well-informed citizen in a democratic society to make his private opinion prevail over the public opinion of the

man on the street" (1946, p. 478). This because a well-informed opinion is more valuable. In a June 7, 1956 memorandum Schutz wrote to Lasswell, Schutz went further when he wrote:

- (6) Means for reaching this goal:
  - (a) Encouraging of debating clubs on all levels of education, using pro and con teams.
  - (b) Preparing of a list of books containing the reliable information in various fields and presenting as far as possible the various aspects of the problems involved in an objective way (these are not the "100 great books").
  - (c) Adult education on various levels.
  - (d) Non-partisan round-table conferences.
  - (e) Sponsoring inter-professional, inter-confessional, inter-racial, etc. discussion groups.
  - (f) Sponsoring television programs to this purpose. (1999, pp. 294-295)

At least three of Schutz's recommendations involved public deliberations. Another two, television programs and adult education, could include deliberation.

Schutz's second type of barrier was free formation of motivations. "Schutz has an account of reasonableness, which also relates to the question of the well-informed citizen's insight into her motives" (Embree, 1999, p. 278). Schutz wrote,

If an actor seems to be sensible to the observer and is, in addition, supposed to spring from a judicious choice among different courses of action, we may call it reasonable even if such action follows traditional or habitual patterns just taken for granted. Rational action, however, presupposes that the actor has clear and distinct insight...into the ends, the means, and the secondary results. (Embree, 1999, p. 278)

Social policies are complex in that they may not result in the intended consequences, or they may result in additional unforeseen consequences.<sup>8</sup> Also, a person's motivation might be partially, or wholly, based on a biased opinion.

The third barrier, as identified by Schutz, to equality of opportunity for the development of powers of social and civic judgment was the opportunity for the individual citizen to be heard, make decisions, and influence others. In a draft of a section of the Schutz-Lasswell committee report, Schutz wrote,

- (c) Barriers of equality of opportunity of bringing about the alternative chosen by the individual or at least being heard by those who make the decision.

... The social world has several dimensions in time: contemporaries, predecessors, and successors. We are here concerned exclusively with the world of contemporaries. It consists in a kernel of situations in which the individuals participate in what might be called a face-to-face relationship in the sense that the participants share a sector of space and live together [during] a stretch of time.... In the group of consocii (family, congregation, local town hall meeting, local professional group) the individual may talk to individuals, answer questions in immediacy, argue in vivid discussion. He has at least theoretically an opportunity to be heard equal to all others....

The only hope for a remedy consists in the assumption that by speaking out among the familiar group of consocii a kind of chain reaction can be created which might bring about the desired result. By the very reason of the activity of the responsible citizen in the smallest circle accessible to him – the family, the classroom, the discussion group, the local political or professional organization – is of the highest importance and should be encouraged. (Embree, 1999, pp. 269-271)

"In this fragment on being heard, he [Schutz] went even further by discerning within intersubjective knowledge formation an ethical value of ultimacy: the single individual wishing to make his personal opinion heard and appreciated" (Barber, 2004, p. 192). Schutz

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<sup>8</sup> See the Method section in Chapter 1 for Dewey's explanation of the means-end-continuum and unintended consequences.

discovered the ethical value of a citizen's ability to be heard and influence others as a way to judge democracy.

The PB process could overcome all three "barriers to equality of opportunity for the development of powers of social and civic judgment" which were summarized by Schutz. The well run PB process provides citizens with sufficient information to make informed decisions concerning their communities. Chapter 5 recommends changes in PB's rules, procedures, and practices to encourage deliberation, which will further help participants become better informed. Schutz's second point concerns an individual's motivation for his judgment. Schutz was referring to "the ends, the means, and the secondary results." These concerns are addressed in chapter 1, in Dewey's explanation of the means-end continuum and unintended consequences. The other barrier that might result from a person's motivation was that the motivation might be based on a biased opinion. This is addressed by facilitators encouraging deliberation, which should help expose any bias. And finally, the PB assemblies give every citizen the chance to stand up and be heard concerning issues affecting their local communities. And since the PB process is open and transparent, every citizen will know the outcome of every issue that was raised during the process.

### **The Social Capital of Robert Putnam**

The concept of social capital has been controversial. First, there is not one generally accepted definition of social capital. This is partly due to social capital being composed of several social phenomena. Secondly, it is controversial because social capital does not meet all of the traditional criteria of being capital. It is beyond the scope of this dissertation to comment on the validity of social capital outside of the PB process. However, Putnam's description of social capital does seem to fit the dynamics of a well-run PB process. It might

be that a well-run PB process provides a unique environment that combines civil society, the state, and direct democracy, where deliberation can occur in a public assemblies and where individuals can begin to think of themselves of part of the community, as opposed to isolated individuals.

This section begins with a brief examination of the history of the social capital concept. Then, the capital debate controversy of social capital is addressed. The next subsection will review Putnam's understanding of social capital and why Putnam's idea of social capital seems to work in the PB process.

### **History of Social Capital**

There are various definitions of social capital, which are reviewed in this section. “The commonality of most definitions is that they emphasize social relations that generate productive benefits” (Bhandari & Yasunobu, 2009, p. 487). More specifically, when social networks are used, the benefits of social capital are created by the relationships of the people participating in the networks, such as increased trust, which can result in increased productivity, both economic and social. “The idea of social capital can be traced long back but its entry into academic and policy debates can be credited to the pioneering work of Pierre Bourdieu (1986), James Coleman (1988) and Robert Putnam (1993)” (Bhandari & Yasunobu, 2009, p. 487). The work of these three social scientists is briefly reviewed. “The dominating paradigm in the current literature on social capital is largely based on Coleman’s (1988) definition and on the work of Putnam (1995)” (Poder, 2011, p. 350).

Putnam was not the first to use the concept. However, he did play “a prominent role in popularizing the concept of social capital” (Bhandari & Yasunobu, 2009, p. 488), through

publication of *Making Democracy Work* (1994) and *Bowling Alone* (2000). Putnam's approach to social capital seems to have resonated better than those of other authors.

Robert Putnam is undoubtedly the author who has done more to popularize the concept of social capital both inside and outside academic circles. His theory – or his speech – is based largely on the concept of social capital by Coleman (1988, 1990) and little on the sociology of networks. (Poder, 2011, p. 348)

A general definition that seems to include all the social phenomena discussed in the literature of social capital is:

Social capital is broadly defined to be a multidimensional phenomenon encompassing a stock of social norms, values, beliefs, trusts, obligations, relationships, networks, friends, memberships, civic engagement, information flows, and institutions that foster cooperation and collective actions for mutual benefits and contributes to economic and social development. (Bhandari & Yasunobu, 2009, p. 486)

As was noted, there is not a single definition of social capital. “The main difference between these definitions is that they treat social capital as either personal resources or social resources” (Bhandari & Yasunobu, 2009, p. 487).

Bourdieu sees social capital as an individual good that is acquired from group membership. “It [social capital] is a personal asset in the competition among individuals aiming to improve their own positions as compared to others” (Bhandari & Yasunobu, 2009, p. 488). The quantity of an individual’s social capital depends on the size of the social networks of which they are members, and the amount of social capital owned by members within these networks (Bourdieu, 1986). Bourdieu defines social capital as “the aggregate of the actual or potential resources that are linked to the possession of a durable network of more or less institutional relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition – in other words, to membership in a group” (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 248).

“For Coleman, social capital is a public good as it exists in the relations among people” (Bhandari & Yasunobu, 2009, p. 488). Coleman believed it was not an individual good because it could only be created and maintained in human interactions. “Coleman identifies three forms of social capital: reciprocity (including trust), information channels and flow of information, and norms enforced by sanction” (Bhandari & Yasunobu, 2009, p. 488). The reciprocity form “means that obligations will be repaid” (Coleman, 1988, p. S102). Information channels are critical to determine action. “An important form of social capital is the potential for information that inheres [is inherent] in social relations” (Coleman, 1988, p. S104). And norms prescribe behavior that benefits the group. “When a norm exists and is effective, it constitutes a powerful, though sometimes fragile, form of social capital” (Coleman, 1988, p. S104). Coleman believed that all human interactions contributed toward social capital. In 1988, Coleman wrote, “All social relations and social structures facilitate some forms of social capital” (p. S105).

Putnam, in *Making Democracy Work*, wrote: “Social capital here refers to features of social organizations, such as trust, norms, and networks, that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating actions....Spontaneous cooperation is facilitated by social capital” (1994, p. 167). Putnam believed that social capital can increase the productivity of both individuals and groups (Putnam, 2000).

### **Capital Debate Controversy of Social Capital**

There is some controversy whether social capital should be defined as capital. How do capital goods compare with social capital?

Several authors have clearly pointed out the weaknesses of the analogy between physical capital and social capital. Arrow (2000) argues that physical capital has three important characteristics: extension in time, deliberate sacrifice in the present

for future benefits, and alienability (transfer of ownership from one person to another). To him, social capital shares only the time dimension aspect with physical capital (for example, trust or reputation take some time to develop); but it does not necessarily require any material sacrifice; in most cases it is also difficult to transfer the ownership of social capital from one person to another. (Bhandari & Yasunobu, 2009, p. 493)

Of course, there are clearly differences between tangible capital goods and intangible social capital.

It may help to more closely examine why social capital does not meet Arrow's second characteristic of physical capital, deliberate sacrifice in the present for future benefits. It seems to depend on motivations and the definition of sacrifice. Social capital does not necessarily require any material sacrifice. However, it does require a sacrifice of one's time. Also, the motivation of people joining associations might be to connect with other people, instead of a calculation of time sacrificed for the sake of future personal enrichment. Robison, Schmid, and Siles questioned, "Is there a contradiction between individual or collective investment in social capital that implies calculation and the emotive non-calculating response of persons for persons?" (2002, p. 15). It does not seem like motivations should matter.

Money is required to start and run a PB process, and the future benefits would include distributing public goods and services in a more fair and transparent manner, which might be expected to reduce costs, such as corruption. Benefits would also include providing people with a sense of community and a sense of belonging. Of course, a benefit to local politicians who support a popular social innovation would be votes.

Arrow's third characteristic of social capital is alienability (transfer of ownership from one person to another). There are situations in which the owner of social capital may

transfer ownership. “For example, friends of my parents may become my friends because of the efforts of my parents. A baby who is born into a particular social structure and in particular to a family may immediately ‘own’ social capital” (Robison et al., 2002, p. 16). However, social capital cannot be sold or rented. The social capital received from a PB process also can not be sold or rented. However, everyone in the community would be encouraged to attend and participate in PB assemblies. Thus, the social capital received from PB seems to meet some – but not all – of the characteristics of capital.

The main idea of social capital is that networks of people can experience increased cooperation, which increases productivity. Putnam wrote:

[T]he core idea of social capital theory is that social networks have value. Just as a screwdriver (physical capital) or a college education (human capital) can increase productivity (both individual and collective), so too social contacts affect the productivity of individuals and groups. (2000, pp. 18-19)

Thus, it seems clear that human interactions can facilitate cooperation which affects both the individual and the community. Is it a type of capital?

The term social capital is now firmly entrenched in the language of social scientists. Thus, for now and some considerable time in the future, the term “social capital” will be in common use among most social scientists, if not most economists, and the task will be to make the most of it. (Robison et al., 2002, p. 8)

This dissertation accepts the term social capital.

### **Putnam’s Social Capital**

Putnam believes that social capital improves the efficacy, or productivity, of society by facilitating cooperation. In 2000, Putnam wrote, “social capital refers to connections among individuals – social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them” (p. 39). Putnam believes there are two types of social capital:

“Bonding capital,” consisting of homogeneous groups with much in common who develop trust and reciprocal relationships; and “bridging capital,” involving heterogeneous groups, typically with divergent views and different demographics who nevertheless develop generalized trust. It is argued that the latter networks, “bridging capital,” are more likely to produce these positive social outcomes than bonding capital. (Wampler & Hartz-Karp, 2012, p. 2)

Putnam wrote, “Bonding social capital (as distinct from bridging social capital) is particularly likely to have illiberal effects” (2000, p. 358). Discrimination may result from bonding social capital. “The civil rights movement was, in part, aimed at destroying certain exclusive, nonbridging forms of social capital – racially homogeneous schools, neighborhoods, and so forth” (Putnam, 2000, p. 362).

Having too much bonding capital is a real danger for PB processes as Wampler and Hartz-Karp write about in a special issue of *Journal of Public Deliberation*, which focused on PB.

Since most PB initiatives researched have relied upon civic organizations with common objectives developing a proposal together, more or less in competition for scarce resources with other civic organizations, it is more likely that bonding capital is being enhanced than bridging capital. (2012, p. 2)

This tendency can be reversed with active recruitment of typically marginalized groups of people to participate in the PB process. We will see this, in chapter 5, from an example in New York City which resulted in greater social justice and the potential for better deliberation, due to having a more diverse group of people.

In chapter 1, it was proposed that the social relationships formed in the PB process could provide the passion needed for individuals to change their mindsets and begin thinking of themselves as part of the community. Now, we need to know how the PB process is sometimes able to provide an environment where this metamorphosis can occur.

In 2003, Baiocchi did an ethnographic investigation of two Porto Alegre districts to discover how the PB process contributed to the transformation from “I” to “we.” Baiocchi wrote, “it is clear from Porto Alegre that state-sponsored institutions have proven important in fostering open-ended discussions in unlikely settings” (2003, p. 68). They were unlikely settings because they were poor districts where people might not be expected to be able to engage in “civic discourse and deliberation” (p. 68). By open-ended discussions, Baiocchi meant discussions that went “beyond the stated purpose of the meetings, which was to allocate budget priorities” (2003, p. 53). People got caught up in discussing policies that affected their community.

Sometimes these open-ended discussions resulted in a meeting being taken over by a non-agenda topic. These non-agenda topics were usually introduced at the beginning of the meeting in time that had been allocated for announcements (Baiocchi, 2003). During the announcements time, “many often took the opportunity to share news, events, and other items deemed relevant to community life” (Baiocchi, 2003, p. 60). Thus, even though the facilitators set the agenda, sometimes the participants determined what was to be discussed. “The discussion of a specific ‘news’ issue sometimes became a discussion of politics and economics, government policy, or macroeconomic problems, not to mention specific community problems” (Baiocchi, 2003, p. 60).

People in these assemblies used a “language of citizenship” which “emphasized ‘the good of the community’ and valued collective and pragmatic problem-solving” (Baiocchi, 2003, p. 62). Participants were able to link private needs to public problems (Baiocchi, 2003). Baiocchi reported in 2003 as a result of this type of approach to problem-solving, “Participants often mentioned a sense of belonging to a larger community of citizens who

together are facing problems together, as a result of having worked together over the year to decide on projects” (p. 62). This sense of belonging is what creates a community. It is another way to describe social capital. Baiocchi found that the state’s role in PB was critical to its success. He wrote that “interviews showed that it was difficult to establish such public-minded discussions on a regular basis in settings outside of the state-sponsored institutions” (2003, p. 66).

The state is able to provide access to information, experts within city agencies, and a space to deliberate.

The role of civic society in PB was also examined in this ethnographic study. The social networks in Por-do-Sol were important, not so much in turning an “I into We,” (Putnam, 1995), but in preventing the “We” of the discussions on collective projects from turning into an “I” of personal disputes as happened in Nazare. (Baiocchi, 2003, p. 69) The Por-do-Sol district had an established civic society prior to the introduction of PB, while Nazare did not (Baiocchi, 2003). The presence of an established civic society means that community activists have more experience. Baiocchi wrote,

experienced activists and well-developed civic networks prevented these open-ended discussions from becoming too disruptive or too personal....Because this [PB assembly] was essentially the only meeting place for the whole community and the Nazare community lacked experienced participants who could maintain order, these interruptions and digressions more often derailed meetings altogether. (2003, p. 53)

Baiocchi’s investigation also found that PB expands civic society organizations<sup>9</sup>. Baiocchi wrote, “these budget assemblies have fostered significant forms of civic engagement

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<sup>9</sup> The expansion of civic society organizations was more pronounced in areas that already had an established civic society.

throughout the city” (2003, p. 69). Civic society and the PB process seem to have a symbiotic relationship.

Interestingly, Putnam found a correlation between happiness and our number of social connections. Although he did hedge his bet when he wrote,

[T]he direction of causation remains ambiguous. Perhaps happy people are more likely than unlikely than unhappy people to get married, win raises at work, continue in school, attend church, join clubs, host parties, and so on. My present purpose is merely to illustrate that social connections have profound links with psychological well-being. The Beatles got it right: we all “get by with a little help from our friends.” (2000, p. 334)

It is interesting that Jefferson believed that increased public happiness would be a result of people actively participating in governing their local communities<sup>10</sup>.

The ability of PB to connect private needs to public policy is an evolution of how Mills and the Port Huron Statement envisioned it. Mills believed it was the duty of social scientists to translate personal needs into public issues, in order to provide publics with relevant issues. As was noted in the section about the Port Huron Statement, in the 1960s, this task was accomplished with consciousness-raising groups. Now, it seems, this duty can be performed in well-run PB assemblies where people actively participate.

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<sup>10</sup> See chapter 2.

## CHAPTER 4

### HISTORY OF PB

This chapter examines the history of PB. As stated previously, PB was invented in Porto Alegre, Brazil, in 1989. However, its inception is not that clear.

Much of the literature on participatory budgeting presents it essentially as an invention of the Worker's Party (PT) in Porto Alegre in 1989. For several reasons, however, its origins are more complicated and disputed than this view allows. As some scholars recognize (e.g., Souza 2001), there are several well-known cases in the late 1970s and early 1980s in which municipal governments under the Party of the Brazilian Democratic Movement (PMDB) submitted their budgets to public discussion, including Lages (Lesbaupin 2000, 41-45), Boa Esperanca (Baiocchi 2001b, 48-49), and Pelotas, where an ex-mayor claims to have invented PB (Goldfrank and Schneider, forthcoming). (Goldfrank, 2006, p. 5)

It is not clear if one of these cities should be recognized as being the first to introduce PB.

Some claim that Porto Alegre was the first city to implement a PB process that was able to capture all the ideals of PB.

The end of the transition [from authoritarianism to democracy] triggered participation in different Brazilian cities, such as Sao Paulo, Belo Horizonte, Recife, and Rio de Janeiro (Avritzer, 2009a). However, only in Porto Alegre could the political context in the postdemocratization period generate a process of reverting priorities, that is to say, of inverting the patterns of democratic participation and public investment at the urban level. (Avritzer, 2010, pp. 167-168)

In other words, previously disenfranchised people participate and poorer neighborhoods receive greater investment. If this evaluation is correct, then the previously mentioned cities had some, but not all, of the features of a PB process. But perhaps these cities should be given credit for helping to develop PB. Most inventions and social innovations are built upon previous similar ideas (Veblen, 1908).

The first section in this chapter looks at what may have led to the development of PB by looking at the social and political conditions in Brazil prior to PB's invention. Next,

Porto Alegre's experience with PB is examined. Then, PB's expansion throughout Brazil is investigated by reviewing a four matched pair study of Brazilian cities to learn the effects PB has on civil society. The following section surveys how the design of PB has changed as it has traveled the globe. And finally, how PB came to the United States is briefly reviewed.

### **Conditions in Brazil that Led to the Invention of PB**

For a couple of decades prior to the mid-80s, Brazil was ruled by an authoritarian government.

Between 1964 and 1985 the country experienced its worst authoritarian experience. Congress was closed by the authoritarian regime twice, once in 1968 and another in 1977. Elections for president were suspended and after 1968 most of the individual guarantees, such as habeas corpus, were also suspended. (Avritzer, 2000 p. 3)

PB, in part, could have been a reaction to Brazil's repressive regime.

During this period, Brazil's form of authoritarianism was unique among its neighbors in South America.

In contrast to all other countries in the Southern cone the authoritarian regime in Brazil did not close congress during the entire authoritarian period and did not rule by decree. On the contrary, congress in the Brazilian case was kept open for most of the authoritarian period and what the authoritarian regime did was to actively intervene in its composition. In the short run such action led to a mild form of authoritarianism in Brazil (Linz, 1971). In the long run it led to more continuity between authoritarianism and democracy. (Avritzer, 2000, p. 3)

While Brazil's government was repressive, it did retain the façade of democracy, which enabled the country to quickly transition to democracy.

Another source of repression among the people of Brazil was the large number of urban poor, which was the result of several factors. First, throughout the past century, "Brazilian society and politics were organized around one central idea: modernization. The country's elites sponsored a project of modernization based on three pillars: economic

development, industrialization and urbanization” (Avritzer, 2000, p. 3). This project was successful in transforming Brazil into the world’s “10th largest industrialized nation” (Avritzer, 2000, p. 3). However, apparently the social effects of this project were not considered.

[T]hroughout the twentieth century Brazil became one of the world’s most unequal countries. In 1984, the last year of authoritarianism in Brazil, the number of poor and very poor people in different regions of the country was above 35% of the whole population, reaching in the case of the Northeast more than half of the region’s population. (Avritzer, 2000, pp. 3-4)

This inequality extended to the distribution of public goods and services. “In 1984, only 64 percent of the urban population of Brazil has had access to treated water, and of those, 59.6 percent were in the southern region of Brazil. Access to sewage systems was even scarcer” (Avritzer, 2010, p. 168). Brazil had a system of distributing public goods and services based on favors, or clientelism.

Brazil has a long history of distributing public goods and services through a system of clientelism. Abers wrote that clientelism is, “a political system based on the exchange of favors between elected officials and their supporters – [which] pervaded Brazilian politics from the national to the local level (Hagopian, 1996; Diniz, 1982)” (2000, p. 3). In exchange for promises from politicians, ward bosses would get out the vote.

In Brazil, clientelist traditions have led to the development of vast political machines that link local bosses to state-level and federal politicians through such *troca de favores*, or favor exchange. In cities, neighborhood associations play a critical role in these linkages. *Cabos eleitorais*, or ward bosses, head up a large percentage if not most neighborhood associations and use them to mobilize votes for their party candidates by conveying promises of favors to local residents. (Abers, 1998, pp. 512-513).

Of course, politicians may not keep their promises. It seems that the bosses in the clientelist neighborhood associations were much better at delivering votes than the

politicians were at delivering public goods and services. “In fact, it is not necessarily in the interest of a candidate to resolve a neighborhood’s problems: doing so will only break a bond of obligation that is based on hope” (Abers, 2000, p. 29). The obligation was to raise hope, not the standard of living. Abers wrote, “The local government did its best to keep these associations under its control without investing substantially in infrastructure” (2000, p. 38).

Why would people continue to vote for politicians who did not fulfill their promises? The people continued to participate in such a system because they were without hope.

In neighborhoods dramatically lacking in basic services and infrastructure, rounding up votes on the basis of promises is not all that difficult. Poor people are grimly aware that they have little real influence over political decisionmaking [sic]. In this context of generalized disempowerment, promises, even if unfulfilled, are better than nothing. (Abers, 2000, p. 29)

Clientelism works best where people are without hope. Politicians, through the ward bosses, trade hope for votes.

This clientelist system started to change after 1974. After the government “won landslide elections in the 1970 congressional elections and with the economy booming, the regime decided it was safe to hold more competitive elections in 1974” (Abers, 2000, p. 26). However, one set of election results surprised the government.

The opposition [to the government] won sixteen out of twenty-two federal Senate seats up for election (Hagopian, 1996:156) The Senate vote reflected growing discontent with the regime, which had brought economic growth but also declining real wage values and worsening social conditions. (Abers, 2000, p. 26)

The regime had never placed a high value on improving the living conditions of its people. And in 1974, the government was beginning to see the consequences of its misplaced priorities.

The government's response was to increase social spending in order to build support.

Hagopian's (1996) study of patronage politics during the authoritarian period in Brazil shows that after 1974, pork barrel politics grew dramatically. The regime began to borrow heavily on the international market so as to fund a buildup in major social programs such as sanitation, education, and social assistance. According to Hagopian, this large increase in government spending was channeled through clientelist networks reaching down to the local level, where traditional politicians could mobilize votes for the regime. (Abers, 2000, p. 26)

Nevertheless, the government's strategy did not work as intended. "After 1974...when the regime increased its efforts to mobilize electoral support at the local level, neighborhood activists gained confidence" (Abers, 2000, p. 30). The government's response to declining support caused the opposition to believe that protest would be rewarded (Abers, 2000).

In the 1970s and 1980s, civil society began to reorganize itself, in the transition from authoritarianism to democracy, by demanding rights and access to public goods and services (Avritzer, 2010). "In the poor urban periphery, neighborhood organizations began to mount vast protest demonstrations demanding basic sanitation, transportation, and housing" (Abers, 2000, p. 31). The evolution of the neighborhood organizations from passively hoping for goods and services to actively demanding goods and services helped lead to democracy in Brazil. "The roots of Brazil's current participatory citizenship regime were firmly planted during the 1970s and 1980s, when CSOs [civil society organizations] developed new political strategies in pursuit of their political, social, and economic interests" (Wampler, 2015, p. 50).

"Brazil was democratized in 1985, when the military released control over political institutions" (Avritzer, 2010, p. 166). And in 1988, Brazil enacted a new constitution. "The 1988 constitution produced three significant institutional changes that are pertinent to how the participatory citizenship regime is being activated today: municipalization of authority

and resources, expansion of participatory venues, and formal guarantee of universal rights” (Wampler, 2015, p. 50). Of course, all three concepts are important to the development of PB.

The left as well as the right were in favor of the inclusion of decentralization in the constitution.

Both [conservative and leftist groups] favored decentralization and municipalization, albeit for different reasons. Conservative groups wanted municipalization because it would put greater resources in the hands of the local political bosses (*coreneis*), who sought to maintain the conceded citizenship regime. Leftist groups sought to municipalize as a way to improve service delivery, expand citizens’ voice, and gain power via local elections. (Wampler, 2015, p. 50)

This is interesting because, as we will see in the following sections, people also have different motivations for supporting PB.

### **PB in Porto Alegre**

This section first looks very briefly at what may have led to the successful implementation of PB in Porto Alegre. Then the institutional structure of this PB process is examined. Finally, a study of the 1989 to 2004 time period is reviewed. The authors of the study chose 2004 as the end date because the PT party lost in 2004 in Porto Alegre.

With the loss of the municipal government in 2004 by the Workers’ Party (Partido dos Trabalhadores or PT), PB did continue but under conditions of less support and more actual opposition from City Hall. This caused a significantly different performance by PB. (Marquetti et al., 2012, pp. 63-64)

This is the most important time period to study because its success is what fueled the rapid expansion of PB.

It seems surprising that the PT party would have lost in Porto Alegre, since PB was such a success. “The reasons for the electoral defeat were not straightforward” (Baiocchi, 2005, p. 158). But it seems that the winning mayor [Fogaca] ran a well-organized campaign.

With respect to OP [PB] in particular, Fogaca cited administration materials about currently delayed projects and promised an improved and more responsive OP [PB]; unable to claim that a vote for the opposition was a vote against the OP [PB], the PT lost one of its trump cards in its bid for a fifth municipal term. (Baiocchi, 2005, p. 158)

Thus, the PT could not effectively use PB as a reason they should be re-elected.

What was it about Porto Alegre that enabled PB to emerge and later to become an example of a best practice of local governance? One reason for the development of PB in Porto Alegre was their strong neighborhood associations.

[A]t the beginning of democratization, neighborhood activities were reorganized, and Uniao das Associacoes de Moradores de Porto Alegre UAMPA was created in 1983 with the aims of reorganizing neighborhood activities and challenging the old umbrella association Federacao das Associacoes de Bairro (FRACAB). As early as 1986, during its second annual congress, UAMPA raised the issue of democratizing the budget. (Avritzer, 2010, p. 170)

The UAMPA's proposal was for “members of neighborhood associations to decide...all budget issues” (Avritzer, 2010, p. 171). The first PT mayor, Olivio Dutra, was elected in 1988 (Avritzer, 2010). After negotiations, “the administration proposed that individual citizens [not representatives of associations] should partake in the participatory budgeting process” (Avritzer, 2010, p. 171).

Another contributing factor for PB emerging earlier in Porto Alegre could be that, for the 1988 election, there were two leftist parties competing, as opposed to one left and one right party, which was more common in Brazil during that period (Avritzer, 2010). Also, Porto Alegre “has had better social indicators in areas such as education and urban poverty” (Avritzer, 2010, p. 168). However, in spite of this, “Porto Alegre still had concentrated pockets of poverty, similar to other Brazilian cities” (Avritzer, 2010, p. 171). Of course, the new constitution was conducive to the emergence of PB throughout Brazil.

“In its election campaign for the city government of Porto Alegre in 1988, the Worker’s Party [PT] proposed a new type of economic democracy, participatory budgeting (PB)” (Marquetti et al., 2012, p. 62). The purpose of PB was to let the residents of a city decide for themselves what the city’s spending priorities should be.

Citizens both as individuals and through their civil society organizations participate in all three phases of the local investment budgetary process: the definition of the citizens’ preferences, the translation of these preferences into the investment budget, and the monitoring and control of its execution. (Marquetti et al., 2012, pp. 66-67)

The first phase of defining the citizens’ preferences, from March to June, included two rounds of regional meetings and several smaller local meetings between rounds.

In order for PB to work, people in any particular city need to be divided into smaller working groups so their voices can be heard. “PB has evolved in practice, starting with the first meetings in five regions of Porto Alegre in August 1989 to discuss the budget for the following year” (Marquetti et al., 2012, p. 63). The structure of PB was in place during most of the time period being considered. Changes made after 2001 “were only technical and did not change the essence of the process” (Marquetti et al., 2012, p. 67).

Until 2001, the PB process started with a series of meetings in each region from March to June. There were two main regional meetings, called first and second rounds. These were coordinated by City Hall, but the agenda was set jointly by the local regional leaderships and City Hall. In addition, the communities organized several local meetings called “intermediaries” between rounds. (Marquetti et al., 2012, p. 67)

These regional meetings had two primary responsibilities (Marquetti et al., 2012). One of the regional meetings’ primary responsibilities was to decide on the priorities of local investment. “The choice set of priorities was: basic sanitation; water and sewage system; land, human settlement regulation; street paving; education; social assistance; health; transport and circulation; parks; leisure and sports; public lighting; economic

development and tax system; culture; and environment” (Marquetti et al., 2012, p. 67). The discussions about spending priorities included individual residents, City Hall representatives, and civil society organizations (CSOs) (Marquetti et al., 2012). “Each regional assembly then chose three from a uniform set of urban investment priorities” (Marquetti et al., 2012, p. 67). This was very important to the residents because, of course, different classes of people would have different priorities. “This thus gave the poor a strong incentive to participate in the PB process in order to increase their consumption of those urban services that they considered the most important” (Marquetti et al., 2012, p. 67).

The second primary responsibility of the regional meetings was to elect delegates to meetings in later stages of the PB process. “Members were elected to the city-wide PB council...and to the Forum of Delegates. This later group monitored public works, kept the community informed during the PB process, and collected new demands for future work” (Marquetti et al., 2012, p. 67).

Another part of phase one were city-wide thematic meetings.

Their purpose was to discuss themes of general interest to the city, and to improve the planning capacity of PB. They were introduced in 1994 as the process continually modified itself, and like the regional assemblies, these were open to the direct participation of citizens, their civil society organizations, and spokespeople for City Hall. (Marquetti et al., 2012, p. 67)

Good PB processes are continuously tinkering with the rules, practices, and procedures of PB to improve the results.

The second phase involves the PB Council whose members were elected in phase one.

The PB Council consisted of 48 members, two each elected from each region and thematic group, two others, and two from City Hall that have a voice but no

vote....During this phase the PB Council met at least once a week, and the meetings were all open to the public. (Marquetti et al., 2012, p. 68)

This phase started after the regional meeting in June and ended with submitting a budget document to the Porto Alegre City Council at the end of September.

The PB Council was assisted by City Hall in formulating a budget. “The city government had an...important role in providing technical knowledge and support by personnel linked to the Mayor’s Office for the elaboration of the investment budget” (Marquetti et al., 2012, p. 68). City Hall also determined the total amount of the annual investment budget (Marquetti et al., 2012).

The PB Council used two steps to determine the budget. “In the first step the PB selected the three main priorities for the city as a whole for the coming year” (Marquetti et al., 2012, p. 68). The priorities were chosen from the same list of 14 priorities that the regional meetings had considered. The second step was determining how to distribute the spending among the regions (Marquetti et al., 2012). The three criteria used to determine how to distribute were:

lack of public services and/or infrastructure in the region; total population in the region; correspondence of the priorities chosen by a region with those chosen by the city as a whole....These criteria had the goal of benefiting the poor areas of the city. (Marquetti et al., 2012, p. 68).

The budget was then presented to the City Council, which voted on the investment budget “largely as proposed” (Marquetti et al., 2012, p. 68). The City Council would risk being voted out of office if it voted against an investment budget designed by the people. “The implementation of the budget by the executive branch then started in January” (Marquetti et al., 2012, p. 68).

The third phase of the local investment budgetary process was oversight. This was done by four groups: the Forum of Delegates, who were elected in the regional meetings; the PB Council; participants in local and thematic meetings; and finally the general public by way of the publicly available budget booklet (Marquetti et al., 2012).

Next, two studies are reviewed to see how well this PB process performed.

The Center for Urban Studies and Advising, CIDADE, an active non-governmental organization in the city of Porto Alegre, conducted research on the social and economic profiles of the PB participants in 1995, 1998, 2000, and 2002. The profiles of the participants were similar in all four years. The results show strong participation by traditionally underrepresented groups in three dimensions: income, education, and gender. (Marquetti et al., 2012, p. 69)

Thus, this experiment in local governance did attract the traditionally disenfranchised and marginalized groups, as intended.

To analyze the redistributive aspect, the authors of “Participatory Economic Democracy in Action: Participatory Budgeting in Porto Alegre, 1989-2004” examined data from the city of Porto Alegre and the official website of the PB, for the period 1990-2004. They found “a clear negative association between the average nominal income of the household head in the region and the number of demands per capita executed in the region. PB has a clear redistributive effect toward the economically disadvantaged” (Marquetti et al., 2012, p. 76). In other words, the lower the average income in a region, the higher the number of executed projects from PB.

There was one characteristic among participants found by the authors of the study, which might explain in part why PB in Porto Alegre was successful: connections participants had with other civil society organizations.

Despite the slight fall over time in the share of participants who have such links, 61.1 percent of [regional meeting] round attendees in 2002 participated in at least one

organization....This connection transmits influences both ways: on the one hand it brings improved organizational capabilities to these sometimes poorly organized or even chaotic groups, while on the other hand it solidly anchors the PB process in local concerns. (Marquetti et al., 2012, p. 71)

Additionally, it gave participants a chance to use their deliberative skills and discover some of their communities' most pressing needs before the PB meetings.

Many authors reported four important results from the PB process in Porto Alegre.

The literature on PB, and in particular the significant part of that literature that is on Porto Alegre, has emphasized four particular results. First, it supports the ideal of democracy...Second, it has a pedagogical effect in that participants learn about rights and responsibilities...Third, PB improves the fiscal performance of governments....Finally, it has distributive effects in the spending of public resources, and in particular it tends to improve the quality of life of the poor. (Marquetti et al., 2012, p. 63)

The fiscal performance is improved because a spotlight is put on the budget and everyone is able to participate in determining priorities. These are the reasons why PB has been growing rapidly around the world.

### **PB's Effect on Civil Society in Brazil**

After PB's inception in Porto Alegre, PB rapidly expanded; first, throughout Brazil, then the rest of Latin America, and finally around the world.

PB rapidly transcended the limits of Porto Alegre. Wampler (2007) and Cabannes (2004) estimated that between 1990 and 2004 more than 250 municipal governments in Brazil instituted PB, while Cabannes (2006) estimated that more than 1,000 of Brazil's roughly 16,000 municipalities had adopted it by 2006. (Marquetti et al., 2012)

One reason why PB expanded so rapidly in Brazil is examined by looking at PB's effect on civil society. This section will focus on a study of four matched pair of cities in Brazil. One city in each pair adopted PB in 1997 and the other did not. This is an especially interesting study because the three authors are well-known in the PB literature, the

methodology was on point, and some of the results on the surface seem to be surprising.

First, we briefly examine the methodology. Then, we review why social policy is difficult to evaluate. Finally, the results are examined in order to gain insight into the effects of the PB process on civil society.

This study of four matched pairs covered the 1997-2000 period and was conducted by Baiocchi, Heller, and Silva. “In pairing cities that adopted PB with cities that did not, our most immediate objective was to develop a methodologically rigorous test of the impact of PB” (Baiocchi, Heller, & Silva, 2011, p. 4). Of course, it was important that each pair be as similar as possible to each other, except for the PB implementation. Thus, each pair was in the same region in Brazil and was similar in size. The primary selection factor for this study was the percentage of votes won by the PT party in the 1996 local elections. In conducting such a study, it was important to control for the “effects of unobserved (to us) or hard to quantify features of the context (for example, history of social movements, and so forth), or what, in the evaluation literature, is termed selection bias” (Baiocchi et al., 2011, p. 62).

For this study, similar vote shares of the PT party were used to match cities. Similar vote shares for the PT party would seem to indicate similar cultural and historical circumstances.

Our working assumption is that vote shares for the political parties, especially for a programmatic party such as the PT that has well-defined ideological and policy positions, are likely to reflect (and hence capture) important aspects of the underlying sociohistorical and political economic context. (Baiocchi et al., 2011, p. 62)

In this study, cities where PT won the 1996 election implemented PB. The cities chosen were “where the PT had won or lost by an absolute difference of less than 10 percent in the 1996 election” (Baiocchi et al., 2011, p. 63).

The authors of *Bootstrapping Democracy* quickly found that determining which cities would be part of their four matched pair social experiment was easier than analyzing the results. They wrote, “it has been difficult to actually isolate the impact of participation and to determine how and why participation makes a difference” (Baiocchi et al., 2011, p. 1). This confirms Dewey’s assessment (see chapter 3) that social policy is harder to evaluate than the physical sciences. It is difficult to determine cause and effect in the sphere of social interactions because it is impossible to isolate people from the effects of all social influences. Nevertheless, using scientific methodology to determine if social policy is working as intended is logical, as explained in previous chapters.

The role played by civil society was seen as essential to understanding the effect of PB. “Indeed, what we discovered was that the most central preoccupation of architects of PB was precisely finding the right balance between “bringing civil society in and preserving the autonomous logic and energy of civic engagement” (Baiocchi et al., 2011, p. xii). It follows that understanding civic society was important to understanding the results of the study. “We [Baiocchi, Heller, & Silva] define civil society as the institutions, practices, and networks of voluntary life that are oriented toward and legitimate themselves in terms of publicness” (Baiocchi et al., 2011, p. 26). It is important to understand which aspects of civil society promote democracy.

Of course, CSOs do not exist in isolation from the influences of history, culture, and local power relationships. As noted, neighborhood associations can be and have been used as clientelistic networks. By examining the components of the definition for civil society, we can distinguish between democratizing versus non-democratizing civil society.

First, by “voluntary” we specifically refer to forms of associational life that are not structured by binding forms of hierarchical authority...or market incentives. By voluntary we mean to specifically refer to “secondary associations” in which people have chosen to associate, and not primary associations such as families or ethnic groups that are ascribed. (Baiocchi et al., 2011, p. 26)

Communication is not specifically addressed in this definition of civil society, but it is critical to understanding if CSOs have a democratizing influence. “Second, we argue that the logic of action of civil society is fundamentally one of modern sociability (Walzer, 1992) in which the critical binding element is communication, and specifically, the production of new norms through deliberation” (Baiocchi et al., 2011, p. 27). As explained in chapter 1, deliberation is important for the creation and modification of societal values.

The third and final component of the definition of civil society that is important to understand for its democratizing effects is publicness.

This is how we would then propose to distinguish between patently illiberal forms of associations, such as the Ku Klux Klan which is dedicated to enforcing an exclusion,...and those whose legitimacy is predicated on making claims about publicness. (Baiocchi et al., 2011, pp. 27-28)

Of course, exclusions could be proposed during public meeting, “but the very fact of having to make such a claim in public...exposes the claim to a counterclaim” (Baiocchi et al., 2011, p. 28). Exposing discriminatory thinking to public inspection should debunk it. “Taken together, these attributes will trend toward the production of the very types of universalizing norms that must necessarily undergird the democratic ideal of collective self-rule” (Baiocchi et al., 2011, p. 28). In other words ,“the idea of civil society,...rests on...the *possibility* of solidarity in modern society” (Baiocchi et al., 2011, p. 28), which, among other benefits, is the possibility of changing an individual’s perspective from “I” to ”we”<sup>11</sup>.

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<sup>11</sup> PB could be a first step in moving toward a solidarity economy such as municipal confederations, which are briefly reviewed in the next chapter.

Civil society has the potential to marshal public opinion and collective action whenever they engage in public deliberation. The authors of the four pair study asserted the following.

Civil society is critical to the quality of democracy because it supports collective action. This is the case in two quite different respects. First, civil society can facilitate the mobilization of underrepresented groups...Second, a vibrant civil society can underwrite the collective problematization and processing of new issues and norms and through the medium of the public sphere...reach new understandings of what we collectively value through argument and deliberation. (Baiocchi et al., 2011, p. 142)

Before this study, there was an open question concerning the effect PB had on civil society. The authors of this four pair study analyzed the relationship between the state and civil society by quantifying it along two dimensions: mode of engagement and mode of decision-making.

The mode of engagement refers to how independent the CSOs are from the state. This is also referred to as the degree of self-organization and self-determination. “Civil society organizations, or CSOs, may be said to be either *dependent* when they do not have the capacity for self-organization and self-determination without external support, or *autonomous* when they have the capacity for self-organizing and self-determination” (Baiocchi et al., 2011, p. 34). Well-developed CSOs are autonomous. Dependent is the other mode of engagement that CSOs have with the state, which means they need the external support of the state in order to organize and be effective.

The mode of decision making is the other dimension of state and civil society relations which was measured in this study. This is also referred to as demand-making, which can be either institutionalized or discretionary. Institutionalized means that decision making is done by using established rules and known procedures. Discretionary means that

decision making is “contingent on connections to a broker/patron” (Baiocchi et al., 2011, p. 34). Thus, movement is possible along the mode of engagement axis between dependent and autonomous and along the mode of decision making axis between institutionalized and discretionary. Each of the eight cities was placed in these categories by analyzing interviews. “Our research objective was to carry out semistructured interviews with at least a dozen key informants in each municipality who occupied different positions in social space for the time in question (1997-2000)” (Baiocchi et al., 2011, p. 169). This was done to learn what, if any, effect PB had on the relations between civil society and the state.

The authors conceded that placing cities in these categories may seem, at times, to not be obvious.

In presenting this model, we offer the standard disclaimer that these are ideal-types to be used as heuristic devices recognizing in particular that on the ground the boundaries between our categories are often blurred. Nonetheless, we believe this model brings greater analytical leverage to understanding actually existing civic society and provides a basis for concrete comparisons across local cases. (Baiocchi et al., 2011, p. 35)

The use of this heuristic has produced results which are explained.

One reason this was an interesting study was that the mode of engagement was evenly divided at the beginning of the study. In four cities, two of which were PB cities, civil society was well-developed and autonomous. In the other four cities, civil society was dependent and needed the external support of the state in order to organize and be effective. The results of this study showed that non-PB cities had no measurable change in either measured dimension of how civil society interacted with the state (Baiocchi et al., 2011).

All PB cities changed their mode of decision making from discretionary (dependent on a broker or patron) to institutionalized (based on rules) (Baiocchi et al., 2011, p. 111).

This is logical because PB must establish rules and procedures concerning how demands are presented to the state. Also, the process leading up to presenting demands follows established rules about how public meetings are conducted and what may be discussed. This is in contrast to discretionary decision making, which is based on clientelism. Autonomous CSOs in a city with discretionary decision making would need to not engage with the state in order to preserve their independence; otherwise they would become a clientistic association. Moving from discretionary decision making to institutionalized decision making means moving toward participatory democracy (Baiocchi et al., 2011).

None of the PB cities had measurable changes in their mode of engagement (dependent or autonomous), except for Mauá, which is discussed in this section (Baiocchi et al., 2011, p. 111). Thus, PB had measureable, but limited, effect on civil society for the time period studied. It is not clear if a longer time period would produce different results.

Mauá had an unexpected result in its mode of engagement. Mauá started in the position of autonomous mode of engagement and discretionary mode of decision making and moved to a dependent mode of engagement and institutionalized mode of decision making. They had an unexpected result because the city government hired the activists who were part of the autonomous civil society. “The formation of this ‘combative’ segment in Mauá was carried out by the same actors who built the PT at the time” (Baiocchi et al., 2011, p. 132). After PT won the 1996 election, the party hired these activists to help run the government. “But, with the introduction of PB, civil society was bought into government and effectively demobilized” (Baiocchi et al., 2011, p. 131). This was the only city to change their mode of engagement. Also, they were the only PB city that had only consultative decision making power. The other three PB cities had a binding decision

making power. Even though the legislature had to agree to any PB decisions, binding decision making meant that the legislature always agreed to nearly everything. One wonders if a combative civil society might have insisted on binding decision making power.

Another unexpected result was the non-PB city of Diadema. They started in the position of autonomous mode of engagement and institutionalized mode of decision making. At the end of the study, they were in the same position (none of the non-PB cities changed their status for either measurement). “Of all our cases, Diadema is most unique. This is the one case where, even in the absence of institutional reforms, a well-organized and combative civil society did manage to have input into city governance” (Baiocchi et al., 2011, p. 113). This shows the potential power of civil society. Diadema has a long history of activism and “is considered the birthplace of the PT” (Baiocchi et al., 2011, p. 66).

Mauá and Diadema were one of the four pairs of this study. “This is our only pair in which the PB city fared less well than its counterpart” (Baiocchi et al., 2011, p. 66). It shows that predictions about social innovations can be very difficult.

João Monlevade (a PB city) had the best result and yet had low participation (2.3%). João Monlevade started in the position of autonomous mode of engagement and discretionary mode of decision making and ended with an autonomous mode of engagement and institutionalized mode of decision making.

CSOs had already mobilized and aggregated interests....This prefigurative role also allowed for more societal innovation, since civil society brought not simply demands to the state, but whole programs and policies....The strong role of civil society did, however, also crowd out nonorganized forms of demand-making with the result that the process was, overall, less inclusive than Gravataí and Camargibe. (Baiocchi et al., 2011, pp. 140-141)

Thus, civil society was empowered, which led to more deliberation within CSOs and more social innovation, yet participation of the entire city population was low. The goal was to increase deliberation for the entire city, not just deliberation within CSOs. “More than any other finding we have presented in this book [*Bootstrapping Democracy*], this powerfully underscores the extent to which participatory democracy is a very delicate equilibrium” (Baiocchi et al., 2011, p. 141). It also points to Dewey’s caution that social policies should be treated like experiments and constantly monitored, in order to avoid unintended consequences.

Gravataí was a PB city. They started in the position of dependent mode of engagement and discretionary mode of decision making and moved to institutionalized mode of decision making (no change in mode of engagement). Gravataí had the highest participation (10.5%) and the lowest involvement of civil society (Baiocchi et al., 2011). “Participants were mostly drawn from the urban poor in irregular settlements. Most of the participants came from *outside* of organized civil society, as what few organizations existed opposed the PB process” (Baiocchi et al., 2011, p. 114). Because civil society did not participate in the process, “the participatory process relied instead on the active and intensive intervention of city government to make it work. City hall employees divided the town into eighty-five microdistricts and coordinated meetings in each at the beginning of the cycle” (Baiocchi et al., 2011, p. 86). It was an experiment in direct democracy with no need for delegates. “Demands were as such the result of deliberation, but this was a rather compressed form of deliberation since actors entered the fora without prior experience of deliberation or prior opportunities to develop preferences” (Baiocchi et al., 2011, p. 139). Thus, the deliberation was not as robust as it could have been.

The extremes of João Monlevade and Gravataí illustrate the need to balance the positive deliberative capabilities of civil society and positive input from larger participation. The goal would be to have civil society involvement with high participation. The PB process, the community, and individuals would benefit from high quality deliberation among a large group of participants, because the proposed projects would be well thought out and individuals would benefit, as explained in other chapters.

In the end, there were positive effects on all the PB cities in this study.

Even the most restricted version of PB had the baseline effect of increasing the flow of information about municipal governance, creating spaces for citizens to voice their demands and subjecting what were once highly insulated and discretionary processes of decision-making to public scrutiny and even iterated bargaining. (Baiocchi et al., 2011, pp. 144-145)

The degree of change that PB brings to a community depends on the existing relations between the state and civil society. Of course, it also depends on the design of PB, which varies greatly.

### **The Design of PB as It Travels the Globe**

A contributing factor to the growth and diversity of PB design has been the diversity of motivations for implementing PB.

In Western democracies, citizen participation is seen as a potential cure against the acute, though enduring, “malaise” or “crisis” of democratic representation (Torcal and Montero, 2006). In other parts of the world, citizen participation is increasingly required in the framework of international development programs or is the result of various bottom-up initiatives. (Sintomer , Herzberg, Rocke, & Allegretti, 2012, p. 1)

The political ideologies of the political parties that support PB are diverse, as well.

Initially, PB was supported by the leftist Worker’s Party. “PB began to lose its exclusive identification with the Worker’s Party. According to Brian Wampler and Leonardo Avritzer [2005], for example, by 2001 center and right parties were responsible

for over 40 percent of PB experiments” (Baiocchi & Ganuza, 2017, p. 65). Now, many PB processes are supported by international development agencies.

Today, PB processes have been implemented around the world.

First, it circulated through Workers’ Party networks in the 1990s reaching throughout Brazil, before becoming popular throughout Latin America, via political party networks and then nongovernmental organizations (NGOs)....In the 2000s, Participatory Budgeting then attracted the attention of international development agencies as well as that of activists in the Global North who learned about it through the World Social Forum. Since 2000, the World Bank and UN agencies have...helped bring Participatory Budgeting to Asia and Africa....And at the same time, European cities began to implement this idea. (Baiocchi & Ganuza, 2014, p. 30)

Also, the cities around the world have different historical and cultural backgrounds, which would influence how they designed their PB processes.

International agencies have played an important role in promoting PB since 1996, when Porto Alegre’s PB won the distinction of international “best practice” at the United Nations Habitat II meeting in Istanbul (Goldfrank, 2012).

Other international organizations clearly play or have played important roles in supporting PB as well...[B]ut the World Bank stands out for the number of PB programs it supports, the number of methods it uses to promote PB, and the amount of resources and research it has dedicated to PB. Only the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and its Habitat Division match or rival the Bank in these regards, and frequently the UNDP and the Bank jointly promote PB. (Goldfrank, 2012, p. 3)

How did the World Bank become such an important supporter of PB? First, it may help to review the original mission of the Bank. “The World Bank’s Articles of Agreement were negotiated in 1944 at the Bretton Woods Conference. The purpose of the Bank was to finance postwar reconstruction and investment in developing countries” (Thomas, 2007, p. 731). The Bank evolved to also focus on good governance since the early 1990s (Thomas, 2007). “The bank asserts that its focus on governance ‘follows from its mandate to reduce

poverty' because 'a capable and accountable state creates opportunities for poor people, provides better services, and improves development outcomes'" (Thomas, 2007, p. 730). In the belief that more participation will help reduce poverty, the Bank is making it a requirement in loans to poor countries.

[T]he Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, which were introduced to accompany the second round of the Bank's Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative... called on the recipient countries to formulate macroeconomic and social policies to reduce poverty in a participatory fashion in order to receive the HIPC funds. (Goldfrank, 2012, p. 6)

Other benefits the Bank believes result from PB include stability and effective state institutions. Concerning stability, Tim Campbell, former manager of the urban program in the World Bank Institute, wrote the following. "In addition to delivering services, local democratic participation is becoming a potentially important underpinning in the responsible management of the financial system and, ultimately, part of the mechanism to guarantee macroeconomic stability" (2003, p. 98). Goldfrank (2006) wrote about why the development community is interested in PB creating effective state institutions.

One [reason] was the rising influence of the notion of participation in development: the other [reason] was the notion that good institutions, or good governance, were important for securing economic growth.... The notion of good institutions is especially related to effective state institutions, which were seen to be missing in developing countries. (2006, p. 11)

And, of course, the World Bank is interested in promoting economic growth.

One additional benefit the Bank receives from the PB process is reduced corruption. By shining a light on municipal budgets, PB tends to reduce the opportunity for local corruption. "At one time the Bank considered corruption to be political and therefore outside its proper ambit of consideration" (Thomas, 2007, p. 741). One of the Bank's built-in safeguards is that it is forbidden from considering political issues when doing risk analysis

(Thomas, 2007). “In 1995, the newly appointed President of the World Bank, James Wolfensohn, was told that corruption was political and therefore could not be discussed” (Thomas, 2007, p. 742). On February 24, 1999, in remarks to a global forum, he revealed his solution (Thomas, 2007). “I [Wolfensohn] decided in 1996 that I would redefine the ‘C’ word not as a political issue but as something social and economic” (Thomas, 2007, p. 742). Thus, the World Bank is now able to discuss corruption.

Of course, some people wonder if there might also be a hidden motivation behind the Bank’s support for PB. In 2012, Goldfrank wrote a paper that addressed these concerns and found that different people in the Bank had different motivations.

[S]ome as true believers in PB’s transformative, democratizing, poverty-reducing potential and some who see PB as supporting a neoliberal agenda that includes efficiency in local government – in fact PB is quite marginal within the Bank.... [T]he most important units of the Bank are not persuaded that participatory budgeting does enough to support neoliberal policy or to provide other benefits to the Bank and the major donor countries. (p. 14)

Thus, while the World Bank is PB’s biggest supporter, PB is a small item within the Bank’s budget.

Today there are at least 1,500 cities with a PB process (Baiocchi & Ganuza, 2014). The design of PB varies widely for two primary reasons. First, the rules, procedures, and practices for each PB process are decided locally. Secondly, “[t]here is no recognized definition of participatory budgeting, either political or scientific, explaining the minimum criteria they must satisfy” (Sintomer et al., 2012, p. 2), in order to call themselves PB. Of course, there has been disagreement over what should be called PB.

Wampler chose to not define PB processes by looking at specific rules, procedures, and practices; instead he focuses on the principles of voice, vote, social justice, and

oversight (2012). These principles could be implemented in any number of different ways.

In 2012, Wampler wrote, “We should also expect that governments and civil society organizations will move beyond the original principles and rules. After all, the principles and rules were created to deal with very specific problems in Brazil” (p. 12). It is likely that different cultures and historical circumstances require different approaches. PB should be expected to evolve, based on local needs.

The four principles are important because they can generate social change (Wampler, 2012). Wampler believes this is what defines PB.

The focus on social change enables us to distinguish among PB programs designed to produce social change and those PB programs designed by governments and their CSO allies to make marginal improvements to the status quo as a means to strengthen their hold on political power. (Wampler, 2012, p. 1)

By social change, Wampler is referring to “a specific effort to alter traditional politics, which may include clientelism, expert-based decision-making, or domination by political parties” (Wampler, 2012, p. 1).

The original PB process in Porto Alegre was Wampler’s incentive to focus on the concepts that generate social change. “In Porto Alegre, there was no set model, but there was an effort to adapt the program rules to promote social and political change” (Wampler, 2012, p. 1). Porto Alegre wanted to end the system of clientelism, by reverting the priorities of participation and local public investment.

The principle of voice refers to active citizen participation (Wampler, 2012). “Importantly, deliberative processes provide access to citizens who have not traditionally had access to political power” (Wampler, 2012, p. 3). An emphasis is put on the traditionally

disenfranchised because an extra effort is required to invite them and let them know that their voice matters. Also, they are likely to support social justice criteria.

The principle of vote empowers the participants. That is, people are empowered to the degree they are able to make binding decisions on issues that matter to them. Also, having the power of the vote is a learning experience. “Having real decision-making authority acts [as] a powerful “school of democracy” because citizens are forced to make difficult choices regarding where resources were allocated” (Wampler, 2012, p. 4). Of course, the scope of issues or projects on which people are allowed to vote matters. Wampler writes, “the key difference among participatory institutions is the degree of delegation of authority to citizens, which can be analyzed based on the extent to which citizens have voice” (2012, p. 5). The combination of voice and vote can cause participants to think of themselves as part of the community and give them a sense of belonging. “The expansion of voice and vote to traditionally excluded sectors of the population allows PB to promote social justice” (Wampler, 2012, p. 6).

Social justice was a key component to PB in Brazil. “However, it is important to note that the diffusion of PB has not necessarily been accompanied by this social justice principle” (Wampler, 2012, p. 6). Wampler wrote that part of the reason might be that when PB was invented, Brazil was one of the most unequal countries in the world (2012). Also, as PB has traveled the world, it has become known as a tool of good governance. “Like many other tools for good governance, it is prized for its value-neutrality, the ease of implementation, and its ability to attract many kinds of institutional stakeholders” (Baiocchi & Ganuza, 2017, p. 76). The thinking seems to be that value-neutrality could appeal to a

broader audience. But of course, social justice is not value neutral. Social justice places value on people.

The fourth and final core principle is oversight, which Wampler defines as improved transparency (2012). To become transparent, local governments need to change the way they do business. This can be a steep learning curve for municipalities. “The bureaucracy needs to be transformed to enable bureaucrats and policy experts to more directly engage citizens” (Wampler, 2012, p. 7). Bureaucrats also need to accept priorities being set by local residents. Likewise, bureaucrats need to adapt to feedback concerning project implementation (Wampler, 2012).

On the other hand, Baiocchi and Ganuza find it useful to disaggregate PB into two components in order to better understand the process and explain how PB has traveled around the world.

We [Baiocchi and Ganuza] describe these two sides of participatory budgeting – participation and administrative reform – as the communicative and the sovereignty dimensions of PB. We use the term communicative dimension to describe the open structure of transparent meetings to deliberate on projects and priorities. (Baiocchi & Ganuza, 2017, p. 141)

The sovereignty dimension describes the administrative reforms needed for bureaucracies to be able to interact with the public and work with the PB process to develop new projects.

The reason Baiocchi and Ganuza chose to examine PB in such a manner is that as PB has travelled the world, it seems to have lost the sovereignty dimension. “The globally replicable version of participatory budgeting and its best practices had no elements of administrative reform, and PB was essentially reduced to a set of meetings” (Baiocchi & Ganuza, 2017, p. 71). One reason this has happened is because it is easier. “By not defining participation as part of the administration but as an external tool that influences it, it became

much easier to implement” (Baiocchi & Ganuza, 2017, p. 76). This might be one reason PB has expanded so rapidly.

Another aspect of PB’s rapid growth is that PB seems to have lost its social justice component as it traveled around the world. “Yet the process of translation from one context to another turned PB into an instrument abstracted from a political project altogether, one associated with the neutral idea of “good governance”” (Baiocchi & Ganuza, 2017, p. 69). This may have made PB easier to sell to a variety of governments.

How did PB transform into a value-neutral idea? The way PB is presented may have a lot to do with it. “The expert presentation of PB as value-neutral may feel necessary to introduce it in certain contexts, and this can narrow the grounds for reopening the discussion to speak for sovereignty reforms” (Baiocchi & Ganuza, 2017, p. 153). The experts may feel that a value-neutral PB is the best that certain countries can accept and implement.

One of the changes with the global travel of PB has been the creation of *dedicated* PB networks (in which both authors [Baiocchi & Ganuza] have participated), which have tended over time to become dissociated from other discussions of participatory democracy or from discussions about cities and social justice. (Baiocchi & Ganuza, 2017, p. 154)

Thus, the way PB is presented is probably the way it will be implemented.

### **PB in the United States**

PB first came to the United States in 2009 when Joe Moore, alderman for Chicago’s 49th ward, introduced it to his district.

Moore started by setting aside his \$1.3 million “menu money,” the discretionary budget that each alderman receives for capital infrastructure projects. I [Josh Lerner] then teamed up with Gianpaolo Baiocchi to form the Participatory Budgeting Project (PBP), a nonprofit organization that could support PB in the 49th Ward, and elsewhere. (Lerner, 2014, pp. 13-14)

Now PBP supports PB throughout the United States and Canada.

The experiment in Chicago was a success. The eligibility to vote for PB projects was simple; you do not need to be registered to vote; you do not even need to be a citizen; you just need to live in the Ward and be sixteen or older (Lerner, 2014). The winning projects for the first year included the following. “The proposal to fix sidewalks received the most votes, and other winning projects added bike lanes, community gardens, murals, traffic signal, and street lighting” (Lerner, 2014, p. 14). PB was also a success for Moore personally. He had barely won his runoff election in 2007. “In 2011, Moore won in a landslide, with 72 percent of the vote” (Lerner, 2014, p. 14). Moore now travels around the country telling people that since PB is popular, it makes sense for politicians to support it.

Since the introduction of PB to the United States, in 2009, it has rapidly expanded.

Participatory budgeting appears to be a rising force in municipal democracy in the United States. The mayors of Chicago and New York have pledged to greatly expand it. Cities from Boston and Cambridge, in Massachusetts, to Long Beach, San Francisco, and Vallejo, in California, are adopting PB. Cities across the country, including Detroit, continue to explore adoption. (Gilman, 2016, p. 9)

It is interesting that the rate of growth within different cities varies greatly. The rate of growth within a city seems to be related to the degree of involvement of CSOs.

In New York City, for example, we [PBP] have worked with Community Voices Heard and dozens of community partners to grow the city’s PB process into the largest in the United States. In just three years, it has grown from four districts to twenty-three – nearly half the city. The funds at stake have grown fivefold, to over \$25 million. In cities without such strong coalitions of partners, such as Chicago and Vallejo, PB has expanded more slowly, if at all. (Lerner, 2014, pp. 31-32)

Specifically, it appears that CSOs that are dedicated to social justice are most able to help the PB process.

New York City’s experience (2011-present), led by social justice organizations and organized around “inclusion” and empowerment,” has been an inclusive and quite open process. In sharp contrast to Chicago’s process, here the process was driven by

a community organization with a mission to empower underprivileged residents of New York City. (Baiocchi & Ganuza, 2017, p. 155)

In the next chapter we look more closely at New York City Participatory Budgeting (PBNYC).

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The social philosophers reviewed in the previous chapters point to our ability to move toward a deliberative society and the desirability of doing so. Whitman, Dewey, and Mills believed that the moral democratic ideal would drive our evolution into an egalitarian democratic society, which would benefit individuals as well as society. Whitman believed that great literature would help us achieve that egalitarian democratic society. Dewey believed that improving our methods of public communication would be the way. Mills, like Dewey, believed that small publics could propose policies that would help people in their daily lives. The social philosophers show us how a deliberative PB process can prove the hypothesis of this dissertation true. Moreover, it is the moral thing to do, because it can help individuals and society.

As previously reported, Talpin found that very little deliberation currently takes place in PB (2011). I propose that public deliberation become a priority for PB. In order to accomplish this goal, I list specific recommendations. The experience of the Iroquois Indians illustrates that an egalitarian deliberative society is possible.

The Iroquois confederation allowed the member tribes to live in peace among one another. The League of the Iroquois had an oral constitution at the time of the earliest settlers, which put an end to the blood feuds among tribes within the confederation. It also specified deliberation rules. The Chiefs would need near unanimous approval of the people before they would issue a decision. Many Europeans and American colonists were very impressed with this culture of the American Indians.

The key to their success could have been the way the Iroquois raised their children. The children were taught to be part of this equalitarian society by accepting the need to be honorable, since there were no laws. They were also taught the duty to participate in decision-making. This deliberative process created a strong sense of belonging among the Indians within the confederation (Grinde & Johansen, 2008). The tribes were small enough for deliberation to occur.

Before face-to-face deliberation can happen, centralized power needs to be allocated from large groups of people into relatively small groups. The early Puritans saw the logic of local control when they embraced Congregationalist policy, which meant that the congregations of each church controlled the policy of their own church, even though severe limits were placed on what was allowed to be debated. The “congregations elected ministers and lay officers” (Cooper, 1999, p. 10). They would also discuss and agree to church policies.

It is easy to see how an existing deliberative society, such as the Iroquois, or how a new society, such as the one early Puritans created out of the wilderness, could maintain and create deliberative societies. However, do people who currently live in a different type of arrangement, such as modern society, have the wherewithal to change their society into one that is deliberative? The Transcendentalists, such as Emerson, believed that people have unlimited potential to grow and develop. Emerson believed that self-improvement needed to be a life-long process. The Transcendentalists believed that people could discover insights and wisdom with self-reflection. If people can change themselves to become better, together they can change society for the better. How would people need to change?

Most people would not need to change. It seems likely that most people have a good moral compass. Some people just might need to become aware of and understand others' viewpoints. A deliberative PB can help create a sense of community and a sense of belonging that can help to raise the awareness of participants to others in their community.

For a PB deliberative forum to work, people involved would need to engage in ethical behavior. They would need to be honestly engaged in trying to find a solution, as opposed to just giving a partisan response or trying to mislead the public forum for personal reasons. Moreover, people in a deliberative forum need to treat others with dignity and respect. In other words, people need to have – and act on – their morals.

The social philosophers reviewed in the previous chapters all address the question of how public deliberation might be possible and what the benefits would be from engaging in public deliberation. Before we get into the details of how PB can become a place for people to experience public deliberation, it might be useful to review, very briefly, a few of these social philosophers.

Henry David Thoreau, another Transcendentalist, also believed that people should follow their conscience, which is developed with self-reflection. Thoreau felt that in order to better themselves, people needed to act on their principles in matters of importance, regardless of the consequences. Speaking in public can be intimidating for some people. However, it is important for people to receive whatever training and experience they need. Public deliberation can help people realize their full potential for public happiness and public freedom. It is important to let belief guide action. Thoreau believed that the problem was that people got so caught up in their daily lives that they lost sight of what was most

important, thus making it impossible to realize their full potential. Citizens need to take the time to consider and act on their moral ideals.

Walt Whitman, the Transcendentalist poet, was a proponent of democracy and the equality of all people. He believed in this equality of all people regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, or social status. In “Song of Myself,” Whitman says that we all have the same potential and only our cultural settings determine who we are and what we become (Kateb, 2014). For deliberation to occur, it is necessary to treat others as equals. In addition, Whitman believed Americans were evolving into an equalitarian democratic society.

According to John Dewey, the ideal of democracy is a community acting on its morals (1993b). Morals are a reflection of the character of people, which society helps form. For example, society’s belief in human equality helps define individuals’ character as well as the community’s character and is an important democratic principle. Dewey wrote, “to acquire the habit of treating it [democracy] as a way of life is to realize that democracy is a moral ideal and so far as it becomes a fact is a moral fact” (1993c, p. 244). Dewey, through his political writings, tried to help people achieve the moral ideal of a democratic society, by promoting the use of the scientific method for social issues within publics. He believed that the problem of publics was the need to improve public communication (Dewey, 1954). Implementing public deliberation in PB would improve the public communication within publics.

C. Wright Mills saw modern society, for reasons noted in chapter 3, causing a generalized immorality, resulting in a lack of moral direction. He observed large modern organizations caused many workers to feel alienated. Mills understood the solution for the alienation and moral insensibility caused by modern society, to be small group face-to-face

public discussions, which would create a sense of belonging among the participants. He saw that the key to making these small publics successful would be the translation of personnel troubles into public policies, as well as looking at the effects of public policy on individuals. This could empower individuals and cure moral insensibility.

Tom Hayden, with the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), wrote the Port Huron Statement (PHS) in the hope that it could awaken the people from their apathy and engage the moral issues. The SDS saw participatory democracy within small groups as empowering people to make moral choices. Part of the legacy of the SDS was the inspiration it gave for several social movements of the 1960s. The SDS was able to energize diverse social movements because it focused on basic values, such as human dignity. We have to keep our eye on the big picture and realize that we are much more alike than we are different.

Alfred Schutz agreed that democracy needed small deliberative forums. He came to realize that some human action, such as discrimination, is immoral. This caused Schutz, late in life, to depart from his earlier stance that the social sciences should be value-free. Schutz discovered the ethical value of a citizen's ability to be heard and influence others, which he saw as a way to judge democracy. Of course, a well-designed PB process could meet this requirement.

Robert Putnam's contribution was to apply scientific methodology to analyze what happens when a group of people in a community get together to work on a project. People working together can accomplish more than the sum of the individuals working separately. This happens in PB meetings when individuals' focus shifts from "I" to "we." Putnam believes that social capital includes the social networks and norms of trust resulting from

social interactions. He recognized that these social networks could help individuals as well as the group.

Learning how to participate in public deliberation requires actual participation in public deliberation. However, some of my recommendations are to increase training to speed the learning process and try to ensure that fewer people give up before they learn how to deliberate. When people engage one another in public communication, they can come to realize that all are human beings who deserve dignity and respect. Deliberation can help both our communities and ourselves by reducing discrimination, intolerance, and increasing cooperation (Dewey, 1993d).

This chapter has four sections. The first one is Conditions for Public Deliberation. Julian Talpin developed four conditions for deliberation as a result of an ethnographic study of three European PB processes, which included participant observation and participant interviews over eighteen months. These four conditions are Procedures, Disagreement, Leaders, and Stakes (Talpin, 2011). I have added a fifth condition of Equity, which means “taking into account the advantages and disadvantages that have shaped participants’ experiences, which may require treating participants differently in order to create conditions that achieve fair deliberation and decisions” (Abdullah, Karpowitz, & Raphael, 2016, p. 3). Incorporating equity into PB would likely increase participation, especially among marginalized groups, because fairness is something people value and are attracted to. This will help the deliberative process. Where possible, experiences of the PBNYC, which is the largest PB in the United States, are used to illustrate the relevance of each condition.

The second section is Recommendations, Since PB processes differ, it was necessary to choose one process in order to make recommendations. I chose PBNYC, because as Su

wrote, “Participatory budgeting in New York City (PBNYC), for both its magnitude and its potential as a model to be copied, has become a decisive case to critically examine” (2017, p. 68). PB started in New York City in 2011, with four city council members sponsoring it, by allowing PB to allocate about one million dollars each in discretionary capital spending, to each of their districts (Jabola-Carolus, 2017). “By 2014, the number of participating districts grew to twenty-four, making Participatory Budgeting in New York City (PBNYC) the largest PB process in the U.S.” (Jabola-Carolus, 2017, p. 110). This section starts with the current state of deliberations in PBNYC, because before recommendations can be made, we need to know the status of public deliberations. The remaining sub-sections are about increasing training, instituting open-ended discussions, and a conclusion with a reminder about unintended consequences for any policy changes.

The third section is Benefits of a Deliberative PB, which includes looking at how public deliberation can prove the hypothesis of this dissertation true, by reviewing Jefferson’s proposal, Dewey’s political philosophy, and Schutz’s ethical democracy. The fourth and final section is Future Directions for Public Deliberation, which includes a sub-section about municipal confederations which is offered as a possibility for further democratization of government and society. This section ends with a brief conclusion reviewing why public deliberation should be a priority for PB.

### **Conditions for Public Deliberations**

Deliberation does not usually emerge spontaneously. In order for people to be able to deliberate, they need to deliberate as equals (Heller & Rao, 2015). It is necessary to neutralize the effects of inequalities within the public forum to enhance the deliberative process. This is addressed in the procedures sub-section. Talpin found that there are four

conditions for deliberation to occur, which are procedures, disagreement, leaders, and stakes (2011, p. 140). As indicated, in addition to these four conditions, I have added a fifth subsection about equity.

With public deliberation as a priority for PB, it is logical to place a greater emphasis on equity. A focus on equity will help to level the playing field for traditionally marginalized groups, which would include encouragement for marginalized groups to attend PB meetings. Since traditionally marginalized people will likely have different opinions than groups that have access to power, this should add to the diversity of opinions at PB meetings, which is a necessary but not sufficient condition for deliberation to occur.

There may seem to be a conflict between equality and equity. However, both can and should co-exist in a deliberative democratic forum.

At high level of abstraction, we can conceive of the “democratic” part of deliberative democracy as comprised of *equality* in opportunities for participation, and *equity* in processes and outcomes. Within the context of democratic theory, *equality* almost always refers constitutionally to rights and empowerments that attach to citizenship. (Moscrop & Warren, 2016, p. 2)

Most people in the United States see the value of equality in opportunities. However, some might believe that equality is sufficient for people “to pull themselves up by their bootstraps.” “Yet, formal equalities are quite compatible with substantive inequities that can undermine the democratic dimensions of deliberative processes” (Moscrop & Warren, 2016, p. 4). For example, everyone may have equal opportunity to attend a public forum, but some might not be able to afford the bus fare. Furthermore, some people might need to have an interpreter. “Ideally, equality enables equity: equal distribution of empowerments such as votes, rights, and opportunities for voice should enable citizens to press for equity”

(Moscrop & Warren, 2016, p. 2). Thus, incorporating both equality and equity into the design produces the best outcome for deliberative democracy.

## **Procedures**

“One of the crucial prerequisites for the emergence of deliberation is the organization of the discussion” (Talpin, 2011, p. 141). In order to encourage organized group discussion, the speakers and the audience should be at the same level, for the symbolic representation of equal power. Of course, everyone should be able to easily see and hear each other. Thus, PB assemblies are usually arranged in circles. Also, the size of the discussion groups is important. If the group size is too large it can impede the quality of the discussion; working groups should be formed based on thematic areas, with four to ten people (Talpin, 2011).

Increasing the number of viewpoints heard can also encourage the emergence of deliberation. The facilitator could organize “turn-taking” with a set number of minutes for each speaker. People running over their time would need to be sanctioned (Talpin, 2011). One possible way to get a person to yield their time if they are running significantly long, would be to pre-arrange with some people in the assembly to help talk down someone who is refusing to yield the floor. Some people may never before have had a chance to speak out, and they may have many pent up grievances. The idea of getting a large number of people to speak up is that disagreement will surface, which is a precondition for the emergence of deliberation.

However, there are potential drawbacks to using the discursive procedure of “turn-taking.”

This discursive procedure is not institutionalized however, and therefore depends on the style of the facilitators. Furthermore, some problems remain with this discursive trick. It becomes indeed increasingly difficult for people to express dissent as a certain number of persons have already expressed their views. (Talpin, 2011, p. 143)

People are reluctant to express a viewpoint openly that is different from the majority opinion.

The Rome Municipio XI PB process uses a simple report to organize discussion and increase the chances for deliberation to emerge for issues that were not on the agenda. After items on the agenda had been covered, there was often time for other issues to be discussed.

Participants come up with issues that were not initially on the agenda, generally related to personal troubles they have, that actually motivated their presence at the meeting. What follows is a messy discussion, where lay citizens, upset at having remained silent for so long, express themselves aggressively, while elected representatives and civil servants try to answer the questions and evoke possible solutions. (Talpin, 2011, p. 143)

Hostile confrontations were often the result. The solution for this situation was to introduce a simple report that must be completed.

People have first to state and define the problem they identified. Then, in a second column, that have to propose a solution to the problem. Discussion generally occurs at both stages, to define the problem correctly, and then to evaluate possible courses of action to solve it. A report is thus written at the end of each meeting for each thematic area, and then addressed to the technical services of the Municipio, who are required to provide an answer. (Talpin, 2011, pp. 143-144)

This simple report forced people to slow down and do what was needed, in the order it needed to be done. The report opened up the possibility of deliberation taking place. The technical services looked at such things as whether something was already planned to address the issue, whether it technically feasible, and how much the suggested solution might cost. At the next meeting, the technical services report would be used as the basis for further discussion (Talpin, 2011). “The organization of the discussion appears, therefore, as

a crucial element for the emergence of deliberation” (Talpin, 2011, p. 144). Considerable thought has to go into the planning of a meeting in order to create an atmosphere that is favorable for deliberation. This simple report also is a reminder that thinking about ways to enhance the deliberative process is ongoing, and thus is never finished.

### **Disagreement**

Disagreement is the second condition for deliberation. People must be willing and able to disagree in public meetings before deliberation can occur. “Heterogeneity and the diversity of views are necessary, but not sufficient conditions for the emergence of deliberation. What matters however is the discursive expression of diversity” (Talpin, 2011, p. 144). A group of people with diverse viewpoints is needed, and they must be willing to express these viewpoints.

A facilitator’s style can help people express themselves. After they have formed into working groups, a facilitator can have participants introduce themselves and give a little personal information before asking for their priorities. “Most of the time people consider opinions to be private matters” (Talpin, 2011, p. 146). Talpin argued, “[I]t appears inappropriate to contradict anonymous strangers (Eliasoph, 1998; Conover, Crew, & Searing, 2002; Duchesne & Haegel, 2006)” (Talpin, 2011, p. 146). Thus, people may be more willing to express their opinions to, and disagree with, a friend, or at least an acquaintance.

“The public expression of disagreement is a difficult move” (Talpin, 2011, p. 146). Some of the procedures, such as small group size, sitting in a circle, and turn taking, can help people speak up when they disagree. In addition, community leaders can be important for the expression of divergent views.

## **Leaders**

The presence of leaders is the third condition for deliberation. “Activists and political party militants have a decisive influence on the quality of PB discussions. Holding strong preferences, they have the cultural and political resources necessary for the expression of dissent” (Talpin, 2011, p. 146). Activists have the knowledge and self-confidence to publicly express and defend their views. Talpin wrote, “it seems that in Rome and Seville deliberation could not have happened without the commitment of local militants” (2011, p. 147). Of course, it would seem to be important to have activists representing different positions.

Morsang-sur-Orge was the third PB process studied by Talpin. “In Morsang-sur-Orge, given the presence of elected representatives in public meetings, dissent and conflict generally emerged between citizens and members of the municipal majority” (Talpin, 2011, p. 147). However, “the presence of politicians in the discussion transforms it into a bargaining process” (Talpin, 2011, p. 148). Instead of deliberation taking place between equal citizens, you have bargaining with the authorities (Talpin, 2011). Thus, it seems that community activists are needed for deliberation to happen; and care needs to be taken whenever politicians are present to ensure their presence does not interfere with deliberation.

## **Stakes**

The fourth condition for deliberation involves stakes. The fact that the end result of PB discussions and deliberations are to make binding spending decisions changes the importance of the deliberations. “Stakes push people to express their views – not keep them private – if they want...to make a difference in on the final decision” (Talpin, 2011, p. 149).

Of course, the amount of money available makes a difference in how motivated people are to participate. But also important are the types of projects that PB is allowed to fund.

In the United States, some PB processes are more limited than others regarding how the money can be spent. PBNYC is able to fund more popular projects than Chicago PB, which may, in part, explain why PBNYC has more participants. “Unlike in Chicago, however, the NYC capital funds are often used for public housing and schools, which has fueled more grassroots interest” (Lerner & Secondo, 2012, p. 4). Money needs to be available to fund projects that are of interest to the community in order to motivate people to get involved.

## **Equity**

In addition to the reasons relating to how a focus on equity helps the deliberative process, we should remember, from chapter 4, that one reason for the invention of PB was to address the issue of social justice, which was a contributing factor to its rapid expansion throughout Latin America. Even though many PB processes around the world no longer have a strong social justice aspect, there are good reasons to include equity (social justice) as a key component of PB.

Brian Wampler wrote, “[I]t is most fruitful to conceptualize PB as a set of principles that can generate social change” (2012, p. 2). He identified the four principles as “voice, vote, social justice, and oversight” (2012, p. 1). His point was that the more resolutely a PB process complied with these principles, the more likely it was that social change would occur (Wampler, 2012). Thus, a focus on equity, given the implementation of the other three principles, will help the community achieve social change.

Importantly, the application of these four principles may lead to a virtuous cycle with everyone involved increasingly benefiting. Wampler wrote:

My research over a number of years indicates that PB's impact on democratic legitimacy is directly correlated with the degree to which each specific PB program adheres to the four principles. If the government and citizens commit to all four principles, a virtuous cycle is initiated in which the benefits of voice, vote, social justice, and oversight are mutually reinforcing. (2012, p. 9)

Thus, a focus on equity, given the implementation of the other three principles, could result in benefits not only for marginalized citizens, but for the local government and the PB process as well. Of course, everyone participating in the deliberative process would receive the individual benefits, as described elsewhere.

First, we will take a quick look at how PB processes in Brazil address social justice. Then, we will examine PBNYC's procedures and tools to address equity. In the recommendations section, proposed changes should improve PBNYC's performance in this area.

Many cities in Brazil use a “Quality of Life Index” to direct funds to neighborhoods most in need. Each city creates its own formula, which determines what percentage of spending each neighborhoods receives. “The Quality of Life Index, based on income, education, physical infrastructure, and social services provided, forms the basis for the distribution of resources” (Wampler, 2007b, p. 51). This is meant to ensure that the poorer areas of the city receive more goods and services, from PB.

[I]t is possible to document that the poorest regions of Porto Alegre received funding that had not been previously available. It is also possible to confirm that low-income neighborhoods in Belo Horizonte received more resources than did middle- and upper-income neighborhoods. (Wampler, 2007b, p. 51)

Thus, this index is working as intended.

Public forums need to negate inequalities so that deliberation can occur among equals. PBNYC has procedures to reach out to immigrants and other minorities to try to have better representation within PB meetings. “To level the playing field, we [PBP] have tried to especially recruit leaders who are already mobilizing marginalized communities” (Lerner & Seconde, 2012, p. 6). In addition to these efforts, the Participatory Budgeting Project (PBP) is a non-profit that helps initiate and run PB throughout the United States and Canada. PBNYC has hired PBP as a consultant to help administer their PB process. PBP specifically targets underrepresented populations by repeatedly inviting them to participate (Lerner & Seconde, 2012). PBP tries to attract diverse groups of people through the design of the PB processes by holding assemblies near public transportation or better yet within walking distance of everyone (Lerner & Seconde, 2012). “Organizing meetings around events that marginalized groups already attend can also help” (Lerner & Seconde, 2012, p. 6). Many times childcare is also provided to help families to attend. Attracting diverse groups of people is very important for deliberation because people with diverse opinions are more likely to disagree.

New York City has been working to attract immigrants to vote on PB proposals.

[D]uring the past four years, participation by immigrants has steadily increased, growing from 19% to more than 28% of all PBNYC voters. Yet, immigrant participation lags compared to their numbers, and there is great variation by immigrants in PB phases and districts. (Hayduk, Hackett, & Folla, 2017, p. 77)

Thus, PBNYC is moving in the right direction but still has a way to go. Funding for outreach efforts has been at the district level, which varied significantly.

PBNYC has deliberately worked to address traditional barriers to immigrant participation in PB’s design.

First, PBNYC organizers eliminated the citizenship requirement for participation. ... Second, districts are encouraged to use bilingual materials and/or interpreters. ... Third, a few districts and some participating community organizations have provided additional supports...such as metrocards, childcare, and food, albeit in limited use.

... Additionally, PB's promise of concrete, if modest, material improvements to their neighborhoods can draw immigrants and immigrant serving community organizations into the process. (Hayduk et al., 2017, p. 78)

Even though PBNYC is doing a lot, more work is needed. This situation seems to be due to lack of resources.

While PBNYC does not have a "Quality of Life worked Index" formula, it does have the "Idea Ranking Tool" that budget delegates can use to bring equity into the determination of which proposals to put up for a vote. The Participatory Budgeting Project developed this tool.. "The Idea Ranking Tool is based on three criteria: need, feasibility, and equity. This tool makes public spending more equitable by helping delegates direct resources to where they are most needed" (Participatory Budgeting Project, 2017b, p. 1).

The need, along with the other two criteria, measures each proposal on a scale from one to four. The higher total score a proposal receives, the more likely the Budget Committee is to recommend funding. Criteria for need includes the following.

[D]etermine if a project solves an important community problem. The number of times a project was proposed during idea collection...This project is not already being funded by the city or another source. The project would benefit a large number of people. The project provides a resource that is missing in the community. (Participatory Budgeting Project, 2017a, p. 2)

The budget delegates can conduct their own research concerning whether a proposal is likely to solve an important community problem (Participatory Budgeting Project, 2017a).

The feasibility of a proposal is ranked according to whether it meets the following criteria. "Similar projects have been implemented by the city. The project meets eligibility

criteria for PB funding. The relevant city agency has stated the project if feasible. There are little or no legal barriers to implement the project” (Participatory Budgeting Project, 2017a, p. 2). Budget proposals might be biased toward what has been done in the past, because city agencies will be more comfortable with what they know.

The equity of a proposal is ranked according to whether the area affected is “low-income, has high enrollment in public assistance, or has other measures of limited resources. The project would direct resources toward many underserved people.” (Participatory Budgeting Project, 2017a, p. 3).

The idea-ranking tool can be used in three different stages of a budget committee’s work. First, it can be used to create an initial screening of which proposals they will work with. In addition, this tool can identify questions that need to researched and answered before the committee can rank them. Secondly, it can be used to reduce the number of proposals that are sent to city agencies. “Each committee submits 5-10 proposals to Council member staff, who relay proposals to agencies for final review and price estimates” (Participatory Budgeting Project, 2017a, p. 4). The third and final way budget committees can use the idea ranking tool is to help them make the final selection of what will be included on the ballot, after they get feedback from city agencies (Participatory Budgeting Project, 2017b).

The Community Development Project (CDP) at the Urban Justice Center with the PBNYC research team does an annual research and evaluation report after each budget cycle. In the report for cycle 4 (2014-2015), “approximately half of reporting facilitators had used district needs maps and district profiles, two-thirds had used a project evaluation matrix, and 80% had made site visits or done field research” (Community Development

Project, 2015). An earlier version of the idea-ranking tool was called the project evaluation matrix. A majority of budget committees were doing field research and using the project evaluation matrix in their research and decisions.

### **Recommendations**

Recall from chapter 1, in Dewey's scientific methodology, facts can either impede the movement toward a social phenomenon, or facts can help a desired social phenomenon occur. In this dissertation, the desired social phenomenon is increased happiness, tolerance, and understanding. In this case, the facts are the rules, procedures, and practices of each PB process. The purpose of the recommendations is to change the facts such that the desired social phenomenon occurs.

Dewey, Mills, the Port Huron Statement, and Schutz agreed that democracy should have publics so people can connect with each other, make decisions, reclaim our morality, create a sense of belonging, and help establish equality. In chapter 3, we found what Dewey meant by publics.

[T]here are two aspects of a public that he [Dewey] thought were important. First, a public must have a clear idea about what it wants to do, its own goals and purposes. Second, it should relate well to other publics. (Hickman, cited in Garrison et al., 2014, p. 161)

Concerning Dewey's first aspect of publics, in chapter 1 we learned that increased public deliberation in PB can promote empathy, counter inequality, and clarify, inform, and foster collaboration (Heller & Rao, 2015). Also from chapter 1, we found that deliberation is the best basis for social action in a democracy, because it best reflects our evolving social values. Of the three methods of decision making, neither voting nor bargaining affect individuals' preferences, which could be taken as given. However, deliberation can change

individuals' preferences, which can converge during the course of deliberation (Heller & Rao, 2015). Thus, I propose that public deliberation be made a goal of PB, in general, and PBNYC in particular. This can be accomplished with additional training for participants, facilitators, and city agencies.

While it is true that making public deliberation a goal will not change things overnight, it will set the direction, which is important. The only thing keeping PBNYC from meeting its equity goal is lack of resources. Once PBNYC begins to move toward achieving public deliberation, it seems likely that a growing number of people will realize the increased benefits to themselves and the community. This will attract more people into the process. As greater numbers of voters demand more funding, politicians are likely either to agree or lose elections to those who do agree. Thus, PBNYC should get the resources needed to meet its equity goals by moving toward the public deliberation goal.

The second aspect of what Dewey meant by small publics is that it is important that PB relate well to other publics. This should be resolved by my recommendation that PBNYC hold regular open-ended discussions. The topics would include social justice issues affecting the city. The appropriate civic social organizations (CSOs), social movements, or government agencies would need to be invited to attend and participate.

The Recommendations section has four sub-sections. The first reviews the current state of deliberation in PBNYC. The second addresses the increased training needed for facilitators, participants, and city agencies to be able to achieve public deliberation. Most people probably do not have experience with public deliberation and could benefit from a brief introduction to it. Facilitator training is important because facilitators have a key role to play. Interaction with city agencies is how policies are implemented. In the next sub-section,

open-ended discussions are proposed to help build relationships between PB and other social organizations and social movements, work on social justice issues, and help speed the building of social capital. The last sub-section is a reminder about unintended consequences for any policy change.

### **Current State of Deliberations in PBNYC**

In 2016, Leighninger and Rinehart reported about the state of deliberation in North American PB processes. They found that none had public deliberation as one of their process goals. Some of the process goals they found included inclusiveness, being an educational process, and increased collaboration (pp. 8-9). It would seem that public deliberation would be an excellent goal.

The five goals for PBNYC for cycle 6 (2016-2017) are to open up government, expand civic engagement, develop new community leaders, build community, and make public spending more equitable. PBNYC also listed their principles of how to implement PB, which are empowerment, transparency, inclusion, equality, and community (Participatory Budgeting New York City Steering Committee, 2016, p. 4). While these are all good goals and principles, I believe that public deliberation should be included.

The role of facilitators within budget committees in PBNYC appears to be ad hoc as far as planning for deliberation. “The structure of PB [PBNYC] devolved down to individual budget committees to come up with their own answers” (Gilman, 2012, p. 5). The choice is between focusing on results, which is the number of viable projects, or focusing on the process of quality deliberation. The deciding factor turned out whether the facilitator chose to follow the results model or the process model (Gilman, 2012). It should be noted that the level of facilitator training varied greatly, with some facilitators receiving no training

(Gilman, 2012). If public deliberation were a priority, every working group would have a well-trained facilitator whose job is to encourage deliberation.

In a research and evaluation report on PBNYC's cycle 4 (2014-2015), it was reported that “additional emphasis on budget delegate facilitator training and support would be beneficial, as more than half of surveyed facilitators (54%) had not attended a facilitator training and 75% had not joined a facilitator-support conference call” (Community Development Project, 2015, p. 4). This report also pointed out that training of budget delegates varied widely. “Most districts held one orientation meeting for budget delegates. Six districts held two orientations, and two districts reported holding three orientations” (Community Development Project, 2015, p. 4). It is not clear how much training is needed for the delegates. Part of the job of budget delegates at PBNYC is to use the tools given to them that, among other things, help ensure that they consider equity in their deliberations. This is important for deliberation because an equitable process will help attract marginalized people, who may have viewpoints that differ from others involved in the process. The evaluation report did say that, “Most surveyed delegate committees utilized tools to consider issues of community need during the project development phase” (Community Development Project, 2015, p. 4). However, the report did not comment on the relationship between the amount of training and the use of these tools.

In addition to budget delegates and budget delegate facilitators, more work needs to be done in PBNYC's neighborhood assemblies during the idea collection phase. “About a third (34%) of assemblies had language support (interpretation or translation) and nearly half (47%) provided food to participants. Fewer districts provided childcare (13%)” (Community Development Project, 2015, p. 4). As was noted, all these efforts are increasing

the number of immigrants who are participating in PBNYC, but more needs to be done. Su wrote, “of all of PBNYC’s multiple goals, equity has proven to be the most elusive” (2017, p. 67). Making public deliberation a goal could indirectly provide the needed resources to meet the equity goal.

### **Increased Training**

Additional training is needed, if deliberation becomes a priority for PBNYC. First, people will need to be provided training in the art of deliberation. Pateman wrote, “the central claim of deliberative democratic theorists: that individuals should always be prepared to defend their moral and political arguments and claims with reasons, and be prepared to deliberate with others about the reasons they provide” (2012, p. 8). Due to inequality in education and experience, many people may not feel prepared to publicly deliberate. Thus, providing training for anyone who would like it is necessary.

It is not only deliberating that people may need to learn, it is public speaking. Talpin’s study found this to be a barrier.

People have, first of all, to acquire the self-confidence to speak up and express themselves, clearly in front of the assembly. This constitutes a first hurdle, as lower participation in the discussion meetings (working groups in Rome, delegate meetings in Seville) indicates. (2011, p. 164)

If public deliberation is made a goal of PB, training in public speaking has to be provided.

In addition to public speaking, it would be helpful to instruct people on the style of grammar expected in a PB assembly. Talpin found that there is certain grammar that is acceptable, and some that is not acceptable at PB assemblies. For example, “it seems that there is a certain consensus around the world – mostly in Europe, Latin, and North America – on the value of detachment and practically (consensus coming from similar historical and

structural evolutions) in the public realm” (Talpin, 2011, p. 159). Talpin found that “PB discursive interactions are ruled by three main norms: Common-good orientation – Non-political discourses – [and] Practicality” (Talpin, 2011, p. 164). Talpin gives an example of a man, Christian, at a Morsang-sur-Orge PB meeting. They were discussing the organization of traffic near a school. Everyone was emphasizing the children’s safety. Christian seemed to brush aside concerns for the children and spoke about the need for parking. “[H]e was sanctioned for not having respected the ruling public grammar, which makes ‘kids’ security’ the highest value” (2011, p. 165). Christian’s proposal was dismissed without any real consideration. “At the following meeting however, a few weeks later, Christian presented his arguments in a different way, and obtained much better results (2011, pp. 165-166). Christian had re-framed his proposal to include concern for the children.

The reason these norms are important is that if someone does not adopt to them, they will likely become discouraged and leave, because the grammar is enforced by shaming. “The will to avoid shame, or more slightly, public embarrassment, appeared as a strong explanation of self-change in the studied cases” (Talpin, 2011, p. 165). However, there are problems with this practice. First, it is unfair to shame a well-intentioned person. Secondly, many people may not change; they may just leave.

The only data available are for the Roman case, where turnover rates are extremely high. In 2004, 68.5 per cent of the participants declared they had not participated in the PB the year before. About half of 2003 participants stopped after one year. (Talpin, 2011, p. 168)

It would be easy to instruct all newcomers on the importance of framing an issue. This should be part of the training.

Before each neighborhood assembly, people who are new to PB could be invited to attend an orientation meeting, perhaps one hour before the assembly meeting. People could be told what to expect and how they might frame a proposal as being a benefit to the community and not just to themselves. In addition, people could be given advice about public speaking and public deliberation. In addition, I recommend that regular meetings or classes be scheduled, with the purpose of giving people practice, advice, and feedback about public speaking and deliberation.

In addition to training the participants in the PB assemblies, there needs to a consistently high level of training for facilitators. Facilitators need to make sure there is no coercion; everyone has a chance to speak, as well as ensuring that discussions do not become personal.

Part of the facilitator's training should be ongoing so they can compare notes on what seems to be working. One example would be the situation discussed in the Conditions for Deliberation section, about encouraging disagreement. Recall that people are reluctant to share their views with or disagree with strangers. Facilitators could experiment with giving people different amounts of time to talk about themselves to see what, if any, differences they see in the number of people who are willing to deliberate. If facilitators worked together, they could reduce their learning curve concerning how much time it takes people not to feel like strangers and open up with others.

I recommend that facilitator training, as well as all other training, be face-to-face, as opposed to conference calls. Schutz's research (see chapter 3) shows that we can genuinely understand another person's point of view (Walsh, 1967). Part of this understanding comes from being in the physical presence of another person. There is much more information

communicated in face-to-face interactions than over the phone. Thus, we have a greater chance of understanding in face-to-face interactions.

Another area of facilitator training could be the importance of how people are divided into working groups. For best deliberative results, care should be taken when dividing people into smaller working groups. Research finds that highly educated white males speak more often and have greater influence over decisions (Abdullah et al., 2016).

Democratic theorists have long recognized that members of less privileged groups need to confer among themselves in civil society associations in order to contribute autonomously and effectively to discussion in the wider public sphere (Fraser, 1992; Mansbridge 1996; Sunstein, 2000). (Abdullah et al., 2016, pp. 1-2)

Thus, marginalized groups should deliberate in their own affinity groups, to advance equity (Abdullah et al., 2016). Affinity or enclave groups refers to people with similar influences and perspectives.

In public deliberation, it is important that everyone have an equal opportunity to speak.

[P]eople with less education or income, of lower social status, immigrants conversing in their second tongue, and women can be less likely to speak or influence others in mixed groups (Black, 2015; Gerber, 2015; Han, Schenck-Hamlin, & Schenck-Hamlin, 2015; Hansen, 2010; Himmelroos, 2014). (Abdullah et al., 2016, p. 6)

That is why these groups should develop their ideas among themselves before participating in the larger public forum. This strategy can help ensure that a diversity of viewpoints are expressed, which is needed for diversity to occur.

Not only are they likely to assemble their own experiential knowledge more effectively than in mixed settings, but they are likely to formulate different questions for experts and officials, which can elicit information about the effects of policy options on less privileged sectors of society. (Abdullah et al., 2016, pp. 16-17)

This might be the only way for all members of the community to be able to express themselves as equals within a public forum.

Since the people in these enclaves share similar influences and perspectives, it might appear that they would all share the same viewpoints. However, facilitators can draw out any differences.

[F]acilitators can foster exploration of similarities and differences of experience and understandings within the group. Moderators can question those who may try to impose a single identity or set of interests on the enclave, and encourage each participant to articulate their own understanding of their social locations. (Abdullah et al., 2016, p. 26)

The role of the facilitator is critical in the composition of working groups, as well as encouraging everyone to speak their own mind within each group.

In addition to increased training for participants and facilitators, there is also the need for additional training for the people within the city agencies who interact with PBNYC, in order to enhance the public deliberation experience for everyone. City agencies determine which projects are feasible.

[T]he facially neutral criteria of feasibility quickly took precedence over community need and priority, and sidelined the sorts of testimony and evidence – based on lived experiences on which neighborhood areas felt less safe at night, or which schools required dire repairs, for instance – more likely to be put forward by traditionally marginalized constituents. Instead, the constituents most likely to forward successful projects were those who tailored (or even created) their projects to fit city agencies' PB project criteria. [From an interview with a former facilitator on 10/21/2015] "I ended up dropping out of PB...I was so disgusted with...[projects]...being contorted to look like – to be defined as – need for technology"...These criteria are thus best and most easily manipulated by those with legal and bureaucratic connections, skills in logic and discursive framing, and grant proposal-writing skills to "distort" their desires into PB-eligible "needs." (Su, 2017, p. 134)

Thus, large portions of the community without such expert knowledge are essentially left out of the process.

The budget delegates in PBNYC did not interact directly with the city agencies.

They went through the staff of their Council Member for their district.

Notably, in contrast to Porto Alegre and other notable cases of PB, no municipal offices were created or restricted to manage PB inputs or mobilize participation. Instead, the administrative model during the first three years leaned on low-capacity, decentralized city staff, and under-resourced CSOs. (Jabola-Carolus, 2017, p. 115)

Obviously, the city agencies play a significant role in the PB process. It is a change for them to have to interact with the public. Additional training could help them to see that community input is a good thing that can result in the community better appreciating the work of city agencies, as well as giving the agency employees the satisfaction of completing projects that the people most want.

The exclusionary effect of city agencies' criteria for PB projects was apparent in where the winning project proposals originated.

For example, in the first PB cycle in 2011-2012, ideas submitted through the online platform constituted twenty percent of all ideas proposed in district 39; yet, more than half of winning projects originated in the online platform. By contrast, most of that districts' neighborhood assemblies (where face-to-face deliberation took place) did not yield any winning projects that year, despite high and active participation. This fits well with findings that city-wide, the PB online platform most engaged white, well-educated, and higher-income constituents. (Su, 2017, p. 135)

In a deliberative PB process, neighborhood assemblies should debate proposals before sending them to the budget committees.

Apparently, even after a proposal went through a neighborhood assembly and was agreeable to the budget committee, the project idea could be overruled by a city agency.

Budget delegates complained that their original project ideas, which spoke to dire community needs, were often sidelined and replaced by questionably needed projects that appeared easy to implement. Predictably, these projects were also those prioritized by city agencies or championed by already powerful groups. (Su, 2017, p. 135)

This situation seems to apply to Foster's third principle, in his theory of institutional adjustment, of minimal dislocation (Foster, 1981b) (see chapter 1). Adjustments in one institution may cause related adjustments to occur in other institutions. This principle states that changes required of another institution cannot be greater than what institution is able to do.

The administrative control of PBNYC shifted after the 2014 election of city officials. "A total of twenty-one Council Members who pledged to sponsor PB were elected or re-elected, a 133% increase" (Jabola-Carolus, 2017, p. 115), out of fifty-one Council Members. In addition, Mark-Viverito, one of the original sponsors of PBNYC, won the City Council Speaker seat (Jabola-Carolus, 2017). "Mark-Viverito committed to devote central City Council resources for PB implementation" (Jabola-Carolus, 2017, p. 115). These reforms included changes to the Steering Committee.

The Steering Committee "determines basic rules of the process, influences resource allocation for PB implementation, and oversees PBNYC's adherence to overarching goals and principles" (Jabola-Carolus, 2017, p. 113). "The Steering Committee included representatives from the Council Members' offices, district-level community-based organizations, and citywide non-governmental groups" (Jabola-Carolus, 2017, p. 115). After the 2014 reforms, the duties of the Steering Committee were changed. In the 2014-2015 cycle, the reforms "moved the locus of citywide PB coordination from civil society to government" (Jabola-Carolus, 2017, p. 116).

The reforms had mixed results. Of course, devoting City Council resources to PB was very helpful. "By carving out space for PB staff in central city offices, the Council

Speaker provided greater administrative stability and infused PB with normalcy and growth potential that shoestring CSOs could never provide” (Jabola-Carolus, 2017, p. 117).

Alongside these gains, however, challenges emerged that threatened PBNYC’s impacts. Some members expressed concern about diminished capacity for evaluation....Others noted that resources for targeted outreach also failed to adequately rise, resulting in a net decrease in per-district outreach funding. One of the clearest losses, however, was a loosening of popular control in the Steering Committee. (Jabola-Carolus, 2017, p. 117)

There was also a growing emphasis on technology. Jabola-Carolus reports, “a technology emphasis emerged as a chief priority in spite of [Steering Committee] members’ relative disinterest in that effort” (Jabola-Carolus, 2017, p. 118).

The role of the Steering Committee had substantially changed.

This approach [the effect of the reforms] reinforced the two main functions left to the Steering Committee in the new division of labor: monitoring the citywide coordination efforts, and in effect, serving as a focus group as the central staff built technologies to streamline PB implementation. (Jabola-Carolus, 2017, p. 121)

The Steering committee pushed to have the process reorganized. During cycle five (2015-2016), “With Speaker Mark-Viverito’s approval, the positions of committee co-chairs was restored, to enable greater civil society control of agendas and deliberations” (Jabola-Carolus, 2017, p. 122). This resulted in greater participation by the non-profits.

History has shown that “success [of PB] is more likely when there is limited resistance on the part of opposition parties, the local legislature, and state bureaucrats” (Jabola-Carolus, 2017, p. 111). It always seems to be a case of political will, which public opinion intensity seems to determine. “Most visible in this case is bureaucratic resistance to change and to non-expert participation, which presents a problem not only for PB administration but also for popular control” (Jabola-Carolus, 2017, p. 123). On the other hand, the strong support from the new City Council Speaker helps the growth potential for

PBNYC. While city agencies may be adapting to PB slower than was hoped, they are making changes to support PB. J. Carlson, a Research Fellow at PBP, stated,

Based on feedback from participants, the Steering Committee, agencies, and contracted partners, a few changes have taken place over the past few years. One change that has been made, for instance, is that city agencies now have designated point people for PBNYC, and PBNYC has a point-person within the Speaker's office to liaise with agencies.

PBP and other partner organizations would still like to see a stronger relationship with agencies and has advocated for the Mayor to take a stronger role in supporting PBNYC. (personal communication, November 11, 2017)

Such changes and advocacy are progress. Improving the quality and scope of PBNYC is always ongoing.

In addition to the actions, it might be useful to examine other options. “[T]he absence of strong civil society pressure may contribute to the lack of political will to pursue broader reforms and alleviate bureaucratic constraints” (Jabola-Carolus, 2017, p. 124). The next sub-section is about a recommendation that directly addresses this issue.

### **Open-ended Discussions**

I propose that PBNYC have regularly scheduled meetings where residents can engage in deliberations about anything that affects the community. These open-ended discussions could be about social justice issues that are outside the scope of the PB process. Of course, trained facilitators would need to be present to help deliberations proceed smoothly. The purpose would be to motivate more people to engage in public deliberations by talking about what was of most interest to them. This is important because the scope of PB processes are limited, in both the types of projects and the amount of money that is available. “Without careful expansion, PBNYC can act as a release valve for frustrated residents and help some to address small scale needs, but it will not necessarily help to

address redistribution or equity” (Su, 2017, p. 74). The hope is that open-ended discussions will help expand PBNYC and help it make connections with other social justice organizations.

Participants in open-ended discussion meetings could discuss anything, including, but not limited to, school dropout rates, reforming local government to be more responsive to the people, police issues, homelessness, local minimum wages, local jobs<sup>12</sup>, or integration of former convicts into the community. Invited social organizations would include those who are working on some of these issues. In addition, inviting church groups and labor unions along with other concerned civic groups should make this group more representative. These organizations, social movements, or government agencies could keep people informed of their ongoing work, in case participants wanted to follow up on something.

These proposed open-ended discussions would seem to violate one of Talpin’s four conditions for deliberation, namely stakes. Since these discussions would be outside the scope of PBNYC, no funding would be available. Since the participants would not be making binding spending decisions, why would they consider the deliberations important?

Working to achieve consensus could be the goal that motivates people to participate in a public deliberation.

Unanimity is also most likely to yield a better informed and considered group opinion because the need for participants to find common ground gives them strong incentives to share information and opinions, gain knowledge, and give each view a fair hearing (Bächtiger, Grönlund, & Setälä, 2014; Karpowitz & Mendelberg, 2014). (Abdullah et al., 2016, p. 26)

Once they agree that consensus is important, they might be willing to put in more effort than usual during deliberations.

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<sup>12</sup> See extensive literature about proposed Job Guarantee Program by Wray, Forstater, and others.

What will happen when they do reach consensus? Without a source of funding, what would be the point? “[U]nanimity may be more likely than majority rule to mobilize participants to further action on behalf of the group’s conclusions because consensus strengthens each member’s commitment to the collective verdict” (Karpowitz & Raphael, 2014)” (Abdullah et al., 2016. p. 26). The participants would work together with their social organizations to raise awareness and work for the needed social justice they all agreed to.

It is not unheard of for PB to have open-ended discussions. As noted in chapter 3, in the social capital section, Baiocchi studied the effect existing social capital had on open-ended discussions in two Porto Alegre districts. In the district with less existing social capital, these open-ended discussions would sometimes deteriorate into personal arguments (Baiocchi, 2003). Quickly defusing personal hostility helps to maintain and encourage a sense of community. If these open-ended discussions work as intended, it would connect PB with other social organizations advocating for social justice, which has been called for by some (Baiocchi & Ganuza, 2017; Lerner & Pape, 2016). This would also help PB conform to Dewey’s second aspect of what a small public should be: “it should relate well to other publics” (Garrison et al., 2014, p. 161).

A key to making open-discussions work, as discussed in chapter 3, would be the translation of personal troubles into policy issues and discussing how policies could affect personal lives. As also discussed in chapter 3, some PB processes in Porto Alegre were able to do this without the help of facilitators. However, in case it is needed, training facilitators to help translate personal issues into policy issues, as well as translating the effects of social policy on individuals, might be helpful. This would help ensure that relevant issues are discussed, which would help to increase participation.

Open-ended discussions, by generating a sense of community and by building social capital, could help build the capacity of individuals and community. The first step in helping marginalized communities is for members of the community to develop a capacity to aspire.

Appadurai wrote,

[T]he experiential limitations in subaltern populations, on the capacity to aspire, tend to create a binary relationship to core cultural values, negative and skeptical at one pole, overattached at the other....Of course, the objective is to increase the capacity for the third posture, the posture of “voice,” the capacity to debate, contest, inquire, and participate critically. (2004, pp. 69-70)

Of course, the open-ended discussions and the PB process could not only build the capacity to aspire, it could build the capacity to accomplish concrete things for their community. In chapter 3, in the Port Huron Statement (PHS), we saw that part of the legacy of the PHS was that it held out the possibility that changing society, in order to further social justice, is possible.

If several civic social organizations come together and act together in open-ended discussions, their influence could grow. We would then be creating social capital on a larger scale. The different social organizations could help each other reach their goals. In the case of PB, the other organizations could campaign to expand the scope of PB projects, as well as the amount of money that is available for PB.

### **Unintended Consequences**

While considering changes to PB, it is important to remember Dewey’s scientific methodology for social policy issues, which is outlined in chapter 1. Dewey wrote that we should view social policies as experiments, while we continuously monitor the results (1938). Even if a policy has worked as intended, we should not assume that it would continue to have the same results. There are many dynamics at work in society. These make

it nearly impossible to predict consequences. Dewey's perspective would be that we should anticipate that any social policy might need adjustments.

An example of an unintended consequence happened in New York City in 2013, "when the dog park won funding over housing improvements" (Lerner, 2014, p. 26). Of course, dog parks are good for pet owners, but people are more important than pets. The Participatory Budgeting Project (PBP) found that "the ballot overflowed with public housing proposals – six in total, making up over a third of the alternatives given to voters" (Lerner, 2014, p. 26). Even though there were plenty of voting sites in this district, "people of color and low-income residents turned out in relatively low numbers" (Lerner, 2014, p. 27). PBP's solution for the next voting cycle was to limit the number of public housing projects that were put on the ballot, so the vote would not be split among too many projects. They also located the voting sites more conveniently for low-income residents. "As a result, two of the three housing projects received funding" (Lerner, 2014, p. 28). This is an example of seeking equity in addition to equality. If people perceive that a process is not fair, they will not be motivated to participate. Equity, or social justice, is one of the core principles of PB.

### **Benefits of a Deliberative PB**

As previously indicated (see chapter 1), one way to increase participation in the PB process would be to attribute all the contributions that the PB process makes to the provisioning process. Making public deliberation a priority of PB should accelerate the process, as more people get the training and find the confidence to debate local issues in a public forum. People then will become a true part of local government. As individuals put more of themselves into the process, the better it will become, for both the community and the individuals.

Once deliberative PB becomes a reality, it will encourage participants to lose their apathy, because they will see that their efforts have concrete results. Thus energized, they may request city officials to allocate a greater percentage of the budget to PB. Moreover, city officials who support an increased role for deliberative PB will likely win their elections.

The hypothesis of this dissertation is that as more of us become actively engaged in deliberations concerning local economic/political issues, the happier, more tolerant, and more understanding we can become. The best way to test this hypothesis is to make public deliberation a priority of PB, because as more people lose their fear of public speaking and gain the infrastructure for public deliberation, they may become more actively engaged in deliberations concerning local economic/political issues. Next, we examine the three components of the hypothesis – happiness, tolerance, and understanding – to learn how public deliberation can prove the hypothesis true.

Becoming happier was discussed in chapter 2, in the Jefferson proposal for a ward system. Each ward would be small enough so that everyone could meet in one location to decide relevant local issues. Public happiness seems to be what motivated Jefferson to make the proposal.

This freedom they called later, when they had come to taste it, “public happiness,” and it consisted in the citizen’s right of access to the public realm, in his share in public power – to be “a participator in the government of affairs” in Jefferson’s telling phase – as distinct from the generally recognized rights of subjects to be protected by the government in the pursuit of private happiness even against public power. (Arendt, 2006, p. 118)

In order to experience public happiness, people need to participate in government, by being fully engaged in their communities. This is part of the essence of democracy.

The alternative to the people not taking public power is for the government, by default, to do so. The result is:

It [freedom] resides no longer in the public realm but in the private life of the citizens and so must be defended against the public and its power. Freedom and power have parted company, and the fateful equating of power with violence, of the political with government, and of government with a necessary evil has begun. (Arendt, 2006, p. 128)

By giving up our right to public happiness and public power, through participation, we would be creating a government from which we likely would need protection.

Jefferson's ward system proposal would guarantee a space where people could pursue public happiness and public freedom. Similarly, the PBNYC process could grow and provide a space as anticipated by Jefferson's ward system. That is, the space would be where people could pursue public happiness.

Becoming more tolerant was discussed in chapter 3 in the section on Dewey's pragmatic political thought. Dewey believed that social interaction is what has meaning. He knew that public communication reminds us that we are all the same. We are all human beings.

Intolerance, abuse, calling of names because of differences of opinion about religion or politics or business, as well as because of differences of race, color, wealth or degree of culture are treason to the democratic way of life. For everything which bars freedom and fullness of communication sets up barriers that divide human beings into sets and cliques, into antagonistic sects and factions, and thereby undermines the democratic way of life. (Dewey, 1993c, p. 243)

Face-to-face communication, when conducted appropriately, tends to break down barriers between people and can help be the antidote for intolerance. Having more people involved in face-to-face public deliberations about issues that matter to them, and are trying honestly to find a solution, seems to be a promising way to fight intolerance. Even if there is not a

consensus, people will benefit from being able to talk with others. Dewey specified that these face-to-face deliberations should take place in public groups.

In *The Public and Its Problems*, Dewey identifies the greatest problem of publics: “The essential need, in other words, is the improvement of the methods and conditions of debate, discussions and persuasion. That is the problem of the public” (1954, p. 208). Public deliberation, as defined in this dissertation, in small working groups would tend to break down barriers between people that lead to intolerance.

Becoming more understanding was discussed in chapter 3 in the section about Schutz. He spent his career gaining comprehension of the “subjective point of view,” a genuine understanding of the other person’s viewpoint. As Walsh writes in the introduction to *The Phenomenology of the Social World*:

[W]e can intentionally grasp those experiences because we assume that his facial expressions and his gestures are a “field of expression” for his inner life. This is what Schutz calls the “bodily presence” or “corporeal givenness” of the partner. The crucial factor here is simultaneity. We sense the other person’s stream of consciousness is flowing along a track that is temporally parallel with our own. (p. xxv)

Hence, face-to-face communication is a key to understanding others. Honestly trying to reach consensus during public deliberations in small groups most likely will result in understanding.

After PB processes adopt public deliberation and open discussion groups as goals, people will begin to see the increased benefits. This would tend to grow PB in the number of participants, amount of money allocated, and the scope of projects. This incremental growth could lead to municipal confederations.

## **Municipal Confederations**

Municipal confederations refers to the idea that neighborhood assemblies should be the place where policy, both political and economic, is decided. “[C]onfederal municipalism is meant to be an ever-developing, creative, and reconstructive agenda as well as an alternative to the centralized nation-state and to an economy based on profit, competition, and mindless growth” (Bookchin, 1995, p. 224). The idea is that the people are in the best position to decide what is best for them. As illustrated in the saying, “only the wearer knows where the shoe pinches,” it rejects the idea that political parties representing the people provided the best possible form of government.

[I]t [municipal confederation] involves a redefinition of politics, a return to the word’s Greek meaning as the management of the community or polis by means of direct face-to-face assemblies of the people in the formulation of public policy and based on the ethics of complementarity and solidarity. (Bookchin, 1995, p. 260)

Here, solidarity refers to the connections that can happen between people in neighborhoods, “in which people can intellectually and emotionally confront one another, indeed, experience one another through dialogue, body language, personal intimacy, and face-to-face modes of expression” (Bookchin, 1995, p. 226).

In the assemblies, policies are decided and administration is done in the confederation. The confederation is “the interlinking of communities with one another through recallable deputies mandated by municipal citizens’ assemblies and whose sole functions are coordinative and administrative” (Bookchin, 1995, p. 262). The fact that the deputies are recallable ensures that policy decisions remain in the hands of the assemblies.

The assemblies would decide economic as well as political issues. “[C]onfederal municipalism literally politicizes the economy by dissolving economic decision making into

the civic domain” (Bookchin, 1995, p. 235). Of course, such changes cannot be accomplished in a short period. An incremental change proposal could include the following steps:

Civic banks to fund municipal enterprises and land purchases; the fostering of new ecologically-oriented enterprises that are owned by the community; and the creation of grassroots networks in many fields of endeavor and the public weal – all these can be developed at a pace appropriate to changes that are being made in political life. (Bookchin, 1995, p. 266)

Keeping in mind the three principles of Foster’s theory of institutional adjustment from chapter 1, such incremental change might be possible.

The question becomes what might be the best way to begin. It would make sense to do something that fills a basic need, such as to provide food. Urban farms might be a good way to start (Bookchin, 1995). These farms could provide high quality organic food at reduced cost to people in need. Moreover, since farms can be labor intensive, it can provide employment to a few people in the community. Then a community restaurant could prepare the food from the community farm. Rehabilitating abandoned houses and buildings would seem also to be logical projects. The people’s imagination would be the only limit to the scope of the issues handled.

In the beginning, it is likely that the municipal confederations would not have any legal authority, but they would have moral power. These municipal confederations could pass resolutions, which could have tremendous influence. As an example,

[T]he nuclear freeze resolution that was adopted by more than a hundred town meetings in Vermont,...[in 1980s]...leading to ad hoc “town meetings” in regions of the country that had never seen them, it affected national policy on this issue and culminated in a demonstration of approximately a million people in New York City. (Bookchin, 1995, p. 230)

The future is unknowable, but one thing seems clear. “Its [municipal confederation] development depends upon the growing consciousness of the people” (Bookchin, 1995, p. 231). Public deliberation in small groups might be the best way to raise consciousness.

### **Conclusion**

If PB adopts public deliberation as a priority and reaches out to other social justice groups, it could fulfill its promise of becoming a transformative force by empowering people to govern themselves. Public deliberation can provide a sense of community and a sense of belonging that helps the participants and their communities. The benefits of a deliberative PB process would likely cause it to grow and become a bigger part of city government. While public deliberation works best at the local level, it could lead to a version of the scenario described above.

On the other hand, perhaps Jefferson’s idea behind his ward system proposal (see chapter 2), might prevail. The ward system proposal might provide the means for the people to actually become the local government in order to fulfill their desires for public happiness and public freedom (Arendt, 2006). Jefferson’s proposal could trigger “the democratic impulse” (Koch, 1964, p. 164), which may cause people to reflect and act on becoming involved in state and federal government. Jefferson incorporated direct democracy with modern representative government. His ideas could provide a foundation that could further democratize our representative form of government.

Public deliberation is not easy; however, it could be the first step toward fixing a system where politicians’ loyalty is to their party and their donors instead of to their constituents. It could lead to an honest search for solutions. Public deliberation may be the

best way to energize individuals and communities to engage and reclaim the political system.

As noted in chapter 1, deliberation is the best method in a democracy to arrive at decisions, because during deliberations, individuals' preferences can change and converge.

In Carole Pateman's 2012 presidential address to the American Political Science Association, she said, "if deliberation is necessary for democracy it is not sufficient" (p. 8). I would argue that, in a way, public deliberation is sufficient. In the recommendations section, I argue that the social capital generated by people energized by engaging in deliberative PB could have transformative effects directly on public opinion and indirectly on politicians. Thus, while deliberation would not provide everything needed for democracy, it could provide the political will to do everything needed.

The benefits derived from public deliberation are due to it provoking self-reflection of one's position and listening to and carefully considering the other person's position. This self-reflection corresponds to the "internal deliberation" discussed in chapter 1. The impulse that sparks the internal deliberation could be the fear of public embarrassment, due to a lack of logical reasons for a publicly stated opinion. Talpin found that trying to avoid public shame or public embarrassment "appeared as a strong explanation of self-change" (2011, p. 165). We may reflect during public deliberation, because we need to better formulate an opinion based on reason, in order to better present and defend it. This self-reflection can result in modifying one's opinion. Newly presented information, during public deliberation, can result in further modifying one's opinion. The ideal condition occurs when our opinions and values converge, producing consensus, or at least a clear majority.

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## VITA

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[https://spa.asu.edu/sites/default/files/2017-12/bythepeople\\_final.pdf](https://spa.asu.edu/sites/default/files/2017-12/bythepeople_final.pdf)