

**UCLA**

**UCLA Electronic Theses and Dissertations**

**Title**

Talking in the Halls: Deliberative Democracy, Local Institutions, and School Board Governance

**Permalink**

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/1cq4t09k>

**Author**

Collins, Jonathan

**Publication Date**

2017

Peer reviewed|Thesis/dissertation

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

Talking in the Halls:

Deliberative Democracy, Local Institutions, and School Board Governance

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree Doctor  
of Philosophy in Political Science

by

Jonathan Edward Collins

2017

© Copyright by

Jonathan Edward Collins

2017

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Talking in the Halls:

Deliberative Democracy, Local Institutions, and School Board Governance

by

Jonathan Edward Collins

Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science

University of California, Los Angeles, 2017

Professor Lorrie Frasure-Yokley, Chair

**Research Question and Framework:**

Does public engagement in the democratic process at the local level actually matter? Can we conceptualize public engagement beyond voting in elections? Furthermore, how does non-electoral public engagement interact with the racial and ethnic politics already in existence in local communities? This study looks to develop and empirically test a theory of local government based on the extent to which local public officials engage in public deliberation with residents of municipalities. In building this framework, the project employs the deliberative democracy theoretical framework. This study also appends to the framework a typology of how public deliberation should function under varying racial conditions in cities, and I empirically test these theoretical concepts by examining the

school board politics of the school districts in Los Angeles County.

**Methods:**

This dissertation project explores the question of interest through a mixture of quantitative and qualitative analysis. Through surveying superintendents across Los Angeles County, I develop the first localized comparative index scale of deliberative democracy – the Deliberative Democracy Index Scale (DDIS). I also measure the policy priorities of the district superintendents as well as collect open-ended responses from the superintendents regarding public participation at school board meetings. Furthermore, this study measures the public’s evaluations of their local government using a separate public opinion survey of Los Angeles County residents. Then, this project concludes with a qualitative analysis of how institutional leadership plays a role the extent to which districts utilize deliberative democracy.

**Findings:**

Districts with greater minority political empowerment and lower levels of racial conflict produce higher DDIS scores. Superintendents of districts with higher DDIS scores are more likely to prioritize issues important to the public as a whole. Residents of districts with higher DDIS scores are more likely harbor positive evaluations of their local government. Districts with higher DDIS scores tend to utilize more creative means to encourage public participation in school board meetings.

**Conclusion:**

A quantitative measure of deliberative democracy carries significant explanatory power. An institution’s level of commitment to deliberative democracy influences how administrators think about policy. That institutional commitment also shapes the public’s

perceptions of local government performance. The commitment to deliberative democracy largely begins with the norms and conditions established by the governing body.

The dissertation of Jonathan Edward Collins is approved.

Matt Barreto

Melvin Rogers

Michael Stoll

Lorrie Frasure-Yokley, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2017

## **Dedication Page**

There are many who have contributed to the completion of this dissertation. First, I have to thank Fernando Guerra, Brianne Gilbert, and the Center for the Study of Los Angeles.

Without their cooperation, this project would not have been possible.

Further, I would like to thank the various groups that supported this research at various phases. First, I thank the University of California- Los Angeles (UCLA), and in particular, I would like to thank the UCLA African-American Studies Department and the UCLA Graduate Opportunity Fellowship for making graduate school possible. Second, I thank the UCLA Graduate Division for awarding me the Eugene V. Cota Robles Diversity Fellowship and making the doctoral journey happen. The UCLA Graduate Research Mentorship and UCLA Graduate Summer Research Mentorship Programs also supported early iterations of this work. Then, a very special thanks goes to Franklin D. Gilliam and the UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs's Office of the Dean for supporting this work through the dissertation-writing phase.

I am forever grateful to the members of my dissertation committee: Matt Barreto, Melvin Rogers, and Michael Stoll. You three brought such unique brands of brilliance to the project and challenged me in ways that forced me to think past limitations I had placed on myself. I have received tremendous support from my committee chair Professor Lorrie Frasure-Yokley. Thank you for seeing my vision even as I struggled to fully illustrate it. Thank you to Frank Gilliam for showing me how to be a scholar and a professional. You all are reason why I have been able to do what I do. You all are the standards that I will spend my career trying to meet, and I can only hope that I can be as helpful and inspirational as you all.

Thank you to the late Mark Sawyer for fighting for me, believing in me, and challenging me to think about the world with a keen critical eye. Mark was an original member of this



committee, but he transitioned shortly prior to filing of this dissertation. While UCLA's policy may prevent me from listing you as a formal member on the committee, your contribution to my work and my career extend beyond the proper recognition I was unable to provide.

My friends at UCLA and peers at other universities have also provided me important support and encouragement. I would especially like to thank Angela Ocampo, Jessica Stewart, Knox Brown, and Ayo Lanionu for your support as UCLA colleagues. From beyond UCLA, I must thank Sally Nuamah, Meghan Wilson, and Dilara Üsküp. Your brilliance, good humor, and encouragement have made you lifelong friends to whom I owe an immense amount. I would also like to thank Brandon Harrison and Isaiah Scott for helping me keep perspective beyond the academic world.

Last but not least, I would like to thank my family. My sisters Aliyah and Ananda keep me motivated by the fact that I know they look up to me and follow my example. You both force me to practice what I preach. I also need to acknowledge my grandmothers Carolyn Ozier and Janie Collins for their unconditional love and long hugs during short breaks. I would also like to thank my Aunt Sue, who I'd never met until I moved to Los Angeles, but she became a second mother; a source of many good meals and much needed words of encouragement. And, of course, I must thank my parents John and Valerie Collins for allowing me to be myself and supporting me no matter what. You put no pressure on me, and you with love and only the expectations I placed on myself. Finally, I would like to thank my partner in life, Crystal Thomas, whose love, dedication, and strength always makes it easier for me to do my best. Any shortcomings are my responsibility alone.

## **Table of Contents**

Chapter 1: The Introduction	1
Chapter 2: Theorizing Deliberative Democracy, Race, and Local Institutions	15
Chapter 3: Urban Representation through Deliberation	43
Chapter 4: Urban Political Evaluations and Deliberative Democracy	74
Chapter 5: Conclusion: A Closer Look	105
Appendix I: Superintendent Survey Information	130
Appendix II: Public Opinion Survey Information	136
References	141

## **List of Tables and Figures**

### List of Figures

Figure 2.1 The Pre-Existing Conflict and Empowerment (PECE) Typology	42
Figure 3.1 Deliberative Democracy Measure's Principal Component Analysis	73
Figure 5.1 Model of Institutional Commitment to Deliberative Democracy	139

### List of Tables

Table 3.1 Factors Comprising the Deliberative Democracy Index	70
Table 3.2 Policy Awareness, the PECE Typology, and Deliberative Democracy	71
Table 3.3 Explaining the Policy Evaluations of Superintendents	72
Table 4.1 Local Resident Evaluations of Overall School Quality	97
Table 4.2 Local Resident Evaluations of District as a Place to Raise Children	99
Table 4.3 Local Resident Evaluations of Local Government Transparency	101
Table 4.4 Local Resident Evaluations of Willingness to Pay More Taxes	103

## VITA

### EDUCATION

#### *University of California – Los Angeles*

- Ph.D. in Political Science, expected 2017
- Area of Concentration: Race and Ethnicity Politics

#### *University of California – Los Angeles*

- M.A. in African-American Studies, 2012
- Area of Concentration: Political Science

#### *Morehouse College*

- B.A. English, 2011 (cum laude)
- Minor: Political Science

### PEER-REVIEWED JOURNAL ARTICLES

2016. “Buying Schools with Social Capital: How Local Response to State Reform Fosters Education Revenue Inequality.” *Local Government Studies*.

### PEER-REVIEWED JOURNAL ARTICLES UNDER REVIEW

2017. Urban Representation Through Deliberation: A Theory and Test of Deliberative Democracy at the Local Level. (Under Review).

2017. “From Politics to Protest and Social Media? The Role of Age Cohort in Explaining Black Political Efficacy in the Dawn of the Obama Presidency.” (Under Review).

2017. “The Politics of Childcare: The Role of Racial Attitudes and Traditional Family Values in Shaping Childcare Policy Preferences.” (Under Review).

2016. “Talking in the Halls: Deliberative Democracy, Public Education, and Elite Political Behavior.” (Revise and Resubmit).

### NON-PEER-REVIEWED JOURNAL ARTICLES

2014. “Race to Sustain: The Policy Implications of Racial Differences in Climate Change Public Opinion Attitudes.” *Harvard Journal of African American Policy*.

2013. “Toward the Great Society: An Analysis of the Relationship between Politics and Underperforming Urban Schools.” *Harvard Journal of African American Policy*.

## **AWARDS**

Brown University Presidential Diversity Postdoctoral Fellowship 2017-2019

UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs Dean's Office Dissertation Research Fellowship 2016 – 2017

Loyola Marymount University Center for the Study of Los Angeles Graduate Research Fellow 2015-2017

UCLA Graduate Research Mentorship Fellowship 2013 – 2014

UCLA Graduate Summer Research Mentorship Fellowship 2013 – 2013

UCLA Eugene V. Cota-Robles Fellowship 2012 – 2016

UCLA Graduate Opportunity Fellowship 2011 – 2012

Mellon-Mays Undergraduate Fellowship 2009 – 2011

## **RESEARCH EXPERIENCE**

Survey Research Analyst. *Latino Decisions*. (2016-present).

Research Assistant. UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs undergraduate curriculum development. (Summer 2016).

Principal Investigator: Dr. Lois Takahashi, UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs Dean Interim Dean

Research Assistant. "Framing Early Childcare Development." (2014-15).

Principal Investigator: Dr. Franklin Gilliam Jr., UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs Dean

## **TEACHING**

Adjunct Professor. "Introduction to American Politics." (Fall 2016).

Institution: Pomona College.

## **OPINIONS AND COMMENTARY**

"Can Trump Win Over African Americans? This Survey Suggests There's Little Chance." *Washington Post* (Monkey Cage blog). (2017).

## **Chapter 1**

### **The Introduction: Why Deliberative Democracy, Local Institutions, Racial Politics, and Education Politics?**

On July 31<sup>st</sup> of 2015 the school board members governing the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) emerged from their backroom chambers and entered a meeting room filled to capacity.<sup>1</sup> The crowd of Los Angeles residents – spanning across racial and ethnic backgrounds, economic classes, and age groups – formed a dissonant clamor comprised of everything from idle chatter to boisterous chants of protest.<sup>2</sup> Student demonstrators decorated the isles of the meeting room. Capturing the spirit of why so many people showed up to the school district central office in downtown Los Angeles on a Thursday night, two of the students held a banner that read, “De-militarize our Communities.”<sup>3</sup> Outrage over police officers brutally slaying Michael Brown in the streets of Ferguson, MO<sup>4</sup> still filled the hearts and minds of many across the United States. So, on that Thursday night, news of the LAUSD police officers poised to receive a mass shipment of military weapons courtesy of the U.S. Department of Defense’s 1033 Federal Program ignited community members of the second largest city (and school district) in the United States to force a serious conversation about school safety. “Back to school, no weapons,” the mass chanted.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> See “Special Board Meeting – July 30, 2015 – 6:00PM.” *Los Angeles Unified School District Board of Education*. <http://laschoolboard.org/07-30-15SpclBdCS>.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> See “Students face LAUSD board, demanding end to military weapons.” *LA School Report*. July 31 2015. <http://laschoolreport.com/students-face-laUSD-board-demanding-end-to-military-weapons/>.

<sup>4</sup> See “What Happened in Ferguson?” *New York Times*. June 14 2014. <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2014/08/13/us/ferguson-missouri-town-under-siege-after-police-shooting.html? r=0>.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

The board members, three in particular, produced a mixed response to protesters at the meeting. When singled out for his perceived individual support of the federal program, Board Member A confrontationally replied to the audience, “I have not seen this school police with M-16s, and neither have you.”<sup>6</sup> Another official, Board Member B, elicited a more stoic response to protesters erupting in chants: “Let them go on.”<sup>7</sup> Meanwhile, Board Member C attempted to find an opportunity for collective reasoning amidst the signs waving and chants reverberating. “I have to tell you,” said the board member, “you may not get the ‘yes’ now, but you were heard. We heard you. You are right to be leaders.”<sup>8</sup> Through this statement, Board Member C issues a promise that, in the end, democracy will prevail, but how firm are the legs on which that promise stands? Systematically, how central are opportunities for dialogue to the politics happening at the local level? Do these types of conversations actually shape the policy decisions that public officials make? Conversely, do the ways that local officials respond to public dialogue influence the way members of the public view local government? This dissertation project explores the implications of what happens when local governments institutionalize these different types of responses to public engagement.

The question this dissertation engages is, does non-electoral engagement from political non-elites actually matter? Are institutions capable of producing environments conducive for substantive dialogue between elites and non-elites? If so, does the institutional commitment to a discursive environment influence the policy decisions made

---

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.



by elites and the outcomes associated with those policies? How does the discursive environment impact non-elites? Do non-elites develop more trust and think more favorably of the elites and the local institution when the institution promotes substantive discourse around political issues? Does the discursive environment motivate non-elites to participate more in the political process? Can all of this be measured empirically? These are the larger questions guiding this research endeavor.

I engage these questions with an eye on how they interact with racial and ethnic politics. In the field of political science, the research on American political behavior predominantly focuses on two concepts: 1) why Americans vote<sup>9</sup> and 2) and whether or not public officials govern in response to what voters want<sup>10</sup>. Yet, the kind of politics happening on that warm July night at the school board central office in one of the most racially and ethnically diverse cities in the world – a type of non-electoral politics that also happens all across the United States – cannot be fully captured by the traditional approaches to the study of American politics. Scholars of race and ethnic politics have pushed the boundaries on how to conceptualize both political participation and political representation.<sup>11</sup> This dissertation project follows in that lineage.

In particular, I investigate the extent to which the racial and ethnic politics of a political space enhances or disrupts the ability to develop discursive environments. Can institutions foster substantive discursive environments with racial and ethnic tension surrounding? Whether due to conflict over material resources or unequal access to political

---

<sup>9</sup> See voter modeling literature (eg. Campbell et al. 1960; Lazerfeld et al. 1948; Popkin 1994; Fiorina 1981)

<sup>10</sup> See institutions literature on representation (e.g. Pitkin 1967; Stimson et al. 1995)

<sup>11</sup> See literature on racial and ethnic politics (e.g. Walton 1985; Dawson 1995; Tate 1994)

power, racial politics should play a central role in how institutions behave. In order to properly evaluate how institutions respond to engagement from non-elites, the role of race and ethnicity must be parsed out and situated within the larger story.

The central argument advanced by this dissertation is that, when local institutions promote deliberation-based democratic governance, elites are more responsive to the needs of their community as a whole, which in turn positions community members to develop higher levels of trust in and favorability towards the institution. The effectiveness of deliberation-based democratic governance, or deliberative democracy, depends on the state of racial and ethnic politics in the community. In particular, institutions unable to mitigate pre-existing racial conflict will struggle to establish a substantive discursive environment. Similarly, democratic discourse is difficult to facilitate in environments where racial and ethnic minorities are denied opportunities for political empowerment. This project demonstrates the larger relationship between deliberative democracy and local political behavior through a focus on education politics in the urban space.

The nuance of this dissertation lies not in the idea itself of democratic practices shaping governance and representation, but in the somewhat disparate research that this project brings together in search of a new conversation. Theoretically, this project borrows from the normative literature on democratic theory in route to deploying the deliberative democracy theoretical framework. While there has been a recent wave of empirical research on deliberative democracy (Ryfe 2005), this project is one of few studies considering the importance of how deliberative democracy interacts with racial and ethnic politics. This is also one of the few projects applying the deliberative democracy framework to the study of local institutions. Furthermore, this is one of the first projects to

extend the study of deliberative democracy and local institutions into the realm of education politics and policy-making.

Each of these different research areas – democratic theory, racial and ethnic politics, local institutions, and education politics and policy – brings a specific contribution to the larger attempt of studying the extent to which civic engagement impacts political behavior. The remainder of this chapter will describe in greater detail the contributions of each area of study followed by an outline of the subsequent chapters.

### **Why Deliberative Democracy?**

Any attempt to conceptualize, theoretically, how the engagement of non-elites may influence the behavior of elites confronts the same set of issues. First, how do we conceptualize civic engagement? Second, what is it about engagement from members of the public that should, in theory, influence the behavior of elites? Deliberative democracy provides a framework for making those specifications. The framework looks to participation in public dialogue as a central form of civic engagement, and the content and ideas that surface through the discourse between non-elites and their representative elites should ultimately shape how the elites go about making decisions (Habermas 1984; Benhabib 1996; Fiskin & Laslett 2003; Mansbridge 1999).

Discursive politics also enables engagement to be conceptualized beyond formal electoral politics. The typical American voter participates in elections just once out of every four years. Even the highest propensity voter votes twice per year (general and primary elections at local, state, and federal levels) at most. Meanwhile, millions of Americans – either by choice or through institutional restrictions – refrain from

participating in elections altogether. While formal electoral behavior captures a key aspect of our democracy, relying exclusively on formal means as a way to assess public engagement fails to account for the activity happening during the periods between elections, which may attract participation from both voters and non-voters.

The activity placed at the center in this project is discourse in public meetings. Public meetings occur far more regularly than elections, and they offer a way for an individual to directly engage in the political process with public officials and other members of the public. The deliberative discourse capable of taking place at public meetings provides an alternative to not just an emphasis on voting, but the rational choice theoretical approach to the way decision-making is predominantly conceptualized in political science. Rational choice theorists see individuals as primarily concerned with maximizing personal utility, which positions political representation to be structured around bargaining between elites and non-elites. Juxtaposed to rational choice, discourse theory argues that individuals are driven by a sense of a shared public interest that they navigate with other members of society through collective reasoning (Guttman & Thompson 2009). While collective reasoning is not limited to these spaces, public meetings represent an environment structured by the institution, where non-elite participation is expected to result in discourse with institutional elites.

### **Why Local Institutions?**

While deliberative democracy has the capacity to function at both the state and national levels, this project conceptualizes the framework as a theory of local institutions. The focus on local institutions serves two purposes. First, it fills a gap within the political

science literature. Theorists and empiricists studying deliberative democracy, while at times using the local level as a unit of analysis (Fung 2004; Fung & Wright 2001), have yet to place the framework in direct conversation with the work on local and urban politics. Similarly, scholars of local and urban politics have yet to employ deliberative democracy as an overarching framework for conceptualizing municipal governance on a broad level. This project builds upon the existing work in both areas to develop and test a new theory of local governance based on deliberative democracy.

Secondly, this project focuses on local institutions because of the close proximity between elites and non-elites that predominantly persists at the local level. Deliberative democracy, as a theoretical framework, relies on the opportunity for discourse between members of the public and their representatives to foster optimal governance (Gutmann and Thompson 2009). Of the three primary levels of government, the vast majority of the members of the American public have the best access, with respect to distance and proximity, to their local government officials. Therefore, on a purely spatial level, individuals have a higher probability of engaging in discourse in the local institutional environment than they have of showing up at state or federal halls. For example, it is much easier for someone in Los Angeles to take an issue downtown to the Los Angeles City Hall than to the California State Legislature in Sacramento or the United States Capitol building in Washington, DC. This access to local institutions makes them the primary spaces for theorizing about and observing democratic governance.

The close proximity is also important for evaluating the active role that theorists expect non-elites to play in the decision-making process. Individuals are expected to be primarily motivated to participate in deliberative governance by the opportunity to

influence legally-binding decisions (Guttmann and Thompson 2009). Local institutions provide access to discussions around policy debates with legally-binding influence over their own communities. Furthermore, unlike state and national policy debates, which usually involve multiple localities simultaneously, these debates facilitated by local institutions focus on that municipality almost exclusively. Thus, despite the fact that the issues themselves may be more complex and idiosyncratic at the local level, an individual's stake in the outcome is much clearer.

### **Why Race and Ethnic Politics?**

Along with the local institution, racial and ethnic politics play a central role in conceptualizing deliberation-based local governance as well. The primary aim of this project is to build upon the way in which political science conceptualizes public engagement as well as how engagement shapes institutions and political behavior. Studies of racial and ethnic politics routinely demonstrate that: 1) race and ethnicity influences how Americans engage in the political system (Dawson 1994; Bobo & Gilliam 1990; Segura and Rodrigues 2006; Junn & Masouka 2008; Masuoka & Junn 2013) and 2) institutions behave differently when race becomes salient (Tate 2003; Mendelberg 2001; Parker & Barreto 2013; Tyson 2016). Based on these patterns, racial politics become central to developing a more robust conceptualization of deliberative democracy, particularly within the context of local institutions.

With regard to deliberative democracy itself, empirical tests of the theory largely overlook the potential role of race and ethnicity. Yet, the few studies of the framework that do focus on race find critical differences (Mendelberg 2002; Fung 2004), which suggests

that more work needs to be done in order to situate race, both theoretically and empirically, within the expectations for deliberative democracy. This project attempts to do so. In particular, this project develops a new typology for race and deliberative democracy, which attempts to establish the racial and ethnic political conditions under which deliberative democracy should perform best.

It is also important to consider the role of racial and ethnic politics because of the project's focus on local institutions. While scholars of deliberative democracy have paid little attention to race, the research on local institutions and behavior consistently highlight the importance of racial and ethnic factors (Kaufmann 2004; Hajnal 2009; Oliver et al. 2012; Frasure-Yokley 2016). Existing research demonstrates the way in which urban municipal institutions have been the primary sites where racial and ethnic minorities have gained access to political power (Bobo and Gilliam 1990). Research also highlights the way in which racial conflict has manifested into contentious elections and policy debates at the local level (Kaufmann 2004; Sonenshien 1993). At the center of racial politics in local – particularly urban – areas lies the clear formation of in-groups that find themselves in competition for descriptive agency and local government resources. In order to have a conversation about the potential role of deliberation-based governance influencing local politics, one must theoretically and empirically disentangle the racial politics of local and urban spaces.

### **Why Education Politics?**

This dissertation project uses education politics as the domain through which to investigate the intersection of deliberative democracy, local institutions, and racial and

ethnic politics. Education politics provides a key set of important advantages. First, education policy is an issue area that most Americans are both familiar with and, Americans are also willing to designate it as a primary issue of concern. Due to compulsory education laws, the vast majority of Americans have experiences with schools, although to vastly varying degrees. Furthermore, Americans routinely list “education” or “schools” as a primary issue of concern on public opinion surveys.<sup>12</sup> Thus, when attempting to measure the potential impact of deliberation-based governance, education politics provides the most optimal environment to observe discourse because of the way in which Americans are able to perceive their stake in the outcomes related to this issue area. Unlike issues like planning and land use or water and power (utilities), residents of American cities are better equipped to formulate opinions and act on those opinions, when the subject shifts to education.

Second, education politics is the only policy area with its own local governing institution in existence almost uniformly across the nation. By investigating school boards, this project can narrow the scope of policy to focus on one issue. This narrow scope is important for ensuring that the culture of discourse being measured in this project all centers around the same issue. Congress, state legislatures, and city councils all engage a range of policy issues, which means any given public meeting could focus on a range of policy issue areas. Individuals may be motivated to attend a public forum around healthcare but less so when the topic shifts to environmental issues, or vice versa. However, school boards almost exclusively focus on education issues. Thus, investigating

---

<sup>12</sup> See “Education.” *Gallup*. January 2015.



deliberative democracy through education politics allows me to hold fixed any variation in Americans' interest in different political issues.

## **Research Design**

This project undertakes the arduous mission of both conceptualizing and measuring deliberative democracy within the context of the local institution. At an operational level, this project uses the school district superintendent as the eye into the school district. Through collaborating with Loyola Marymount University's Center for the Study of Los Angeles, I survey 52 of the 80 school district superintendents within Los Angeles County, and I ask each superintendent a set of questions pertaining to the state of deliberation at school board meetings between school board members and members of the public. I compile the responses into an additive index: the Deliberative Democracy Index Scale (DDIS). I also ask the superintendents questions about race relations in the district as well as their level of priority placed on a range of policy issues.

Along with the survey of the superintendents, I also collect public opinion survey responses from over 2,500 residents located throughout Los Angeles County. In particular, I ask respondents about their perceptions of the quality of public education in their school district, how conducive their district is for raising children, local government transparency, and their willingness to pay more in taxes. I group the respondents by school district, and I test the extent to which the DDIS can predict both the policy priorities of the superintendents and the perceptions of the residents of the school districts.

## **Chapter Summary**

The next chapter, Chapter 2, will develop the theoretical framing deployed throughout the remainder of this dissertation. As stated, this project borrows the deliberative democracy theoretical framework, but Chapter 2 provides more depth. The chapter reviews the normative literature on deliberative democracy established by philosophers and political theorists. The chapter also reviews the empirical literature on deliberative democracy in route to describing the way in which this project conceptualizes and measures deliberative democracy. Chapter 2 also develops the Pre-Existing Conflict and Empowerment (PECE) Typology that will be used to establish the theoretical expectations for how deliberative democracy should interact with the racial politics of the urban space. Ultimately, this project utilizes the Deliberative Democracy Index Scale (DDIS) as the tool to measure how discursive the environments that school boards foster actually are, and I describe the way in which I expect for the measure to interact with racial conflict and minority political empowerment.

Chapter 3 empirically investigates the question of whether deliberation-based democratic environments influence the policy goals of local elites. Utilizing a survey of superintendents throughout Los Angeles County, I find that superintendents of districts with stronger commitments to deliberative democracy are more likely to hold policy preferences that reflect the common interest of their districts. However, I also find that racial factors from the PECE Typology are statistical predictors of deliberative democracy index scores. Thus, the chapter as a whole provides evidence that deliberative democracy may be influencing elites' their individual policy priorities as well as their perceptions of how viable their districts are for implementing policy, but the effectiveness of deliberation seems to depend on the racial politics already in existence within the district.

Chapter 4 examines the extent to which the deliberative democracy environment impacts how non-elites evaluate their local government. In this chapter, I merge the school district-level measures with public opinion data from constituents of the various school districts from throughout Los Angeles County that are included in the district-level dataset. This chapter provides evidence that residents of districts with a stronger commitment to deliberative democracy see their districts as more transparent. Residents of these more democratic districts also hold more favorable views of their local government's performance. Chapter 4, therefore, demonstrates an empirical link between deliberative democracy at the school district level and the way residents of urban school districts view their local government and the public goods their officials are responsible for. However, once again, the PECE Typology factors mitigate the relationship; positive evaluations of local government are best related to the districts' commitment to deliberation in places with low levels of racial conflict.

The final chapter details a qualitative analysis of what superintendents see in the actual school board setting. The chapter highlights the strategies that lead to the most effective deliberation environments. The final chapter also provides a summary of the dissertation and discusses the broader implications that arise as a result of this project. The dissertation brings a new conversation to political science, but more work needs to be done to extend the conversation further. The final chapter maps the path that the conversation around deliberative democracy, race, and local institutions needs to take. Furthermore, because of the findings from this dissertation, the final chapter also discusses the broader implication for education politics and policy.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Deliberative Democracy, Race and Representation: A New Framework for Democratic Accountability at the Local Level**

Political representation is one of the most widely studied concepts in political science. For decades, scholars have been concerned with the question of whether elected officials represent the interests of their constituents, and the extent to which constituents demand accountability from their officials (Pitkin 1967; Fenno 1977; Miller and Stokes 1963; Arnold 1992; Poole and Rosenthal 2000). The research in this area has made tremendous theoretical and empirical contributions to the study of politics and government, but these contributions exist almost exclusively at the national level – emerging primarily from studies of Congress.

Meanwhile, the literature on local politics as a whole has little to say about democratic accountability. A small subset of the emerging literature, however, has begun demonstrating that local level democratic accountability can occur under certain conditions such as: institutionalized citizen participation (Fung 2009), increased voter turnout (Hajnal 2009), and reduced population size (Oliver et al. 2012). However, scholars have yet to build upon these contributions to formulate a normatively sound and empirically tested theory of democratic representation, despite the fact that across thousands of cities municipal-level public officials get elected to represent millions of Americans every year. This chapter aims to address the void in the study of local and urban politics by introducing a framework for democratic representation at the local level. Drawing from the work on democratic theory, this new framework of local representation is based upon the theory of deliberative democracy, which calls for the conceptualization of a discourse-driven model of political representation. Ultimately, this chapter argues that local residents should best achieve democratic accountability from their representatives when public deliberations take place regularly.

This chapter begins by defining and describing the deliberative democracy theory, which means highlighting the key principles on which to evaluate the theory's effectiveness. The next section engages the criticisms of deliberative democracy, both on theoretical and empirical grounds, particularly its main criticism of having an inability to withstand the problems associated with racial differences in communities. After engaging criticisms, I propose a new conceptual model of deliberative democracy featuring a typology that outlines the expectations of deliberative democracy under different social - particularly racial - dynamics. Through the typology, this chapter argues that deliberative democracy should best produce representative democracy when localities experience low levels of pre-existing (racial) conflict and high levels of political empowerment (equally distributed across racial groups).

### **What is Deliberative Democracy?**

At its core, deliberative democracy is the idea that discourse is central to the process in which elected officials make decisions that represent the preferences of their constituents (Fishkin 2011). Distinguished from a broad idea of communication, deliberation features disagreement between actors based on individuals' respective experiences (Gutmann and Thompson 2009). However, citizens and their representatives – assuming they all agree to pursue the collective group interest or “common good” – exchange stories and information used to support their respective resolutions. The information exchange opens the opportunity for debate and ultimately persuasion based on the strength or validity of the various pieces of information brought to the discourse (Dryzek 2000). The persuasion process leads to a legally binding collective decision agreed

upon by the entire public. Ultimately, both citizens and representatives who win the persuasion debate must justify their decisions by providing reasons for their final resolutions, while responding to concerns others have with the final outcome (Gutmann and Thompson 2009).

Deliberative democrats – both citizens and representatives – primarily base their discourse around a process of collective reasoning. Amy Gutmann and Dennis Thompson (2009), perhaps, articulate it best in stating that the arguments made during deliberative discourse should “appeal to principles that individuals who are trying to find fair terms of cooperation cannot reasonably reject” (p.3). This distinction prevents reasoning from becoming a function of procedure (majority rules) and it should prevent the discourse from favoring an individual or specific group’s narrow interests (maintains the focus on how the issue works toward the greater good). Instead, free and equal citizens should accept the reasons that emerge through the discourse.

The moral claim attached to deliberative democracy lies not in the virtue of the decision but the process by which the decision is made. Democracy rooted in deliberation treats citizens as autonomous agents, who take part in the governance of their own society either directly or through their representatives. This agency and participation takes precedence over the morality of the actual decisions reached. In deliberative democracy, it is important that citizens present and respond to reasons, or demand that their representatives do so, with the aim of justifying the laws under which they must live together. The reasons are meant to both produce a justifiable decision and to express the value of mutual respect. It is not enough that citizens assert their power through interest group bargaining or voting in elections because those forms of participation do not require

officials to explain their decisions. Deliberative democracy requires justification, which establishes a governments' respect for its citizens as well as democratic accountability.

This process of discourse-based democratic representation fits best in the local or municipal setting. For democratic deliberation to foster democratic accountability, citizens must agree upon some sort of common good and, ultimately, a collective decision. As a result, it is important to limit the scope of the issues because as the scope of an issue increases, it becomes more difficult for citizens to reach agreement (Schattsneider 1960), and compared to national or even statewide political debates, the local level provides the narrowest scope (Oliver 2012). Deliberative democracy also relies on contact both between fellow citizens as well as between citizens and their representatives. At the local level, citizens find themselves in closer proximity to other individuals, which increases the opportunity for individuals to engage in discourse (Putnam 2000). Also, government officials at the local level (as well as community-based organizations) are best positioned to respond to the small-scale concerns of citizens (Frasure-Yokley 2015). By focusing on the local level, one can begin to examine the true potential of deliberative democracy. However, before this chapter focuses on the local context, it will first describe in more depth the principles of the theory itself.

### **The Principles of Deliberative Democracy**

Deliberative theorists largely agree that conceptions of democracy based on self or group-interest, preference aggregation, or group competition are insufficient (Habermas 1984; Benhabib 1996; Elster 1998;). These alternative methods do not take seriously the process of justifying to one's fellow citizens the laws that they live under. This overarching



agreement amongst theorists of deliberative democracy has led them to highlight core principles that are central to the framework: 1) disagreement 2) diversity 3) information exchange 4) shared interest or “common good” 5) collective decision-making 6) mutual justification (Habermas 1984; Cohen 1997; Dryzek 2000; Guttman and Thompson 2009). Each principle makes a specific contribution, and while deliberative democracy can still take place in the absence of any one of these principles, the process achieves optimal substantive representation when all six are practiced.

### *i. Disagreement*

Theorists describe disagreement as a temporal phenomenon in place to provide the impetus for deliberation. However, they conceptualize this initial, ephemeral disagreement as a relatively natural occurrence. By virtue of the fact that individuals have different personal experiences, discourse between citizens should prompt disagreement between them based on the differences in those experiences. That discourse must, however, be equally interpretable across discussants. As Habermas frames it, “the conditions of validity of symbolic expressions refer to a background knowledge intersubjectively shared by a communication community.” Deliberation is very much an active process in that, “every disagreement presents a challenge to the [respective] lifeworld backgrounds [within the community]” (Habermas 1984, p. 13). Disagreement happens as members of the public offer varying viewpoints, which are all equally validated by the institution.

Habermas suggests that the initial disagreement should occur through a larger process of collective reasoning. At the site of communication, individual members of a public should attempt to make claims about public affairs based on knowledge acquired

through their own unique experiences. Because those experiences differ from person-to-person, any dialogue about these experiences naturally results in disagreement.

Disagreement occurs through dialogue that includes both members of the public and administrators, and any instance of disagreement could begin with any combination of members of the public and administrators engaging in conflict. However, deliberative democracy is not equipped to handle outside conflict filtering into the current discourse (Fung 2009). Therefore, the disagreement must remain centered on how individuals' different experiences relate to the current topic of discussion.

## *ii. Diversity*

The differences in experiences foster disagreement, but diversity in members of the public establish these differences in experience. What goes somewhat understated in Habermas's framework is the importance of individuals actively perceiving those differences in experiences amongst themselves. If deliberation relies on discourse between individuals with different life experiences, the involvement of people from diverse backgrounds should be foundational. Diversity, particularly in terms of social identity, should in theory position individuals to perceive the differences in experience amongst themselves. For example, all individuals in a public hearing may be unique in some way, but if they all prescribed to the same social identity, they may not recognize or acknowledge their differences. Instead, identity homogeneity may push the assumption that those individuals have the same experiences, and as this assumption becomes stronger, the opportunity for disagreement – and consequently, deliberation – lessens.

Diversity emerges not only in the disagreement, but also through attempts to develop the best possible solution. In Habermas's view, a public reaches the most well reasoned decision by engaging with as much information as possible. This information comes from the diverse experiences of the citizenry. Habermas calls this information offered to the discourse "validity claims," and he argues that "diversity of various linguistic realizations" (p. 41) or variation in cultural backgrounds that often manifest themselves through language, increase the amount of validity claims available to any given discourse. Increasing the amount of information or validity claims available during discourse provides more tools with which to form reasoned arguments for decisions to be collectively agreed upon. Habermas does acknowledge that diversity in linguistic realizations comes with costs in that discourse has to be "intersubjective" or understood across backgrounds. Thus, while diversity strengthens discourse, institutions must eliminate barriers to communication across cultures in a way that maintains equal power across deliberators.

Diversity is an important component to creating substantive representation. As public officials make decisions based on reasons derived from validity claims, the decisions that feature more diversity should produce decisions that reflect the needs of the entire community. For example, if within a diverse community the deliberators are a homogenous group, those deliberators will most likely reach a decision that benefits individuals with experiences more similar to the deliberators than members of the larger public who have dissimilar experiences. However, if a diverse group of people comes together at the deliberation table, the decisions should better reflect the collective interest of a diverse public. This, once again, assumes that differences in experience manifest into social

identity cleavages, but accepting this assumption, diversity is a pivotal aspect of success with deliberative democracy.

### iii. Information Exchange

As the emphasis on disagreement and diversity reveals, deliberative democracy makes argumentation central to the quest for a rational decision. In its most basic sense, an argument “contains reasons or grounds that are connected in a systematic way with the validity claim of a problematic expression” (Habermas 1987, p. 18). Thus, argumentation, at least within the deliberative democracy framework, refers to the opportunity for the expression, and ultimately the exchange, of validity claims. The validity of the claims emerges from the “life worlds” or differing experiences of the members of the public as well as the stability of the reasoning attached to those experiences.

The goal of deliberation is for any given public to reach the most well reasoned decision possible. This reasoning takes place through the opportunity for persuasion, but the persuasion occurs through the use and exchange of information about individuals’ various personal orientations to the topic of discussion. Habermas emphasizes the exchange aspect of communication in order to remove the element of zero-sum competition. With democratic deliberation, discourse should produce a mutual or shared understanding amongst the public. This shared understanding can be best reached by members of the public attempting to persuade one another by using all of the information shared across members of the community. In short, the exchange of information coupled with opportunities for persuasion create the opening for shared understanding to develop in route to a collectively agreed upon decision.

The information exchange has to be equitable across members of the public. Habermas denotes a tremendous amount of attention to the importance of adjusting for the structural imbalance in the discourse. Habermas calls for jurisdictions to install constitutional, or procedural, mechanisms to ensure that all information can be considered equally. He was aware of the way in which social and cultural dynamics could bias conversation. Consequently, Habermas presents a liberal stance on knowledge by considering any expression from one's experience to be potential information. Habermas only makes two criteria for knowledge. First, it must be useful towards a larger reasoning process. Second, information must also be interpretable or understandable across "life worlds" or cultures. Information can be exchanged in an equitable way if institutions commit themselves to being open towards extracting the reasoning capacity from all information as well as interpreting information across the idiosyncrasies of language.

#### *iv. Shared Interest or "Common Good"*

Where individuals locate their interests is extremely important to the deliberation process. Habermas engages the role of individual interests through his emphasis on the need for the validity claims within the discourse to converge around, "an interest common to all those affected," by the outcome of the discourse. Pursing a shared interest, as opposed to a collection of individual goals, reinforces the overall rationality of the decision. Assuming that all participants desire the most reasoned decision, the claim that meets the approval of all those affected should neutralize individual motives, leaving only the desire for a public to seek the truth, cooperatively.

Shared interest is also the primary mechanism that holds the communication together once the initial disagreement occurs. Without the shared agreement to pursue a community-wide interest or “common good,” argumentation discourages participation in deliberation. If individuals do not pursue a shared public interest, they become a collection of individuals pursuing separate individual interests, or pluralists, who compete for access to the political agenda. Under a pluralism framework, policy decisions are largely a function of zero-sum games in which argumentation produces winners and losers. If one’s validity claims do not survive debate, there is no incentive to participate in discourse around an idea that does not factor in their perceived interests. However, once individuals agree to pursue a shared interest, disagreement occurs, but participation across members of the public should remain in tact.

#### *v. Collective Decision-Making*

Habermasian discourses have a procedural component to them. Habermas conceptualizes a process in which institutional or cultural mechanisms are in place to ensure that decisions are made collectively, although the Cohen’s (1989) conception of an ideal democracy provides a more detailed development; individuals with the capacity to speak and act – or those with access to the proper intersubjective background information – must not be excluded from deliberation. Participants should have equal opportunity to introduce information and arguments as well as contest existing claims. People also have the right to contest the very procedures guiding the deliberation process, and the entire discourse itself must occur publicly. Together, these procedures make for a process aimed at ensuring that any legally binding decision reached within a community is made

collectively with members of the public involved. Involving citizens in the policy-making process creates the opportunity for citizens to enforce democratic accountability from their representatives.

With an emphasis on procedure and discourse, Habermas develops this notion of “communicative action” to describe the normative parameters for collective decision-making through democratic deliberation. Communicative action occurs when “actors seek to reach an understanding about the action situation and their plans of action in order to coordinate their actions by way of agreement.” The action Habermas refers to could be either legal or non-political collective action. He makes sure to highlight the idea that discourse in itself is a form of action. The process of sharing information, persuading others, and reaching a shared understanding is an active process that requires effort on behalf of members of the public, administrators, and the institution itself. Communicative action is not an inevitable phenomenon, but through the right procedures and incentives, collective decisions that reflect the interest of the entire community can emerge.

Communicative action, along with relying on the procedural aspect to facilitate the discourse, also looks to the legally-binding aspect of the process to motivate participation. The primary question that often emerges during debates about deliberative democracy is: why would people choose to deliberate? Habermas’s framework involves individual members of the public having the civil right to refrain from participation. However, individuals should choose to participate because of their perceived stake in the outcome of discourse. When discourse has the ability to become legally-binding policy, individuals become interested in sharing their respective validity claims, engaging in acts of persuasion, and being a part of the final collective decision.

#### vi. Mutual Justification

While the communicative action aspect of deliberative democracy relies on legal legitimacy, that legitimacy establishes itself through mutual justification. Legitimacy is not simply an empirical matter. For a law to be legitimate, it is neither necessary nor sufficient that most citizens feel that it is. However, it is necessary that individuals take part in a process aimed at producing laws that are mutually justifiable to citizens (Gutmann & Thompson 2009). Thus, the primary conceptual criterion for legitimacy is mutual justification – a process through which individuals present and respond to reasons intended to justify a political decision.

Along with cementing the legitimacy of the decision, mutual justification also creates more opportunity for reasoning. Disagreement and the exchanging of information result in the chance for members of a public to begin reasoning toward a decision. Mutual justification allows disagreement and information exchange to continue even after the final decision has been reached. As the administration justifies the final decision back to the public, members of the public have space to further the discourse by introducing more information or reformulating pre-existing counter arguments. Ultimately, the space for additional information and argumentation further enhances the likelihood of a public's decision being as well reasoned as possible.

#### **Will Deliberative Democracy Always Work?**

Theorists have remained divided on the prospects of democratic deliberation turning conflict into agreement. Some theorists strongly recommend deliberation as a



method for resolving conflict. For instance, Barber (1984) offers support for the idea that deliberation can take disparate individuals who desire selfish goods and transform them into a community of active citizens pursuing common goods and public interests. John Stuart Mill (1859) considered deliberation to be the chief virtue of democracy because it allowed the meeting of opposing considerations. According to Bickford (1996), Aristotle favored deliberation as a way to ensure more sound public decisions and enhance people's commitment to peacefully solving conflict. Warren (1996) argues that deliberation should draw interest from citizens since the issues most likely to initiate conflict should be issues that citizens care about most. Even when it fails to achieve agreement, deliberation can broaden people's perspectives by forcing them to take into account an abhorrent point of view, if only to figure out how to persuade their opponents (Thompson & Gutmann 1996).

Meanwhile, theorists have also been skeptical of the ability of deliberation to enhance democratic accountability, particularly as the size of the public increases. Cohen (1989) questions whether institutions can commit to a framework that fosters will formation between free, equal, and autonomous citizens. In particular, she is concerned with the ability of institutions to create an environment for public deliberation while being bound to private commitments. Similarly, Dryzek (2000) finds himself at odds with the ability of institutions to equalize underlying power structure imbalances existing within deliberation environments (he instead believes civil society should play a larger role). Mansbridge (1983) argues that deliberation could lead to "adversary democracy" in which discourse exacerbates conflict. Adding empiricism to the critique, Mendelberg & Oleske (2000) argue that consensus and the pursuit of common interest can be disrupted by heterogeneity within the group of deliberators. As a whole, critics have been suspicious of

the ability of the deliberative democracy framework to create equal discourse in communities with pre-existing issues regarding economic inequality or social biases.

Scholars interested in deliberative democracy from an empirical stance have found positive evidence that supports the intuition of political theorists. For instance, a line of research that relies on a combination of polling and small focus groups finds that allowing citizens to deliberate increases their political knowledge, reduces opinion polarization, and fosters opinion change (Fishkin 2003; Luskin et al. 2002; Fishkin & Luskin 2005). Existing work also demonstrates that institutionalized deliberation motivates citizen participation, particularly individuals who traditionally abstain from politics (Fung 2009; Fung & Wright 2001; Leib 2010; Ackerman & Fishkin 2004; Neblo et al. 2010; Esterling et al. 2011). Providing citizens with the opportunity to engage in democratic deliberation appears to make them more informed about political issues and more motivated to participate in the political process. Empirically, deliberation provides hope for the prospect of representative democracy. With a vast majority of these scholars studying small groups or small-scale political debate, the evidence suggests that deliberative democracy should be particularly useful for the study of representation in local politics.

While the more recent work on deliberative democracy generates optimism, the concerns with diversity, inclusion, and equality raised by the critics still linger. In studying community policing and school governance in Chicago, Fung (2009) devotes the most attention to the issues that arise when race becomes a factor. Fung demonstrates that race can be a barrier for minority communities seeking to access resources needed to deliberate effectively on a consistent basis. This dissertation project extends Fung's critique further by considering situations in which racial issues (or other social cleavages), in themselves,

become a source of conflict. Fung assumes that the “judicious allocation of power, function, and responsibility between central authorities and local bodies can mitigate these pathologies of inequality, parochialism, and group-think.” He is correct in that maintaining a balance between a central administration and local groups gives marginalized citizens a potential mechanism through which to enforce accountability even amongst a public bias against their interests and concerns. However, it also remains unclear whether members of historically marginalized groups can be incorporated into the deliberation process, and if so, under what conditions does this incorporation take place? As a result of the opportunity in place to build on the work of Fung and others, this project introduces a theoretical framework that creates expectations for democratic deliberation as the social dynamics within and around the community change.

### **A Conceptual Framework of Deliberative Democracy, Race, and Local Politics**

Overall, this chapter argues that deliberative democracy serves as the most optimal framework for theorizing about democratic representation in local politics. This chapter has argued that deliberative democracy positions local publics to make well-reasoned collective decisions by engaging Habermas’s theory of communicative action. This chapter has also argued that the social and political conditions surrounding a community shape the capacity for democratic deliberation to occur. In this section, I systematize the surrounding conditions in arguing that both pre-existing conflict and the level of political empowerment within a community influence the extent to which localities use deliberation to arrive at well-reasoned collective decisions.

### *Pre-Existing Conflict*

Conflict initiates democratic deliberation. Without some sort of disagreement, the deliberation process does not begin, and collective decisions, even with an involved citizenry, become products of groupthink. However, the conflict should lead to substantive deliberation when it originates within the scope of the subject or issue about which the deliberation occurs. This project considers pre-existing conflict to be any sort of disagreement between members of a community that persist over time. Pre-existing conflict creates a latent tension between individuals based on their position on the issue being discussed. Particularly when considering local politics, scholars consistently highlight the ways in which local leaders and institutions rely on the racial divides to achieve political gains (Hajnal 2010; Frasure-Yokley 2015; Kaufmann 2004; Sonenshein 1993; Orr 1999; Henig et al. 2001). These studies largely demonstrate that, when pre-existing conflict drives political behavior, representation occurs mostly on descriptive terms. However, the research on local politics implies that pre-existing racial conflict complicates the prospect of substantive representation through deliberation.

Along with the implications from the literature, the sheer logic of the framework suggests that pre-existing conflict should stand at odds with deliberative democracy. When disagreement stems from tensions that divide a community before individuals enter the deliberation space, the principles of democratic deliberation unravel. If participants see themselves as at odds with one another along social dimensions, they become less likely to agree on a common good in which to pursue. For instance, if a school district is in conflict along racial and ethnic lines due to a lingering suspicion regarding unfair treatment of students based on race or ethnicity, any attempt to deliberate over a specific district-wide

issue, like the implementation of a new after-school program, could result in polarization along racial and ethnic lines. This polarization would come from the inability of individuals on different sides of the tension over fair treatment to agree on the type of program that aligns with the common good of the district. Deliberators who believe that students of their racial or ethnic group are being treated fairly by the district may see a new after-school program as in line with the common good of the district. However, deliberation participants with ties to schools with experiencing racial conflict may show suspicion towards the idea that a new after-school programs would benefit the district as a whole rather than giving even more resources to a certain group of students. Therefore, the pre-existing conflict functioning through tension over racial segregation would disrupt the ability of the entire community of deliberators to agree on the common good.

The problem of pre-existing conflict extends to the other principles of deliberation as well. The sharing of information during the deliberation process depends on individuals being open to exchanging claims of reason. Pre-existing conflict complicates information sharing by creating a source of cognitive dissonance; individuals would merely reject any information that they could interpret as running counter to their stance on the pre-existing conflict issue. Returning to the example of a new after-school program, members of the district would reflexively accept or reject opinions on funding for a new after-school program based on their perception of where the opinion provider stands on racial pre-existing racial tension. Without individuals willing to accept additional information, the prospect of a community making collective decisions also diminishes. Collective decisions, within the deliberative democracy framework, depend on shared learning and persuasion, and neither act can take place under a polarized environment.

Pre-existing conflict can jeopardize mutual justification as well, which is the final, and arguably most important, principle of deliberative democracy. Mutual justification involves the use of the other principles working simultaneously. In having administrators justify the final decision back to the public, they open the opportunity for: a reconfiguration of how the issue relates to the common good, additional information sharing, and added opportunities to re-make collective decisions. As previously discussed, pre-existing conflict becomes a barrier for these events. Pre-existing conflict can also influence how administrations perform mutual justification. When the administration senses the kind of latent hostility that pre-existing conflict fosters, they may be more inclined to conduct mutual justification in a more clandestine manner. Administrators may strategize ways of justifying their decisions in select environments with the intention of keeping the pre-existing conflict away from the current discussion. Doing so, however, leads to the exclusion of certain groups, particularly groups who have the least political influence over the local officials. Circling back to the after-school program example, school board members and the superintendent may try to target their attempts at justifying the final decision on developing a new after-school program towards parts of the community where the certain racial groups are located. If whites in the city – for example - were to vote in local elections and donate to candidates at higher rates than minority residents, the local officials will most likely appeal to this more influential group if the community, as a whole, finds itself split over pre-existing racial conflict.

*Empowerment*

Along with an absence of pre-existing conflict, the level of political empowerment within a community also dictates the success or failure of democratic deliberation. In this project, I refer to Bobo and Gilliam's (1990) notion of political empowerment, which defines the concept as "the extent to which a group has achieved significant representation and influence in political decision-making." Like the idea of deliberative democracy, political empowerment involves community members playing a significant role in political decision-making, and as a result, both processes rely on citizen participation. However, whereas deliberative democracy looks to individuals' various stakes in the outcome as the motivation to participate, empowerment motivates citizen participation by building "political trust, efficacy, and knowledge through gains in representation" (Bobo & Gilliam 1990). Similar to pre-existing conflict, political empowerment points to a factor that extends beyond the scope of deliberation proceedings. In order for participation in democratic deliberation to feature substantial and fair citizen engagement, political empowerment must be in place, particularly empowerment amongst historically marginalized groups within the community.

The research on minority empowerment following Bobo and Gilliam demonstrates the way in which empowerment becomes detached from descriptive representation over time. Studying Los Angeles, Gilliam (1996) shows that empowerment relies on symbolic elections and descriptive representation to translate into greater incorporation of city residents into the existing regime. Gilliam and Kaufmann (1998) demonstrate that this relationship between participation and symbolic politics or co-ethnic descriptive representation wane over time due to feelings of political alienation. Spence and McClerking (2010) estimate that black political participation is highest in cities with short-

term black mayors. Taken as a whole, the literature on black political empowerment suggests that, while the symbolic representation motivates minorities to become more engaged in municipal politics, that participation only sustains itself to the extent that minorities feel incorporated into the decision-making process. The research on black empowerment also leaves open a set of questions that become extremely important for developing a theoretical framework around democracy in urban cities.

For instance, political participation in urban cities requires a multi-racial, multi-ethnic approach, but the work on empowerment largely restricts itself to political participation amongst Black voters compared to whites. The vast majority of the primary studies of political empowerment only explore differences in political participation rates between Black and White voters (Bobo and Gilliam 1990; Gilliam and Kaufmann 1998; Spence and McClerking (2010). Only Franklin Gilliam's (1996) study of Los Angeles examines African Americans in comparison to Whites and Latinx, but he finds low levels of empowerment existing among the latter group, which he attributes to their political alienation from the political regime led by African-American Mayor Tom Bradley. Yet, recent work on local level political participation suggests that political empowerment expands well beyond motivating Black voters, particularly as the more Latinx candidates are competitively seeking local office (Barreto et al. 2005; Barreto 2007; Abrajano and Alvarez 2005). This emergence of Latinx officeholders and resulting Latinx political empowerment has at times resulted in conflict not just between Latinx and Whites but also Latinx and African Americans (Kaufmann 2003a;2003b; McClain and Karnig 1990). With relevant research revealing the complexity of interracial politics in urban cities, it is



important to update the political empowerment framework to consider new empirical and theoretical developments.

Along with an inattention to multiracial politics, the work on political empowerment also restricts its analysis of political participation by largely relying on voting behavior as the primary method for evaluating engagement. However, thinking about empowerment beyond voting is critical for better understanding the true effect of symbolic representation. The literature suggests that formal participation rates waver as the tenure of the co-ethnic regime increases. However, despite the decrease, a significant portion of local residents remains “empowered” and committed to the political process. In fact, the research suggests that voters increase in sophistication following a rise in empowerment. In the original framework, Bobo and Gilliam (1990) argue that Blacks’ desire to influence the decision-making process creates the environment through which descriptive representation motivates political participation. Gilliam and Kaufmann (1998) cite voters’ recognition that co-ethnic candidates were, for various reasons, unable to meet their policy demands as the primary reason for the decline in political participation. Spence and McClerking (2009) suggest that even when Black voters become disenchanted with Black officials at the local level, their support for co-ethnic candidates in national elections increases. If political empowerment motivates voters to be involved in the political process, empowerment needs to be placed within the context of a political participation framework that extends beyond voting in elections.

Deliberative democracy provides the best lens through which to re-conceptualize political empowerment. Studies of urban cities must confront the arduous task of creating expectations for political behavior in densely populated environments that feature a vast

array of racial and ethnic diversity. Through the emphasis on diversity in experiences and information, deliberation encourages dialogue and agreement across the multiplicity of racial and ethnic lines that exist in an urban city. Deliberation not only allows diversity into the conversation; the process is intended to equally validate the perspectives and experiences of individuals of different backgrounds. In elections, diversity only occurs to the extent that the aggregated preferences of historically marginalized groups outnumber the preferences of those who have historically held political power. Thus, individuals who become empowered by descriptive representation can utilize deliberation as a process through which to articulate their goals and concerns regardless of the size of their racial or ethnic group within the electorate.

Deliberative democracy, however, performs best when racial and ethnic groups within an urban city experience high and evenly distributed levels of political empowerment. Having uniformly low or uneven levels of political empowerment can negatively affect the principles of deliberative democracy. For instance, the initial disagreement relies heavily on an empowered citizenry. If citizens lack a sense of efficacy towards the political system or political knowledge of how governments make policy, they may be significantly less inclined to speak out on an issue; therefore, preventing disagreement. The uneven empowerment scenario is of particular importance to the diversity element of initial disagreement. If empowerment is uneven across groups within the community, there may be no initial disagreement because the empowered few may all agree on an issue at the outset of deliberation. Therefore, the lack of diversity at the deliberation table could stymie the ability of democratic discourse to take place altogether.

Empowerment also has the capacity to dictate information sharing as well. Similar to the problem it creates for initial disagreement, citizens must be willing or empowered enough to offer claims of reason to the discussion. However, empowerment must be equally distributed in order to prevent community members from accepting claims as reasonable based on someone's ability to use an advantage in political knowledge to express a claim through more accessible language. Empowerment, therefore, influences the extent to which individuals both disperse and receive information.

Collective decision-making, pursuit of the common good, and mutual justification all depend on empowerment as well. If the overall empowerment level in a community is low, administrators will most likely make decisions without any citizen input. These decisions are also more likely to reflect the interests of the officials instead of the common good of the community as a whole. Furthermore, citizens – when empowerment is low - will be disinterested in any kind of justification of the final decision. If the empowerment levels are unequal across groups within the community, collective decisions will be made between administrators and the groups with the empowerment advantage. Furthermore, the decisions will most likely reflect the interests of the most empowered group as opposed to the common good of the community as a whole. Meanwhile, any efforts by administrators to justify those decisions will be targeted towards the more empowered groups.

### *Pre-Existing Conflict and Empowerment Typology*

Deliberative democracy should produce substantive representation under the right conditions. Particularly, this section has argued that the presence of pre-existing conflict

and political empowerment dictate the extent to which democratic deliberation leads to quality democratic representation. This subsection offers the Pre-Existing Conflict and Empowerment (PECE) Typology, which describes the parameters of the two conditions working simultaneously. PECE is a four-scenario typology as Figure 2.1 displays. The most optimal scenario is a community with low levels of pre-existing conflict and high political empowerment. Without major pre-existing conflict, disagreement should emerge from within the deliberation setting and communication lines between the various deliberators, both community members and local officials, should be open. The high level of political empowerment should ensure citizen participation in the decision-making process. Assuming that empowerment is distributed equally across the community, minority groups within the municipality should have agency throughout the decision-making process. When a city experiences low levels of pre-existing conflict and high (and equal) levels of political empowerment, it becomes fertile ground for citizen engagement to translate into collective decisions that represent the best interest of the entire the community.

The most difficult terrain for deliberative democrats to navigate is the opposite scenario: high pre-existing conflict with low empowerment. When a locality experiences high levels of pre-existing conflict, deliberation becomes significantly more likely to result in polarization as opposed to collective agreement. Polarization occurs because individuals interpret the information emerging in the discourse through the lens of their position on the pre-existing conflict, which invites disagreement. While high pre-existing conflict influences the conversation, low empowerment weakens the likelihood that individuals will even participate in any sort of deliberation whatsoever. Thus, with low citizen

engagement and a strong possibility of polarization, high pre-existing conflict and low political empowerment make for the least optimal scenario for deliberative democracy.

The remaining two scenarios reside in-between the most and least optimal possibilities. The first of the two second least optimal scenarios involves a space experiencing a low level of pre-existing conflict as well as low political empowerment. While the lack of pre-existing conflict increases the likelihood of spaces reaching a collective decision, the low level of empowerment suggests that those decisions will most likely reflect the interests of an engaged few. The other second least optimal outcome involves the opposite scenario: high pre-existing conflict and high political empowerment. High empowerment motivates a high level of participation in the deliberation process; however, if pre-existing conflict is also high, then that participation would result in intense debate, extreme polarization, and strong disagreement across the community. Therefore the second least optimal scenarios should lead to either narrowly interested decisions or democratic dysfunction.

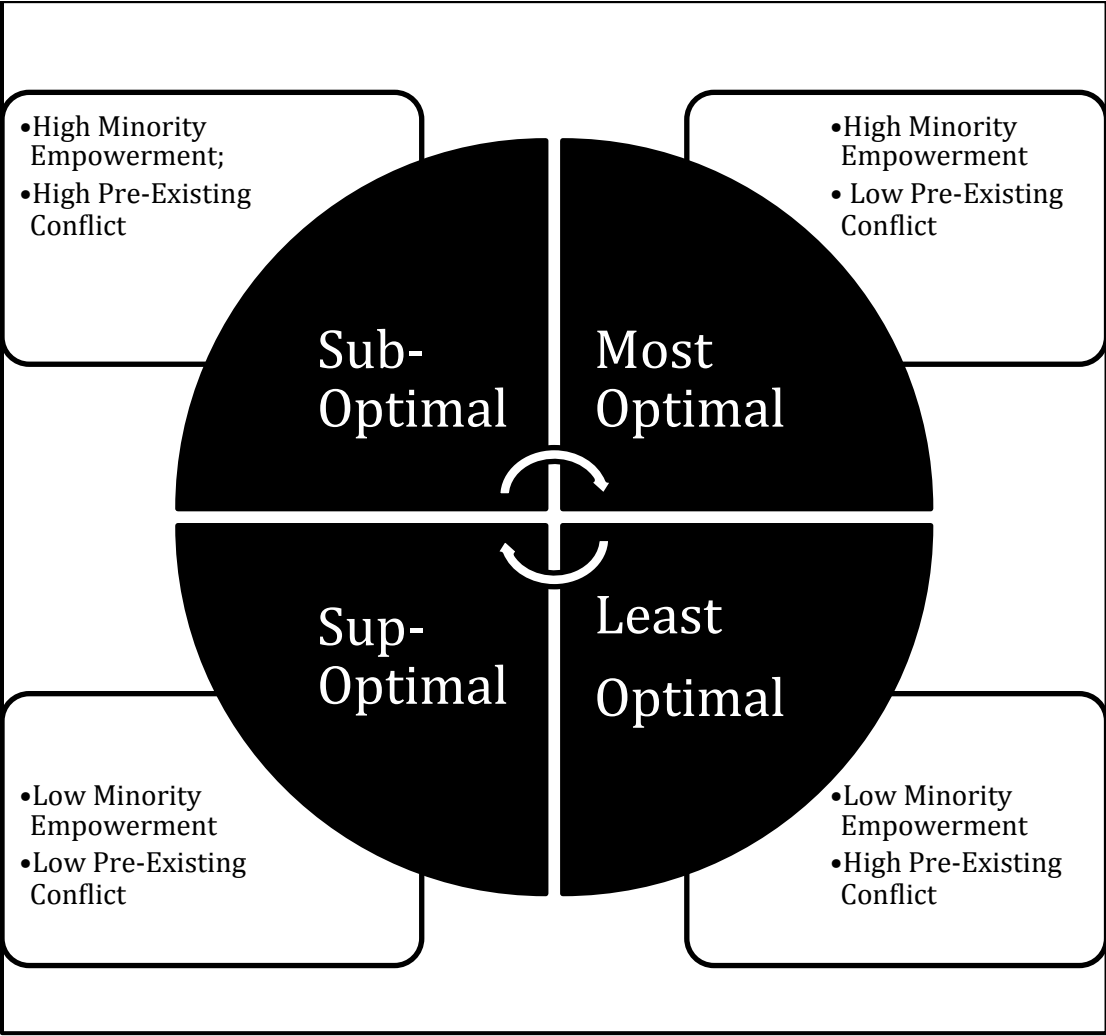
## **Conclusion**

This chapter has argued that deliberative democracy, as a framework, is important for conceptualizing substantive democratic representation in local politics. I have highlighted the core principles of deliberative democracy: diversity, disagreement, information exchange, shared interest, collective decision-making, and mutual justification. Each of these principles have their own unique role in the larger composition of the democratic deliberation process, and the explanation of their roles in this chapter stem directly from the way in which the concepts are conceptualized by political theorists.

The more recent literature on deliberative democracy contains noteworthy criticisms of the framework. In particular, scholars have raised the critique – on both theoretical and empirical grounds – that deliberative democracy may not actually lead to free and equal decision-making. Instead, deliberation could foster strong disagreement or another scenario in which inherent imbalances in power decide the outcome of events. Understanding the validity of these critiques, this chapter incorporates the negative alternatives into a typology, which describes the expected outcome of deliberation under different social conditions within a locality. The primary objective of the typology is to better understand the way in which the social cleavages, particularly racial dynamics, of a local area influence the effectiveness of deliberative democracy. This chapter argues that deliberative democracy works best when communities minimize racial tension, while equitably increasing the political empowerment of the citizenry.

The remaining chapters will empirically test the relationship between deliberative democracy and the political behavior of both the public officials as well as the non-elites of the urban community. The next chapter in particular focuses on whether urban school board superintendents, who live in spaces that practice democratic deliberation more regularly, better prioritize issues important to the districts. This next chapter also tests the role of race in the potential relationship between deliberation and superintendent policy priorities by also testing the extent to which the PECE Typology mitigates that potential relationship. The next chapter also introduces the scope of this project, Los Angeles, as well as the unit of analysis: school districts.

**Figure 2. 1: The Pre-Existing Conflict and Empowerment (PECE) Typology**



**Notes:** This typology is a purely theoretical model, and the typology originates through this dissertation project.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Urban Representation Through Deliberation: A Theory and Test of Deliberative Democracy at the Local Level**



America is a nation of urban enclaves. Today, over 80 percent of the 320 million people in the United States live in urban cities.<sup>13</sup> For much of the past half century, urbanization largely resulted in residents settling into suburbs. However, the most recent trend has led to an increase in population size within dense urban spaces spearheaded by the migration of both young adults and retirees (Benetsky et al. 2015; Frey 2013). This particular kind of growth has tremendous implications for the political landscape: young adults have been a major target for mobilization during the last three presidential election cycles and retirees have been the most consistent voting demographic group for decades. Along with this new group of migrants, urban cities also still have a high concentration of racial and ethnic minorities amongst its large population, and traditionally minorities have utilized their size to influence urban governance in a way that they are unable to at the national level. As a result, the current demographic landscape of urban cities features a population who should, in theory, be extremely interested in pushing for democratic accountability from their local representatives. Despite the sociopolitical arrangement of urban cities, political scientists know little about how political representation operates in these environments. Most of the commentary on major metropolitan cities consists largely of journalistic speculation and analytical policy recommendations. In these critiques, urban cities are largely lambasted as overly-complicated political spaces with enormous obstacles to both 1) interpersonal contact and 2) citizen interest in politics (Levine 2015; Ross and Levine 2011). As a result, social scientists have yet to systematically analyze how democratic accountability functions in large urban cities.

---

<sup>13</sup> “2010 Census Urban Area Facts” *U.S. Census*.  
<http://www.census.gov/geo/reference/ua/uafacts.html>

Nowhere is the absence more apparent than with respect to substantive representation. Every day, thousands of local actors – such as: big city mayors, city council members, school board members, and a host of other officials – make decisions that impact their constituents and their communities. Although these decisions represent arguably the most immediate experience with democratic representation for a majority of Americans, political scientists have little understanding of how well local officials are actually held accountable by their constituents. Among the voluminous literature on representation, the vast majority of articles and books have concentrated on members of Congress.<sup>14</sup> Of the relatively smaller body of literature on representation in large urban cities, most studies have focused on local elections without much analysis on how much democratic accountability exists beyond casting ballots (Berry and Howell 2007; Green et al. 2003).

Substantive representation has also gained little prominence in the field of urban politics. Beyond research on political machines and ethnic coalitions in large cities (Erie and Kogan 2016; Jones-Correa 2001), previous studies of urban politics have primarily relegated representation to descriptive identity-based politics (Hajnal 2010). Meanwhile, the most prominent studies of local politics have largely focused on governance in big cities, whether through elite-driven politics (Dahl 1961; Stone 1989), municipal competition (Peterson 1981), symbolic representation through minority empowerment (Browning et al. 1997; Welch and Bledsoe 1988; Bobo and Gilliam 1990), or political ideology (Ramakrishnan and Wong 2010) with little to say about substantive representation. Recent studies of local politics in suburbs suggest that accountability at the

---

<sup>14</sup> Berry and Howell (2007) estimate that 94% of articles published between 1980 and 2000 in the top-5 ranked political science journals focused on presidential, congressional, or gubernatorial elections.

local level is possible, but the evidence is relegated to municipalities where the scope is small and the actors are interdependent (Oliver 2001; Frasure-Yokley 2015).

This paucity of research actually reflects a much larger gulf in the political science literature on democracy in a variety of smaller contexts. In voluntary civic associations, in many workplaces, and in countless smaller social circles within American society, people are called to voice their concerns and demand accountability from the leadership. These small governance environments may be the places where citizens learn the basics of collective decision-making (Putnam 2000), but with big cities, political scientists know very little about how responsive leaders are to their constituents, especially when partisanship and economic evaluations are not germane.

Looking to explain how democracy works within dense and diverse populations, this chapter develops and tests a new theory of representation in large urban cities – a theory based on democratic deliberation. After reviewing the literature on both representation and local governance, I question whether prevalent models of representation will be germane to large cities, and this chapter theorizes on how substantive representation at the local level should be a function of both the level of democratic discourse and the state of race relations within a community. Contrary to popular stereotypes and commonly held misconceptions, this chapter finds that local officials in big cities formulate policy concerns and priorities that are representative of the policy interests of their communities, but they do so in accordance with the level of democratic deliberation taking place in the community. Yet, the extent to which communities engage in democratic deliberation depends on citizens' political interest as

well as race relations throughout the area. From these findings, perspectives on large city politics and democratic representation are refined.

### **Representation in Big Cities**

Most of our knowledge about the way elected officials represent their constituents comes from the vast body of literature on congressional voting behavior. Scholars have explained congressional responsiveness by largely relying on three factors: partisanship, constituency contact, and electoral incentives (Miller and Stokes 1963; Fenno 1978; Mayhew 1974). There are many reasons, however, to question whether this robust model of government decision-making at the national level is applicable for large urban cities in the United States. First, issues at the local level are more specific and idiosyncratic than large-scale national policies, which disrupt the strength of political party cues (Oliver and Ha 2007). Second, due to high population density, urban cities provide a major challenge for contact between elected officials and their constituents. Lastly, big urban spaces tend to produce elections that are less competitive than national contests for office seats with less prestige than federal positions (Oliver 2012 et. al). Without strong parties, opportunities for widespread contact, and significant electoral competition, big city governance is positioned to function much differently than congressional districts.

The limited research on representation at the municipal level suggests that local officials are largely unresponsive to their constituents. Scholars tend to highlight institutional constraints when attempting to explain a lack of representation at the local level (Peterson 1981; Craw 2010; Hajnal and Troustine 2010; Trounstine 2010). These studies point to the intergovernmental nature of policy at the local level; often the federal

and state governments impose restrictions on how much control local officials have over their jurisdictions (Wong 1988; Peterson 1995). Along with institutional barriers, studies also show that political fragmentation constrains local officials as well. This issue of political fragmentation is particularly salient for urban school governance. Scholars show that democratic responsive can be comprised by the asserted interests of a variety of actors such as: teachers unions (Moe 2011), business leaders (Stone et al. 2001), and urban school reformers (Hess 2011; Hess 1999). Municipal officials have room to be unresponsive, these studies assume, due to a tendency of local residents to demonstrate low levels of political interest and participation.

A variety of studies have found competing evidence that local residents are indeed informed enough to evaluate their local officials. Arceneaux (2004) finds that citizens are able to delineate between local and other levels of government when assigning policy responsibility to elected officials. Tausanovitch and Warsaw (2014) suggest that city residents select officials that match and respond to their ideological preferences, although the relationship weakens for large cities. However, other scholarship reveals indications of representation occurring in big cities. Howell and Perry (2004) demonstrate that big city residents do formulate approval ratings of mayors in accordance with indicators of mayoral performance. Also, Stein, Ulbig, and Post (2005) show that approval ratings strongly predict candidate support in big city mayoral elections. Taken as a whole, the studies of local citizen attitudes and behavior suggest that urban city dwellers have the capacity to inform themselves about politics at the local level. Demonstrating this ability is important because it suggests that the residents of big cities also have the ability to be active and engaged in policy discussions taking place in their communities. The next

section presents a framework of how informed urban residents go about demanding accountability.

### **Urban Accountability through Discourse**

The literature on big cities largely ignores the possibility that effective substantive representation can occur. This chapter questions that omission by arguing that a reexamination of representation through the lens of democratic deliberation can produce evidence of responsiveness in a large city. Deliberative democracy is a framework suggesting that discourses between members of the public and their elected officials is central to representative decision-making (Habermas 1984; Gutmann & Thompson 2009; Fishkin 1991). This form of representation differs from the more common conceptualization of aggregating the preferences of individuals. Instead of simple majority-rule, deliberative democracy relies on the open exchange of information between individuals and, ultimately, persuasion resulting from the information exchange. Since discourse and persuasion lie at the core of the framework, institutions must provide opportunities for members of the public to deliberate with their representatives. Institutions also require that representatives justify final decisions to the public.

There are six principles identified in the literature that indicate if a governing institution utilizes a deliberative model of democratic representation. Theorists suggest that deliberation begins with *initial disagreement* on a policy issue amongst members of the public and their representatives (Habermas 1984; Gutmann and Thompson 1999). This disagreement should take place between a representatively *diverse* group of participants (Fishkin 1997; Mansbridge 1983), who all agree to pursue the *common good* of the public

as opposed to individual or group interests (Benhabib 1996; Chambers 1996; Chambers 2003; Barber 2003). Members of the public must agree to *exchange information* regarding the policy issue of discussion (Gastil 2000; Lindeman 2002). Representatives should then reach *collective decision* made in partnership with members of the public through collective reasoning (Habermas 1984; Cohen 1989). Lastly, the representatives must *justify* the final decision back to the public (Gutmann and Thompson 2009; Dryzek 2000). These six principles – *initial disagreement, diversity, pursuit of the common good, information exchange, collective decision-making, and justification* – should surface in any space committed to governing through deliberative democracy.

### **Pre Existing Conflict and Empowerment (PECE) Typology**

While deliberative democracy serves as an innovative framework for re-conceptualizing urban democratic representation, the theory also has its limitations. Several scholars have in various ways argued that attempts to deliberate could lead to greater disagreement and polarization (Mansbridge 1983; Sander 1997; Sunstein 2002; Mendelberg and Oleske 2000). These scholars remain skeptical of the ability of individuals to turn disagreement into collective decision-making, particularly in environments where people find themselves polarized due to longstanding pre-existing conflict. Scholars have also been critical of the extent to which institutions validate participation from members of historically marginalized groups in the deliberation process (Mansbridge 1983; Benhabib 1996; Dryzek 2000).

As a result of these limitations, this paper proposes a typology – Pre-Existing Conflict and Empowerment (PECE) - that establishes the theoretical expectations for

deliberative democracy when interacting with urban conditions. Figure 2.1 displays the theoretical expectations of the PECE Typology. The most optimal conditions for urban deliberative governance should involve high minority empowerment and low pre-existing conflict. Meanwhile, the least optimal conditions are low levels of minority empowerment and high levels of pre-existing conflict. Urban spaces with either high levels of minority empowerment and high pre-existing conflict or low levels of minority empowerment and low pre-existing conflict harbor equally suboptimal conditions for urban deliberative governance.

The existing research on urban politics suggests that conflict between different racial groups often determines the political behavior of people and institutions in large cities, whether it results in: the backdoor formulation of regimes (Stone, 1989), racial divisions deciding election outcomes (Kaufmann 2004; Hajnal 2010), or competition for resources (McClain 1993; Meier and Stewart 1991; Meier et al. 2004). Therefore, the effectiveness of deliberative democracy should depend on the presence of *pre-existing racial conflict* within an urban space. Specifically, parts of an urban environment that experience high levels of pre-existing racial conflict should be significantly less likely to engage in deliberative practices. Most attempts at public deliberation should result in polarization along racial and ethnic lines.

The effectiveness of urban deliberative democracy should also depend on the extent to which racial and ethnic minorities have access to *political empowerment*. Urban politics scholars have also surfaced the way in which minority access to political office empowers racial and ethnic minority residents to participate more in urban political affairs (Bobo and Gilliam 1990; Gilliam 1996; Gilliam and Kaufmann 1998; Spence and McClerking



2010). More specific to deliberative democracy, Archon Fung (2009) demonstrates the way in which empowering minorities to participate in deliberative practices motivates their overall political engagement. Specifically, Fung shows that empowering minority residents to hold official board or office positions better incorporates them into the deliberation process. Thus, parts of urban areas where the majority of residents lack descriptive representation – or access to official positions – should experience deliberative democracy being either: 1) restricted to the empowered few within the community or 2) non-existent due to the fact that there may be no citizen participation at all.

## **Hypotheses**

Information is arguably the most important aspect of the deliberative democracy framework. The process relies on the exchange of information between citizens and their representatives. Furthermore, existing empirical research has demonstrated deliberation both benefits from having an informed citizenry (Fiskin 1997; Lupia 2009; Mendelberg 2002) and fosters shared learning, which increases the overall information level of the citizenry (Iyengar et al. 2003; Fiskin and Luskin; 2005; Esterling et al. 2011; Warren and Pearse 2008). Thus, democratic deliberations should occur to the extent that the citizenry is interested and informed about politics. As a result, the first hypothesis is as follows:

*H1: As residents of a municipality show more interest in and awareness of political issues, school districts will demonstrate a stronger commitment to deliberative democracy.*

Along with information, race is also expected to play a significant role in the effectiveness of deliberative democracy. According to the PECE typology, the robustness of deliberative democracy in an urban space should depend on the extent to which urban institutions

foster high levels of political empowerment, while also minimalizing racial conflict. As a result, the second and third hypotheses are as follows:

*H2: Districts where institutional elites have positive perceptions of race relations will demonstrate a stronger commitment to deliberative democracy.*

*H3: As local racial and ethnic minority residents gain access to political empowerment, school districts will demonstrate a stronger commitment to deliberative democracy.*

Once the parameters that dictate deliberative democracy have been established, the extent to which deliberative democracy leads to substantive representation can be tested. Studies typically test representation by matching the ideology of constituents to either the ideology of their representative or the ideology of their representative's vote choice. However, relying strictly on ideology can be limiting when citizens' policy preferences do not align well across ideological dimensions. A more optimal method for accessing representation in an urban city is through evaluating the priorities and concerns of the representatives.

Theorists continue to debate the expected outcomes for public policy when deliberative democracy is deployed. However, the fact that deliberation makes the policy process more arduous for a local official is less unsettled. Dating back to Schattsneider (1950), political scientists have understood that enlarging the scope of a debate increases the conflict around any given issue. Deliberative democracy involves an increase in informed and engaged citizens participating in the policy-making process. The increase of engaged citizens should prompt local officials to show more concern toward the policy-making process. In particular, deliberation should lead officials to be concerned with the arduousness of the policy-process, given the enlarged scope, as well as more concern – in

the sense of priority – with policies that fit the needs of the district. Therefore, the final two hypotheses of this chapter go as follows:

*H4: Local officials in spaces with stronger commitments to deliberative democracy should be more likely to see the prospect of implementing policy reform as difficult.*

*H5: Local officials in spaces with stronger commitments to deliberative democracy should show greater concern towards policies affecting the municipality.*

If local officials are not having regular discursive dialogues with their constituents, the policy-making process becomes a function of the interests and concerns of the elected officials. Without deliberation the officials rely on pluralist negotiations with interests or their own ideological beliefs. Under these conditions, substantive representation only occurs to the extent that the goals of narrow interest groups or ideological beliefs of public officials embody the concerns of the members of the public. Deliberative democracy, therefore, should mark a pathway to effective substantive representation.

## **Data**

To test these hypotheses, this chapter utilizes data from the Los Angeles Region Leaders Survey (LARLS) project. LARLS has produced a survey of school board superintendents serving school districts throughout Los Angeles County, which is the most populated county in the United States according to the US Census.<sup>15</sup> The survey was administered in partnership with Loyola Marymount University's Center for the Study of Los Angeles. We contacted the superintendents of all 80 school districts within Los Angeles County and 52 (65%) agreed to participate in the face-to-face surveys and interviews,

---

<sup>15</sup> American Fact Finder. *US Census*. <http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=bkml>. 2015.

which we conducted during the 2015-16 academic school year. We included six questions in the survey instrument that ask superintendents about the practice of deliberative democracy in their districts. This survey is the first of its kind to ask such questions to local officials. Given the procedural nature of deliberative democracy, we felt it important to ask about the different principles of deliberative democracy that theorists emphasize: willingness to exchange information, diversity in backgrounds amongst participants, willingness to pursue common interests or the public good, collective decision-making, and justification.<sup>16</sup>

Table 3.1 displays the specific wording from the survey as well as the distribution of responses. As the table shows, there is consistent variation in superintendents' perceptions of democratic deliberation in their districts. Furthermore, Figure 3.2 displays the results of a factor analysis of the six deliberation measures, which maps the combined variation of all six measures onto four possible dimensions of variation. One can see the majority of the arrows converge in the same two planes, which indicates that the variables follow similar variation patterns; the variation mainly falls along two dimensions. Therefore, statistically, the individual deliberative democracy measures fit well together as components of an index. As a result, an additive index measure of deliberative democracy is compiled based on each district superintendent's responses to the six deliberative democracy questions. Each "always" response is coded as a 3, and the "usually" responses are coded as a 2. Meanwhile, the "sometimes" responses are coded as 1, and "never" responses are coded as zeros. The additive index that the responses from all six of the

---

<sup>16</sup> The survey did not ask superintendents about initial disagreement because we assume that disagreement is inevitable in any governance setting.

deliberative democracy questions are combined into ranges from 1 to 18, and the full index forms what I call the Deliberative Democracy Index Scale (DDIS).

In theorizing about how deliberative democracy should function at the local level, this chapter describes the PECE typology in which deliberation depends on a high level of political empowerment as well as a low level of racial conflict. In order to test this theory, LARLS included measures of both concepts. We measure racial conflict by asking superintendents, “How would you rate the race relations of your district compared to other districts in Los Angeles County?” Respondents are given the choices: better, about the same, or worse. I also create the measure of political empowerment by matching the race or ethnic background of the superintendent to the racial composition of the school district. Specifically, I measure the extent to which the racial or ethnic group of the superintendent comprises more of the district population than that group’s median size across Los Angeles County. This chapter is especially interested in political empowerment amongst racial and ethnic minorities. Therefore, I create a separate measure of minority political empowerment that only factors districts with minority superintendents and above-median minority student populations.<sup>17</sup> For example, districts that have an African American superintendent and as well as an African-American student population larger than the median African-American student population for the county are indicated as minority political empowerment districts. This same process is performed for Latinx and Asian superintendents and student populations. The expectation is that superintendents who perceive the most evidence of deliberative democracy in their districts will also perceive

---

<sup>17</sup> This method of measuring political empowerment and minority political empowerment is consistent with the existing literature. See: (Bobo and Gilliam 1990); (Gilliam 1996); (Gilliam and Kaufmann 1998); (Spence and McClerking 2010).

positive race relations, and there should also be high levels of minority political empowerment in their districts as well.

Along with testing the theoretical application of deliberative democracy to local politics, this chapter is also interested in the relationship between local officials' perceptions of democratic deliberation and the goals and priorities that local officials formulate. In order to approach the latter, our survey also includes questions that assess superintendents' policy-related goals, priorities, and concerns. Specifically, we ask superintendents the following questions:

- In your opinion, what is the most significant financial concern schools in your district will face in the upcoming year? (implementing new policies, labor costs, improving infrastructure, energy costs)
- How would the passage of the California Multilingual Education Act impact your district? (very positive impact, somewhat positive impact, somewhat negative impact, very negative impact)
- To what extent are General Ed teachers in your district prepared to teach students with special needs? (very prepared, mostly prepared, a little prepared, not at all prepared)

Each question involves a policy area within public education in California that should have direct implications for the students in each of the districts represented. School finance is typically a primary issue of concern for all districts throughout the United States. By having a large number of non-native English speakers, the issue of multilingual education is a highly salient issue in California. Lastly, the California Department of Education lists special education as a top priority for public schooling in the state.<sup>18</sup> While the state generates a baseline incentive for superintendents to care about these policy issues, the

---

<sup>18</sup> For policy and program priorities of the Los Angeles County Office of Education See "Specialized Programs: Responds to the Unique Needs of California's Diverse Students." <http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/>.

districts that engage in deliberation should show an increased concern due to the pressure and input from residents of the district. Along with questions about deliberative democracy and policy-related concerns, we also collect personal information about the superintendents that the literature suggests may also factor into their decision-making. The data includes information on each superintendent's: racial identification, gender identification, age, partisan affiliation, political ideology, experience, and salary.

The dataset for this chapter also features district-level aggregate data merged with the survey responses. This aggregate-level data shows that the within the largest county in the United States there is significant variation across the school districts. For instance, the enrollment sizes of the school districts, which are the primary indicators of population, range from the over 646,000 students of Los Angeles Unified School District to the 223 students of the Hughes-Elizabeth Lakes Union School District. In terms of racial demographics, the districts served by the superintendents in the sample feature high concentrations of racial and ethnic groups: White populations as high as 76%, Black populations as high as 40%, Latinx populations as high as 98%, and Asian populations as high as 51%. However, the sample also includes superintendents of districts where no racial or ethnic group comprises a majority. In terms of socioeconomics, the districts also vary with respect to the percentage of students eligible for "Free or Reduced Lunch," ranging from 2% to 96%. While these municipal institutions all comprise a part of a major urban area, they differ significantly in regards to their demographic and socioeconomic composition. This chapter will demonstrate that, despite ecological differences, the extent to which local officials perceive democratic deliberation will predict how local officials both assess and take concern with policy issues.

This project examines school districts and superintendents due to their optimal utility. By focusing on school districts, the scope of public policy at the local level narrows. While issues such as land use and road maintenance may not resonate with the level of knowledge or political interest of the typical urban resident, public education tends to be one of the most prioritized issues at the local level, and at the school district level only public education issues enter the discussion. Superintendents are the ideal actors through which to assess deliberation in a school district because they are appointed officials. As appointed officials, they have a much weaker incentive than school board members – who are elected – to inaccurately assess citizen participation in their district. The only problem with relying on superintendents is that appointed local officials are less responsive to constituents than elected officials (Sances 2016). However, because superintendents are not institutionally positioned to be responsive, any evidence of representation actually better validates the framework because public responsiveness would come despite there being an electoral incentive to do so.

Because this investigation examines the politics around school boards, control measures that account for existing theories of school governance are also factored into the dataset. Stone et al. (2001) suggest that the relationship between local officials and the business community influence school district policymaking. Moe (2011) argues that the organizational capacity of teachers' unions best dictates policy decisions. Also included are controls for factors idiosyncratic to the superintendents: nativity (from Los Angeles or not), years of experience on the current job, and the salaries afforded to the superintendents by the districts. These professional factors intend to engage the influence of superintendents'



leadership style and ideology, which other scholarship has shown to be important factors (Hess 2003; 2012).

The school districts included in the dataset amount to a sample size more than representative of the districts in Los Angeles County. However, because the sample size (n=52) leaves limited statistical power for a multivariate analysis, this chapter utilizes a dataset generated by sampling with replacement from the original dataset a total of 250 times.<sup>19</sup> With the use of random sampling, this chapter analyzes the information from the original dataset but with significantly greater statistical power added to the multivariate estimations. The random sampling had largely no effect on the direction or size of the statistical relationships measured in this analysis. Increasing the sample size mainly reduced the error or random noise preventing the measurements from establishing estimates with statistically significant confidence levels.

### **Determinants of Urban Deliberative Democracy**

In order to understand the role of democratic accountability in shaping the behavior of local officials, it is important first to identify any systematic differences in the nature of democratic engagement. Throughout this chapter, it has been established that deliberative democracy is the framework through which democratic accountability and engagement are captured. One of the primary purposes of deliberative democracy is to generate more information around any given policy issue up for discussion. As a result, this chapter

---

<sup>19</sup> Sampling without replacement allows the sample size to be enlarged, while allowing each observation within the larger sample to remain independent of one another. Thus, each of the simulated districts had the probability of being selected into the larger sample. For use of sampling with replacement in previous political science research see: Mueller et al. 1972; Lewis & Poole 2004; Ashworth & Clinton 2007.

offered H1, which expects a positive statistical relationship between deliberative democracy and the level at which citizens are informed about policy. The results of the test of the first hypothesis are displayed in the first column of Table 3.2 (Model 3.2A). The data estimations confirm the first hypothesis. Superintendents' perception of their district residents' awareness of education policy issues – the Local Control Funding Formula, Common Core, and Smarter Balance Assessment<sup>20</sup> – is a statistically significant predictor of districts' deliberative democracy index scores. Specifically, with regard to political awareness, per every one-unit shift upward in district residents' awareness scale score, districts' deliberative democracy index scores increase by an average of 0.5 units. As expected, the districts that seem to be more committed to the practice of democratic deliberation also seem to have a more politically aware population.

The PECE Typology predicts that racial factors, particularly racial conflict will disrupt the ability of deliberative democracy to take place in a local political space. Hypothesis 2, therefore, predicts that deliberative democracy will decrease as racial conflict increases. The estimates from Model 3.2B, which are shown on Table 3.2, provides the results of the test of Hypothesis 2, and the data, once again confirms the hypothesis. The data shows a strong positive relationship between [positive] race relations and deliberation, which suggests that deliberation has a strong negative association with poor race relations. Per every unit increase in positive race relations, districts' deliberative democracy scores increase by an estimated 2.1 points, which makes race relations the statistically the most impactful variable across all four models. Thus, the estimates strongly

---

<sup>20</sup> Awareness is measured by superintendents' perception of how well informed residents of their districts are about the three separate policy issues. Their perceptions of each are combined into a single additive scale.

suggest that the extent to which pre-existing racial conflict filters into the discourse at school board meetings has a significant impact on the capacity for deliberative discourse at those meetings.

While deliberative democracy increases in accordance with positive relations (or decreases as pre-existing racial conflict increases), superintendents' perception of democratic discourse in the district should also be a function of political empowerment as well (See H3.). The results from Model 3.2C on Table 3.2 shows the results of adding political empowerment to the statistical model explaining differences in deliberation. As the estimations indicate, the data also confirm the second hypothesis; deliberative democracy scores increase in accordance with political empowerment. Model 3.2D substitutes overall political empowerment for minority political empowerment, and the results indicate that minority political empowerment shares a positive statistically significant relationship with the deliberative democracy index as well. While political empowerment looks at all districts in which the race of the superintendent matches the race of the largest racial group in the district, minority political empowerment narrows to only designate districts where the superintendent and majority racial group are both of racial and ethnic minority groups. Simply put, minority empowerment excludes majority white empowerment districts. The results indicate that districts with more politically empowered residents boast deliberative democracy index scores an estimated 1.2 points higher than non-empowerment districts. Similarly, minority political empowerment districts have deliberation index scores an estimated almost 2 points higher than non-minority political empowerment districts. The last column on Table 2.3, Model 3.2E, measures all four predictors – awareness, empowerment, minority empowerment, and

race relations – together, and one can see that race relations and awareness remain significant predictors of school districts’ commitment to deliberative democracy.

As a whole, the estimations from the models on Table 3.2 support the theoretical expectations established in the PECE Typology. Urban school districts with strong commitments to deliberative democracy experience, on average, lower levels of pre-existing conflict as well as high levels of minority political empowerment. The models show other patterns as well. High deliberative democracy districts tend to be both smaller in size and have positive rapport with teachers’ unions. Deliberative democracy scores also appear to differ based on some of the characteristics of the superintendent evaluating the deliberation such as: whether or not the superintendent is from Los Angeles, his or her political ideology, whether or not he or she has advanced degrees, his or her age, and his or her level of experience. However, even when controlling for these district-level factors and idiosyncrasies of the superintendents themselves, it becomes clear that racial conflict and minority empowerment are critical factors for effective deliberative democracy in the urban districts analyzed for this study. Furthermore, it is also evident that, between the two PECE Typology factors, mitigating pre-existing racial conflict appears to be what is most statistically related to a strong district-level commitment to deliberative democracy. The question now becomes, does that commitment to deliberative democracy – or lack thereof – impact the policy process or policy prioritization in the school districts?

### **Urban Deliberative Democracy and Policy-Based Representation**

How does a governing body’s use of democratic discourse translate into substantive representation? In order for deliberation to motivate responsiveness, democratic discourse

should influence how local officials evaluate or assess the state of policy efforts in their districts. In theory, democratic deliberation should surface the policy-related concerns, issues, and priorities harbored by members of the community. Therefore, the local officials who are responsible for implementing policy should demonstrate a greater concern towards – or a higher priority placed on – policy important to their districts as their districts become more democratic. For school districts, the superintendents are the lead bureaucrats charged with the task of implementing policies signed into law by the school board. Superintendents also utilize their own discretion in implementing initiatives that are not explicitly stated by the school board. In order for discourse to lead to representation, there should be a relationship between the level of democratic discourse in the district and superintendents' assessment of policy in their district. Specifically, since deliberation should serve as a tool for enforcing accountability, democratic discourse should prompt superintendents to show a greater concern towards policy issues that are important to the district.

In order to test this relationship, this chapter examines three policy areas that the California Department of Education (CADOE) has designated as primary issues: school district finance, language instruction, and special education. Due to the emphasis from the CADOE, every district in the original dataset has the incentive to address the three issue areas. Along with the incentive from the state, the issues themselves are central to administering quality public education in any district in Southern California. Thus, the extent to which local officials address these issues speaks to the extent to which they represent the interests of local residents as defined by the state of California and a general understanding of quality public education.

Table 3.3 shows the results from the statistical models estimating the relationship between democratic deliberation and administrative elites' policy concerns. Models 3.3A and 3.3B examine the issue of school finance. Specifically, they measure which superintendents would be more likely to cite "creating new policy" or "labor costs" as the top financial concerns facing their districts. According to the models, superintendents' concern with these two specific areas of school district finance increase in accordance with the level of democratic deliberation they observe in their districts. In terms of specific estimations, superintendents' concern with implementing new policy grows by 0.02 standardized units for every one-unit increase in a district's deliberative democracy score. Similarly, concern with labor costs also increases by an estimated 0.54 standardized units per unit increase in a district's deliberative democracy score. These estimations are statistically significant at the 95% and 99% confidence levels, respectively. Thus, the results suggest that the extent to which districts practice deliberative democracy is positively related to the extent to which superintendents see crucial fiscal policy issues as major concerns.

Language instruction and special education are two policy issues within the broader scope of curriculum, which is an area where school boards hold the most discretion. The questions posed to superintendents regarding special education and language instruction, particularly multilingual education, ask them to evaluate their district's performance in these two policy areas. Model 3.3C shows the estimates for which superintendents are more likely to say that multilingual education will have a positive impact on their districts. The results indicate that, even when controlling for the percentage of students in the district who are considered English Language Learners (arguably the primary beneficiaries

of a multilingual education program) democratic deliberation still experiences a statistically significant relationship with superintendents' attitudes toward multilingual education. However, that relationship is negative, which indicates that the more democratic school districts are also the districts where superintendents do not see multilingual education having a positive impact. Specifically, superintendents are 0.029 standardized units less likely to see multilingual education as having a positive influence per unit increase in their district's deliberative democracy score. This relationship is, once again, statistically significant at the 95% confidence level. Substantively, Model 3.3C suggests that more deliberative democracy is actually associated with lower levels of support for multilingual education amongst the superintendents.

Model 3.3E displays the results from modeling the extent to which superintendents feel that their districts are prepared to meet the needs of students with special needs. Once again, the deliberative democracy index measure produces a statistically significant correlation with the policy issue, although this time only at the 90% confidence level. Superintendents' confidence in their district's ability to administer education for students with special needs increases 0.022 standardized units on average per unit increase in a district's deliberative democracy index score. Thus, the data suggests that, even when controlling for the combined population of the most vulnerable students that tend to require special needs – students living in poverty, English Language Learners, and foster youth – deliberative democracy is still associated with the way superintendents perceive their districts ability to work with students facing unique challenges.

As a whole, the models on Table 3.3 provide evidence that superintendents' perception of how much democratic discourse takes place in the district links directly to

the extent to which superintendents take concern with or evaluate public policy in their districts. These showings of concern and the evaluations are not necessarily positive. In fact, the concerns with school finance indicate that superintendents may see policy as a more difficult feat in parts of an urban area where local officials have to engage in conversations with constituents and justify the decisions they make. As a result, the show of concern, even when meant in the sense of arduousness, suggests that democratic deliberation does seem to position local officials in a major urban area to approach their job with the expectation that they will be held accountable for the final decisions that become policy in the school districts.

## **Conclusion**

Taken together, this chapter provides a robust picture of deliberative democracy and substantive representation in a large urban area. This chapter has argued that regularly occurring democratic discourse in a large city leads to greater substantive representation. It has been demonstrated that deliberative democracy is a theoretical framework that can be applied to the study of urban politics. The first analysis of this chapter reveals that deliberative democracy functions best when local residents: show an interest in political issues, display high levels of political empowerment, and live under low levels of racial conflict. In Los Angeles – a large city with tremendous racial diversity but also a history of both racial tension and racial segregation – the data show that once racial factors enter the equation, deliberative democracy breaks down. On a theoretical level, the PECE Typology predicts that such a breakdown will occur, but on a societal level the fact that racial issues hinder democratic discourse suggests that their local officials are not



properly representing residents of minority communities. However, the data also suggests that urban deliberative democracy functions best when racial and ethnic minorities are equally represented alongside their White counterparts.

Despite the issues with race, this chapter contests the growing myth that democratic ability cannot exist in a large urban city. Previous studies that focus on large areas largely examine them as a single entity. This analysis explores a large urban area as a sum of parts in which residents are located in various communities with their own political institutions with which they can engage. As opposed to comparing local officials in Los Angeles to ones in Chicago or New York, this study compares officials from Santa Monica to administrators in Inglewood. While both scenarios focus on the urban area, the latter comparison has a unique set of strengths. First, comparing communities within an urban area holds fixed larger institutional factors such as the influence of state and county government. Confining the comparison also keeps cultural environments more similar, and like the work that scholars have done on suburbs, the intra-urban-area comparison enables one to measure the role of size and scope in shaping democratic practices. As the results indicate, the size of the community is also a part of the larger story of democracy in a large city. However, uncovering the full story of how democracy works in a major urban area begins with acknowledging the fact that democracy is possible in these places and theorizing accordingly.

The findings in this chapter also have implications for education politics. Americans often cite education as one of the top social issues of importance, and as its importance grows education becomes more and more of a political space. Yet, the dialogue around education is too often not a conversation about education as the space to demand

democratic accountability. The evidence put forth in this chapter suggests that to the extent residents of large cities demand democratic accountability, the local officials approach the policy-making process with those demands in mind. In order for the quality of public education to improve, particularly in places with the most vulnerable students, education needs to be discussed as a political space in which engaging in constructive discourse with local officials can be just as –if not more – helpful as volunteering or donating school supplies. Of course, there are racial issues that appear to prevent democratic discourse from taking place in districts with these vulnerable student populations. Thus, the responsibility lies on the school governing institutions themselves to create an environment where they hear the concerns of local residents and justify the decisions they make back to people in their communities.

<b>Table 3.1: Factors Comprising the Deliberative Democracy Measure</b>	
<b>The following questions ask you to reflect on school board meetings in your district:</b>	
Are community members open-minded when considering different viewpoints on a topic?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Always: 6%</li> <li>• Usually: 58%</li> <li>• Sometimes: 21%</li> <li>• Never: 2%</li> </ul>
Are community members interested in pursuing district-wide interests (as opposed to group/individual interests)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Always: 17%</li> <li>• Usually: 45%</li> <li>• Sometimes: 34%</li> <li>• Never: 2%</li> </ul>
Are board members interested in pursuing district-wide interests (as opposed to group/individual interests)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Always: 51%</li> <li>• Usually: 36%</li> <li>• Sometimes: 9%</li> <li>• Never: 2%</li> </ul>
Are community members involved in the policy-making process along with district officials?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Always: 13%</li> <li>• Usually: 38%</li> <li>• Sometimes: 24%</li> <li>• Never: 2%</li> </ul>
Once a policy decision is reached, do district officials take time to justify decisions to community members?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Always: 25%</li> <li>• Usually: 42%</li> <li>• Sometimes: 28%</li> <li>• Never: 4%</li> </ul>
Does a demographically-diverse representation of individuals provide input at board meetings (as opposed to a homogenous group)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Always: 15%</li> <li>• Usually: 40%</li> <li>• Sometimes: 30%</li> <li>• Never: 13%</li> </ul>
<b>Source:</b> 2016 Los Angeles Region Leaders Outlook Survey	
<b>Notes:</b> Responses were collected from in-person surveys of the superintendents; superintendents completed surveys individually with the interviewer present as a proctor.	

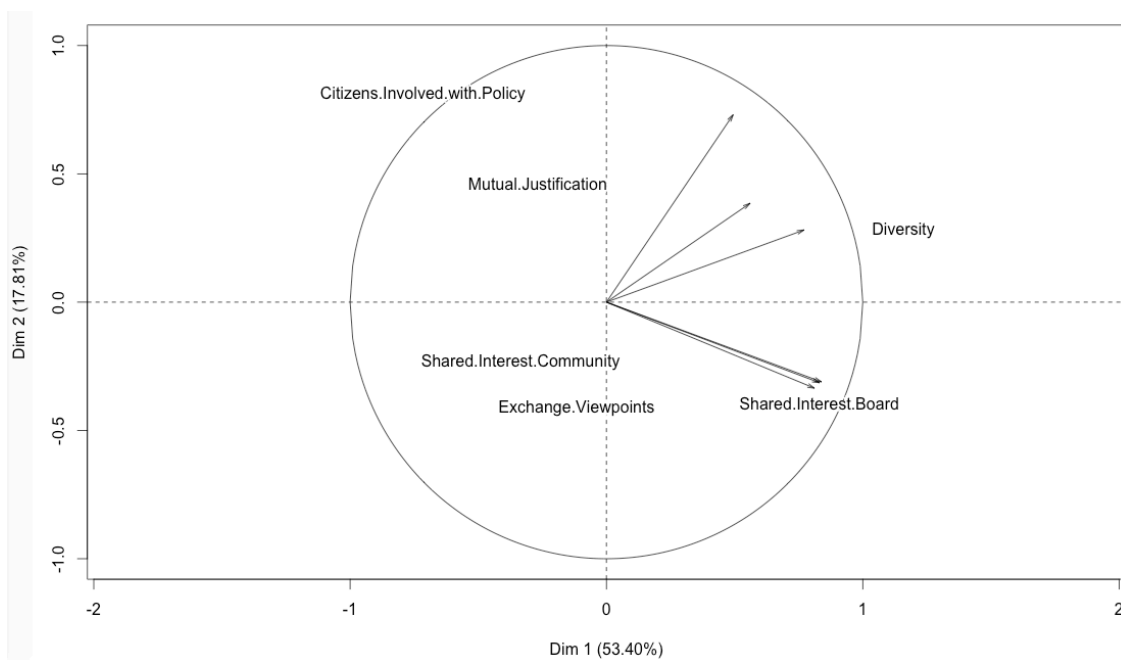
<b>Table 3.2: Policy Awareness and the PECE Typology as Predictors of Deliberative Democracy</b>					
	<b>Models</b>				
	<b>3.2A</b>	<b>3.2B</b>	<b>3.2C</b>	<b>3.2D</b>	<b>3.2E</b>
	<b>Awareness Model</b>	<b>Racial Conflict Model</b>	<b>Empowerment Model</b>	<b>Minority Empowerment Model</b>	<b>Awareness + PECE Model</b>
<i>PECE Typology Factors</i>					
Race Relations		2.134***			2.096***
Empowerment			1.215*		-0.609
Minority Empowerment				1.852**	1.248
<i>District-Level Public Awareness of Education Policy Issues</i>					
Awareness Scale	0.487*				0.586**
<i>School Board Relations with Community Institutions</i>					
Business Community	0.682	0.095	0.165	0.165	-0.157
Teachers' Union	2.018**	1.983***	2.870***	2.998***	1.724**
<i>Other District-Level Measures</i>					
Enrollment	-0.009***	-0.007**	-0.009***	-0.010***	-0.007**
Poverty	-0.008	0.002	0.014	0.008	-0.009
<i>Superintendent Characteristics</i>					
Male	-1.082*	-0.952*	-1.049*	-1.300**	-0.631
Native	-0.997*	-0.919*	-1.636***	-1.536***	-0.518
Liberal	0.091	0.014	-0.252	0.043	0.091
Conservative	-2.490**	-0.955	-2.994**	-2.919**	-1.217
Democrat	1.152	1.720**	1.450*	1.160	1.422*
Republican	1.593*	0.894	2.083	2.022**	1.230
Education	-2.126**	-1.881*	-2.188**	-2.733***	-1.699*
Salary	-0.187	-0.137	-0.104	-0.164	-0.329
Experience	1.169***	0.879**	1.148***	1.005***	0.842**
Age	-0.703***	-0.747***	-0.783***	-0.813***	-0.596**
<i>Observations</i>	250	250	250	250	250
<i>R-squared</i>	0.324	0.373	0.319	0.335	0.406
<b>Source:</b> 2016 Los Angeles Region Leaders Outlook Survey & Ed-Data Education Data Partnership					
<b>Notes:</b> Estimates come from models featuring multivariate linear regression modeling. Estimates come from models featuring multivariate linear regression modeling.					
Measures of "Poverty" and "Diversity" are aggregate measures from the Ed-Data Education Data Partnership. All other variables come from the superintendent survey responses.					

**Table 3.3: Explaining the Policy Evaluations of Superintendents**

		<b>Models</b>		
	<b>3.3A</b>	<b>3.3B</b>	<b>3.3C</b>	<b>3.3D</b>
	<b>New Policy</b>	<b>Labor Costs</b>	<b>Multilingual Education</b>	<b>Special Education</b>
<i>Deliberative Democracy Index Measure</i>				
Deliberative Democracy	0.020**	0.054***	-0.029**	0.022***
<i>School Board Relations with Community Institutions</i>				
Business Community	0.124	0.210*	0.361***	0.424***
Teachers' Union	0.056	0.079	-0.069	-0.136
Enrollment	-0.0000002	0.00002**	-0.000002***	-0.00000009
<i>Other District-Level Measures</i>				
Poverty	-0.004***	0.004*	0.014***	0.054**
Diversity	-0.007***	0.079**	0.004*	0.012
Male	0.095	0.111	-0.040	0.132
<i>Superintendent Characteristics</i>				
Native	0.041	-0.152	-0.165*	-0.135
Liberal	-0.071	-0.025	0.174*	-0.220*
Conservative	0.233*	-0.584***	-0.290*	0.224
Democrat	-0.102	-0.044	0.111	0.028
Republican	-0.027	-0.004	0.316**	-0.091
Education	0.152	0.209	-0.517***	-0.042
Salary	0.071***	-0.068*	0.005	-0.046
Experience	-0.099**	-0.017	-0.125**	0.068
Age	-0.015	0.015	0.035	0.039
Teacher Salaries		-0.004		
ELL			-0.013***	
Poor/ELL/Foster				-0.056***
<i>Observations</i>	<i>250</i>	<i>250</i>	<i>250</i>	<i>250</i>
<i>R-Squared</i>	<i>0.384</i>	<i>0.445</i>	<i>0.255</i>	<i>0.403</i>

**Source:** 2016 Los Angeles Region Leaders Outlook Survey & Ed-Data Education Data Partnership  
**Notes:** Estimates come from models featuring multivariate linear regression modeling. Measures of "Poverty", "Diversity", "Teacher Salaries," "ELL," and "Poor/ELL/Foster" are aggregate measures from the Ed-Data Education Data Partnership. . All other variables come from the superintendent survey responses.

**Figure 3.1: Deliberative Democracy Measure Principal Component Analysis**



**Source:** 2016 Los Angeles Region Leaders Outlook Survey

## **Chapter 4**

### **Urban Political Evaluations and Deliberative Democracy**

How do big city residents make political evaluations? The idea of the public making evaluations has been central to field of political science, but the majority of the attention has centered on the extent to which voters evaluate the performance of congress and the president. Scholars have provided ample evidence that, at the national level, voters make evaluations based on indicators of economic performance (Kramer 1971; Tufte 1975; Fiorina 1981; Lewis-Beck 1990; Lewis-Beck and Steigmaier 2000). These works largely rely on the concept of retroactive assessments of what government officials have done to improve the conditions of the individual voter. These explanations, to varying degrees, root themselves in the assumption that voters will make choices seeking to maximize their own individual utilities. Such an assumption carries tremendous explanatory power in the national environment where economic policies largely consume voters' interests. However, the purely economic approach to understanding voter evaluations weakens when the scope of politics shifts both in terms of policy focus and spatial unit of analysis.

As a result, far fewer considerations have been given to voter evaluation at the local level. This is in part a function of local politics scholars focusing on the roles of either institutional structure or social context as opposed to performance indicators.

Paradoxically, the studies that do examine local voter performance evaluation often fail to simultaneously theorize about both social context and institutional behavior. This chapter undertakes the task of offering and testing a framework for local level political evaluation grounded in the social, particularly racial, context of cities and how social context interacts with institutional behavior. The conceptualization of institutions in this chapter, however, also provides nuance. While studies of local politics traditionally rely on formal electoral structures when studying institutions, this project focuses, instead, on local institutions'



capacity for functioning through democratic discourse with the public. Consequentially, this chapter argues that local residents develop more positive evaluations of their local institutions when those institutions promote deliberative practices between residents and their public officials, while also managing racial conflict within their communities.

### **Voter Evaluations at the Local Level**

The idea that voters at the local level make coherent evaluations of candidates and policies is a relatively modern phenomenon. Before cities began widely implementing the Progressive Reforms, studies of local politics largely focused on the behavior of the political, economic, and social elites wielding power through political machines (Dahl 1961; Hunter 1953). The scholarship examining cities after the Progressive Reforms had stabilized still remained focused on the behavior of elites as research continued to highlight low levels of citizen participation (Peterson 1981; Stone 1989; Logan and Molotch 1987; Trounstein 2009). Instead of questions of how voters behave, the dismantling of local political machines positioned scholars to question the behavior of these newly reformed democratic institutions (Caren 2007; Craw 2010). However, evaluations of how democratic these institutions were largely remained absent.

While the research on local politics shifted to questions of institutional behavior, the demographics of cities began changing rapidly. As whites migrated to newly formed suburban areas, cities became highly segregated spaces, and scholars began showing evidence of the role that racial conflict and racial coalitions were having in explaining institutional behavior and electoral outcomes (Sonenshein 1993; Kaufmann 2004; Hajnal 2009). Along with racial cleavages surfacing, the changes in the distribution of income and

wealth across localities prompted researchers to also demonstrate how intersecting issues of race and class were influencing the how institutions were appropriating resources and administering public goods (Wilson 2012; Massey and Denton 1993). Still, questions of local residents making political evaluations remained primarily on the margins.

A different set of literature places the emphasis less on institutions and devotes attention on the extent to which voters shape outcomes through selecting their officials. These investigations, to varying degrees rely on the logic of the traditional economic-performance model. For instance, some existing research finds evidence of voters making economic-based evaluations of candidates at the local level similar to what has been found at the national level (Berry and Howell 2007; Brender 2003; Arnold and Carnes 2012). Studies also provide evidence that voters make political evaluations with the use of partisan or ideological cues (Tausanovitch and Warsaw 2014). Perpendicular work highlights the role of racial context – both local demographics and the race of local leadership – in shaping evaluations of candidates (Howell 2007; Howell and Perry 2004; Howell and McLean 2001). Such work builds on the findings of Kaufmann (1994), who argues that urban voters make evaluations based on the extent to which racial group conflict interferes with partisan or ideological signals.

As a whole, the existing research demonstrates that institutional behavior influences the way voters evaluate local level political affairs. However, the behavior of institutions remains opaque with respect to standards of democratic accountability. Is it sufficient to conceptualize local institutions as purely a function of supply-and-demand transactions, matching ideologies between residents and representatives, or conflicts between racial and ethnic groups? Local public officials spend tremendous amounts of time

attending meetings open to constituents of their districts, and community members – even those who may not engage in electoral politics – dedicate time to demanding accountability from public officials by publicly voicing their concerns. This chapter argues that the extent to which local institutions create spaces for public deliberation ultimately influences the local residents' evaluations of their local government.

### **Deliberative Democracy and Local Political Evaluations**

This chapter offers a new conceptualization of local institutional behavior rooted in the deliberative democracy framework, which emerges from political philosophy. At its base, deliberative democracy is the notion that discourses between citizens and their representatives should lead to the most well reasoned political decisions (Habermas 1996; Gutmann and Thompson 2009; Dryzek 2000; Cohen 1989). Although widely debated internally, theorists largely agree on this broad definition. Theorists also agree on the overall logic of the deliberative democracy theoretical framework: to provide a normative alternative to the strategic-bargaining-based approach to the study of political behavior. Strategic bargaining grounds itself in the logic of *quid pro quo*; actors assumed to have fixed preferences make decisions based on the desire to maximize their individual utility. The bargaining logic surfaces, to varying degrees, across the existing literature on local level political evaluations either through negotiations between: 1) economically self-interested voters and candidates or 2) power brokers of various racial group coalitions. Deliberative democracy, instead, replaces the act of bargaining with reasoned debate and argument. Theorists relax the assumption of fixed preferences and emphasize the openness or fluidity

of preferences to shift based on the strength or validity of the claims made during open discourse.

Deliberative democracy theorists also loosely agree on a set of principles that establish the boundaries for what makes discourse democratic. Normative scholars articulate the importance of political discourse in which institutions give equally sovereign individuals the opportunity to exchange viewpoints, ideas, or experiences. Institutions must also encourage diversity within the backgrounds of the individuals sharing viewpoints. Also, theorists emphasize the essential role of individuals agreeing to pursue a common interest over individual self-interests. Individuals should also be incorporated into discussions resulting in legally binding decisions, and the final decisions that representatives reach from these discussions with the public should be justified or explained back to members of the public.

There is a growing empirical literature in which scholars have tested components of deliberative democracy. Numerous studies have examined how deliberative democracy functions beyond the United States in countries such as: Canada (Warren and Pearse 2008), the United Kingdom (Bloomfield et al. 2001), and China (Fishkin et al. 2010). Empirical research in the United States has primarily focused on national-scale deliberations (Dahlgren 2005; Wright and Street 2007), laboratory and field experiments (Druckman and Nelson 2003; Esterling et al. 2002), or studies of small groups (Luskin and Fishkin 1998; Gastil 2000; Ryfe 2002). Very few of the current studies focus on municipal politics, and the few that do have yet to examine how deliberative practices impact local residents' political evaluations. They focus, instead, on the capacity for deliberation to mitigate conflict (Mendleberg and Oleske 2000; Karpowitz et al. 2012) or the functionality of

deliberation as a tool for citizen mobilization (Fung 2009; Berry et al. 2002). This chapter contributes to the empirical literature on deliberative democracy by demonstrating the framework's implications for how local residents evaluate local government performance.

### **A Deliberative Democracy Model of Local Evaluations: The PECE Typology**

This chapter argues that municipal residents evaluate the performance of their local government in accordance the extent to which the institutions promote deliberative practices and mitigate racial conflict. Conceptually, this chapter relies on the Pre-Existing Conflict and Empowerment (PECE) Typology established in Chapter 2. The PECE Typology draws on the larger empirical literature on deliberative democracy to specify the conditions under which the framework should be most successful within the context of urban governance. According to the PECE Typology, deliberative democracy should best lead to the type of democratic governing environment theorists envision when local institutions experience low levels of pre-existing racial or ethnic conflict as well as high levels of political empowerment, particularly minority political empowerment.

The limited work on local-level deliberative governance demonstrates the capacity for pre-existing racial conflict to severely disrupt the effectiveness of deliberation as a tool for democratic governance. Mansbridge (1983) and Mendelberg (2002) perform the theoretical work of surfacing the way in which social dynamics can significantly disrupt the effectiveness of deliberation, and through studying school-desegregation town hall meetings, Mendelberg and Oleske (2000) document the way in which pre-existing racial tension leads to deliberation exacerbating localized conflict. Fung (2009) develops his accountable autonomy model of deliberative governance in direct response to the critiques

of latent social bias within the deliberative democracy framework; he argues for an institutional structure that establishes a strong central authority responsive to empowered local organized bodies that vindicate the voices of the subaltern. Yet, Fung finds that, even with his model in place, Chicago neighborhoods with various types of pre-existing conflict still found it difficult to create productive deliberative environments unless communities brought in some sort of third-party deliberation facilitators. Local social – particularly racial – dynamics present major problems for deliberation unless institutions establish the proper mechanisms to diffuse the pre-existing tensions.

Along with the importance of quelling pre-existing conflict, effective deliberation requires citizens with fair and equal voices. As a result, the concept of empowerment, particularly minority empowerment becomes a prerequisite for effective deliberation. Minority empowerment begins with descriptive or symbolic political representation. The literature on urban politics has linked these gains in representation to increased interest in politics and levels of political participation amongst co-ethnic minorities (Bobo and Gilliam 1990; Gilliam 1996; Gilliam and Kaufmann 1998; Kaufmann 2003; Spence and McClerking 2010). Visible access to decision-making positions “empowers” racial and ethnic minorities to become more engaged in politics, particularly in the urban environment. Political empowerment becomes essential to the deliberation environment because deliberation relies on the exchange of information from various life experiences. Without substantive levels of empowerment, the final decisions are left to reflect, primarily, the goals and interests of the dominant group.

As a result of both the racial conflict critiques and the significance of political empowerment at the local level, the PECE Typology becomes a useful theoretical tool for

conceptualizing the way in which deliberative practices should influence city residents' evaluations of local government. The Pre-Existing Conflict and Empowerment (PECE) Typology establishes a two-dimensional plane in which the state of social conflict – particularly racial conflict – has the capacity to interact with the minority political empowerment conditions. The conceptual plane maps a universe of four scenarios: 1) high empowerment; low pre-existing conflict 2) high empowerment; high pre-existing conflict 3) low empowerment; high pre-existing conflict 4) low empowerment; low pre-existing conflict.

Each scenario has a different degree of optimality. The best conditions occur in an urban space experiencing high levels of minority empowerment and low levels of pre-existing conflict. When local institutions empower minority residents and deploy tactics to decrease racial conflict, deliberation should be most effective. In particular, the absence of racial conflict should enable deliberators to more freely exchange viewpoints, and through listening to alternative views they position themselves to better to pursue community-wide interests comprised of a shared response to individual issues brought before the public. Meanwhile, empowering residents of traditionally marginalized groups should allow diverse members of the local public to involve themselves in the collective decision-making process. Low pre-existing conflict and high minority empowerment also position a descriptively representative institution to better justify final decisions back to a public capable of reaching collective agreements. When local institutions have the ability to make decisions with a diverse and involved citizenry – decisions that are also justified to the public once finalized, local residents should make positive evaluations of their local government due the fact that their government underwent procedures to seek policy input.

Residents' political evaluations should be most negative when deliberation exists in an urban environment of high pre-existing conflict and low political empowerment. Under these conditions, the principles of deliberative democracy collapse. Conflict decreases the incentive to exchange viewpoints across individuals of different backgrounds, which positions potential deliberators to pursue self-interests over public interests. The absence of empowerment prevents residents from involving themselves in the decision-making process and demanding representatives justify decisions to the public. With low minority empowerment and high pre-existing conflict, public dialogue results in highly polarized public meetings and clandestine decision-making, which should position residents to hold distrust towards their local officials. Urban residents' sense of distrust should fuel negative evaluations of their municipal government.

## **Hypotheses**

The argument of this chapter is not that residents' direct participation with deliberation proceedings influences their individual political evaluations. Such a relationship has already been widely debated across the existing empirical work. Instead, this chapter argues that deliberative practices produce a more open, engaging, and participatory political environment, which should invite residents to derive positive evaluations of local public goods. The racial politics in the urban space dictates the extent to which deliberative practices result in an environment welcome to public engagement. In particular, mitigating or minimizing racial conflict is central to creating the conditions for productive deliberation. Similarly, empowering racial and ethnic minorities by electing or appointing their co-ethnics to administrative positions increases the likelihood that even



the most vulnerable residents would feel that local government welcomes their voices. Ultimately, the more open environment that deliberative practices should produce makes residents feel more included and better represented regardless of whether or not they regularly attend public meetings or not. Deliberative democracy should create an environment in which simply believing your voice would be heard if you participated in a public meeting will prompt you to hold positive attitudes towards your local government.

This chapter derives a set of hypotheses that guide the empirical test of the argument described in this chapter. First, this chapter expects to establish a statistical relationship between deliberative democracy and political evaluations.

*H1: Residents of urban municipalities with stronger commitments to deliberative practices will hold more positive attitudes toward their municipal government.*

However, because the PECE typology establishes the conditions under which deliberative practices should be most successful, the second hypothesis adds a caveat to what is expected from H1.

*H2: The positive relationship between governments' commitments to deliberative practices and positive evaluations of government will only surface once racial conflict and minority empowerment are accounted for.*

Under the optimal conditions, deliberative practices should lead to more positive evaluations, but that relationship should function through deliberation fostering more open and transparent environments. Thus:

*H3: Residents of urban municipalities with stronger commitments to deliberative practices will also be the residents more likely to see their local government as transparent.*

## **Deliberative Democracy and Local Evaluations: A Research Design**

This chapter tests the potential relationship between deliberative practices and urban residents' evaluations of municipal government by collecting data on school boards throughout Los Angeles County. Los Angeles County is the most populated county in the United States,<sup>21</sup> and it has a total of 80 school districts within its boundaries. All districts within the county follow the broad mandates established by both the state of California and the Los Angeles County Office of Education. Existing research often notes the intergovernmental constraints different municipalities face (Peterson 1981; Hajnal 2009). By only comparing districts within Los Angeles County, this chapter examines school districts, all of which subscribe to the same intergovernmental arrangements. In terms of the actual decision-making authority of the local officials, this type of design allows me to compare institutions with relatively similar amounts of power.

This chapter focuses on school boards because they are local institutions that narrow the policy scope to one issue area: public education. A primary reason scholars of local and urban politics find little evidence of democratic citizen engagement in previous studies is because they focus on city government institutions which handle a range of policy issues, many of which citizens have very little knowledge (e.g. planning and land use, sanitation services, street maintenance). Education, as a policy issue, is more salient and accessible for most local residents as evidenced by the fact that education routinely surfaces as a top policy priority in national public opinion surveys.<sup>22</sup> Also, social scientists document the primary role that schools play in Americans' residential decisions (Rossi and

---

<sup>21</sup> See: "Annual Estimates of Housing Units for the United States, Regions, Divisions, States, and Counties: 2016." <https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=bkml>

<sup>22</sup> See: "Education a Fixture on 'Top Problem' List." *Gallup*. <http://www.gallup.com/poll/9223/education-fixture-top-problem-list.aspx>.

Shlay 1982; Sharkey 2012). In studying urban democracy, school boards provide a high level of utility as a unit of analysis.

While the school board is the unit of analysis, this study undertakes a two-level approach. This chapter relies on individual level public opinion responses from Los Angeles residents to measure political evaluations, but I survey the superintendents of the school districts in order to produce district-wide measures of deliberative democracy, racial conflict, and minority empowerment. The data collection took place through Loyola Marymount University's Center for the Study of Los Angeles. The center regularly collects public opinion responses from Los Angeles residents as well as survey responses of local public officials, but I partnered with the Center for their 2016 round of data collection and added a series of questions to the survey of superintendents regarding the deliberative practices in their district.

This design makes for the most extensive study of representation at the school district level ever conducted in Los Angeles. Of the 80 school districts in Los Angeles County, the collaborative surveyed 52 (65%) school district superintendents, and they also collected public opinion responses from 2,400 Los Angeles County residents. By merging these two separate surveys, I match the responses of the superintendent to evaluations made by individuals who actually live in the school districts. Data is purged in the merging process; the final dataset encompasses 47 school districts and 1890 survey responses. The districts vary significantly in terms of size; the majority of respondents (1220) live within the boundaries of the county's largest district - Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). However, statistical weights are applied to account for the differences in district

population size. Also, multi-level statistical modeling is applied as well in order to treat the districts as equal and, therefore, reduce the impact of the population size differences.

The public opinion survey provides individual-level measures of urban resident political evaluations, and these evaluations focus on two areas: 1) evaluations of the public good and 2) evaluations of local government. Specifically, I asks respondents to rate the overall quality of K-12 education in their district based on a three-point scale: poor, fair, or good. This chapter measures public good benefit by asking respondents if they believe their district is a good place relative to other districts for raising children, posing the question with a discrete “yes” or “no” response option. Similarly, this chapter estimates respondents’ willingness to contribute to the public good by posing the question: “would you be willing to pay higher taxes to maintain the current level of funding for K-12 public education?” This chapter assesses government transparency by asking respondents the extent to which they feel their local government is open and transparent about its operations. The appendix displays the means and standard deviations for each of the four government performance evaluation measures.

Based on the conceptual framework offered in this chapter, urban residents’ political evaluations should be statistically related to three factors: deliberative practices, racial conflict, and minority empowerment. This chapter develops district-wide measures of each factor using the survey of school district superintendents. The measure of districts’ level of commitment to deliberative practices is developed through a series of questions derived from the core principles of deliberative democracy as highlighted by political theorists: 1) viewpoint exchange, 2) opinion diversity, 3) pursuit of the common good, 4) collective decision-making, 5) mutual justification. The survey questions related to the

deliberative democracy are framed around the extent to which superintendents generally observe these behaviors occurring in school board meetings.

The actual language from the survey questions measuring deliberative democracy can be found in Chapter 3 on Table 3.1. Superintendents are provided four answer options: never, sometimes, usually, or always. An additive index of measure of deliberative democracy is compiled based on each district superintendent's responses to the six deliberative democracy questions. Each "always" response is coded as a 3, and the "usually" responses are coded as a 2. Meanwhile, the "sometimes" responses are coded as 1, and "never" responses are coded as zeros. With 6 deliberative democracy questions asked in total,<sup>23</sup> the additive deliberative democracy scale – the Deliberative Democracy Index Scale (DDIS) – has the possibility of ranging between 0 and 18. The previous chapter, Chapter 3, has already demonstrated the reliability of the DDIS with respect to explaining the policy priorities of urban school district superintendents. This chapter's deployment of the DDIS extends the use of the scale to the political evaluations of urban school district residents.

The variables measuring racial conflict and minority empowerment are relatively straightforward. This chapter measures racial conflict through a survey question posed to the superintendents asking them to assess the conditions of race relations in their district compared to other districts in the county. Superintendents are asked to evaluate race relations using a three-point scale: worse, about the same, or better. This chapter measures minority empowerment by matching the racial demographics of the district to the racial identification of the superintendents. I designate minority empowerment

---

<sup>23</sup> While the study focuses on 5 principles, we ask the question on common good twice; asking separately whether the public and also school board members exhibit the behavior.

districts to be those in which the majority of the students enrolled in the districts' schools are of the same racial or ethnic minority group as the superintendent. Thus, like the DDIS, the measures of racial conflict and minority empowerment operate at the school district level.

Along with the measures of deliberative democracy, racial conflict, and minority empowerment, this chapter also includes measures that incorporate alternative hypotheses. Because the existing literature emphasizes the role of matching ideology between residents and elites, a measure is added that designates whether the political ideology of the resident - conservative, moderate, or liberal - matches the ideology of his or her superintendent. Scholars also frequently highlight the role of low information voters in explaining the absence of attention paid to democratic engagement at the local level; therefore, this chapter includes a district-level measure of political awareness based on a series of questions to superintendents regarding how informed constituents seem to be on a specific set of education policy issues.<sup>24</sup> Individual level factors that may influence urban residents political evaluations are included as well: homeownership, marital status, parental status, educational attainment, economic class, citizenship status, and racial identification.

Because this analysis looks to rely on a number of district-level factors to explain the individual-level political evaluations of urban residents, this chapter utilizes multi-level multivariate regression analysis as the primary analytic technique for building statistical models. Multi-level modeling (MLM) performs a key set of necessary tasks. First, because a

---

<sup>24</sup> The political awareness measures whether superintendents perceive adults in their district to be aware of three policy issues: Common Core, Smarter Balance Assessment Consortium, and the Local Control Funding Formula.

significant portion of the sample lives within one district, this analysis needs a technique that will allow the districts in the sample to receive equal consideration. Second, this analysis needs a technique that will also enable conclusions to be potentially drawn from individual-level explanatory factors, while making these district-level considerations. MLM techniques are also very prevalent within research on education policy (Rumberger 1995; Bock 2014); therefore, because this study carries tremendous implications for the politics of public education as well as education policy, it is important to utilize a technique consistent with not only the standards of political science but also the education scholarship as well.

### **Deliberative Democracy and Evaluations of District Quality and Viability**

The results from the research design show evidence of a meaningful relationship between deliberative practices in school board meetings and the way in which local residents evaluate local public goods. Particular to public education, the MLM estimations demonstrate a strong positive correlation between deliberative practices and specific types of local resident evaluations: 1) quality of the public schools and 2) viability of the district as a place for raising children. Table 4.1 displays the set of models used in estimating how deliberative democracy, concepts from the PECE typology, and other factors from the literature are related to evaluations of district-wide school quality. The estimations align with the hypotheses derived from the conceptual framework; residents' evaluations of school district quality become more favorable as districts demonstrate a stronger commitment to deliberative practices. However, as the PECE typology suggests, deliberation only becomes a significant factor when racial conflict and minority

empowerment are added into the model (see Table 4.1; Model 4.1A compared with Model 4.1C). Substantively, as residents' districts shift one unit upward on the DDIS, the residents themselves also become 0.8% more likely to hold a favorable evaluation of the quality of their school district. This means that individuals living in a district that is, for example, 8 DDIS points higher than individuals of a neighboring district, would be, on average, 6.4% more likely to evaluate their district as a quality provider of K-12 education.

While the deliberation does perform as hypothesized, minority empowerment – although statistically significant – performs in the opposite direction from what the framework anticipates. Minority empowerment correlates negatively with evaluations of school district quality, which means that local residents making negative evaluations of their districts' quality are more likely to live in majority-minority districts with a minority superintendent. This pattern in the data becomes potentially troubling for the prospect of deliberative practices providing agency to racial and ethnic minorities through access to administrative authority. The negative correlation between district quality evaluation and racial conflict in the district, however, do suggest that residents are making positive evaluations in environments where racial and ethnic minorities are incorporated into the deliberation proceedings.

The full model suggests that, all things considered, evaluations of district quality experience the strongest relationship with deliberative practices. The traditional measure of local representation – matching ideology between residents and their representative – appears to be statistically unrelated. However, political awareness performs consistently with the existing literature in that residents making positive evaluations are also residents of districts where residents are perceived as less aware of specific policy issues. Similarly,



individuals in districts with higher percentages of students in poverty also hold more negative evaluations. The individual-level factors that correlate significantly with evaluations of district quality center on social class and citizenship, with those self-identifying as lower class and citizens, respectively, both professing distinctly negative evaluations. The strongest factors appear to be district-level aggregate measures, and it appears that residents are making more positive evaluations in districts with low levels of child poverty and strong commitments to deliberative practices.

Local resident evaluations of their community as a viable space for raising children largely follow the same trends as their evaluations of district quality. As the models in Table 4.2 display (Models 4.2A, 4.2B, 4.2C, 4.2D, and 4.2E), resident evaluations are positively linked to their districts' commitment to deliberative practices, but once again, deliberative practices only reach statistical significance once measured within the context of the full statistical model. When used both as a bivariate measure and a covariate with the factors from the PECE typology – racial conflict and minority empowerment, the size of the standard errors exceed the coefficient estimation, which make it difficult to surface any statistically meaningful relationship. Instead, the PECE typology measures appear to be most robustly related to evaluations of communities as viable places for raising children. However, while racial conflict experiences the negative correlation with positive evaluations that the framework leads one to expect, minority empowerment continues to function opposite of expectations: residents of minority empowerment districts continue to make more negative evaluations of their district. Thus, once again, deliberative practices are associated with positive evaluations, but deliberation remains one part of a larger story

consistent with the existing literature in urban politics that emphasizes the role that racial and economic factors play in local resident political evaluations.

### **Deliberative Democracy and Evaluations of Trust in Local Government**

Examining differences in local residents evaluations of the quality of their school and their community's overall viability for raising children surfaced evidence of deliberative practices an important factor. This section explores the extent to which deliberative practices are associated with evaluations of local government trustworthiness. I focus on two separate measures of local government trust evaluation: 1) evaluations of local government transparency and 2) evaluations of residents' willingness to pay more in taxes. While evaluations of transparency serve as the more direct measure of residents' perception of local government trustworthiness, residents' willingness to pay more taxes assesses the extent to which residents hold enough trust in local government to individually contribute additional resources.

The model estimations suggest that deliberative practices are indeed linked to evaluations of transparency. The statistical relationship between deliberation and evaluations of transparency, however, emerges only once the model factors in racial conflict and minority empowerment. Significant at the 80% confidence level, residents are estimated to be 1.2 percentage points more likely to see their local government as transparent, as their district's DDIS increases by one unit (See Model 4.3C of Table 4.3). Minority empowerment also plays a role in the story of residents' evaluations of local government transparency. Residents of minority empowerment districts are, on average, 12 percentage points less likely to see their local government as transparent. In the full

model (Model 4.3E), the relationship between deliberation and evaluations of transparency becomes opaque, and instead the average resident who sees his or her local government as non-transparent appears to live in districts where residents are largely aware of policy issues and poverty is relatively low. Residents who see their government as non-transparent are also more likely to be homeowners and legal citizens.

Deliberative practices, however, appear to be statistically unrelated to residents' willingness to pay more in taxes. As Table 4.4 displays, the DDIS is statistically insignificant across all models. Furthermore, racial conflict and minority empowerment are largely unrelated as well, except for a slightly significant bivariate relationship with the latter variable. The model featuring all three factors together – deliberation, racial conflict, and minority empowerment – produces all null results. Instead, the factors most associated with a willingness to pay more taxes to support local schools are: homeowners, who are significantly less willing to pay more, and residents identifying as Latinx, who conversely are willing to increase their tax contribution for the sake of local schools. As a whole, the statistical evidence suggests that deliberative practices are related to direct perceptions of local government transparency, although the same can not be said for indirect indicators of transparency that require financial sacrifices.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has examined differences in urban residents' political evaluations, and it has been argued that those evaluations are influenced by their community's commitment to deliberation-based democratic governance. I have also argued that the influence of deliberative democracy on urban resident political evaluations should interact with the

state of racial conflict and minority empowerment in the community. I have supported this argument using evidence from an analysis of school districts throughout Los Angeles County. In particular, I find statistically significant associative links between individual political evaluations and district-wide commitments to deliberative practices. However, that relationship is most robust when models also factor in district-wide differences in racial conflict as well as minority political empowerment.

The descriptive nature of the research design adds constraint to the implications of the results. The findings from this chapter do not support any causal claims about deliberative practices. While a clear trend emerges, future research will focus on ways to evaluate the actual effect that participating in deliberation proceedings has on local political behavior. This chapter suggests that living in a community that practices deliberative democracy leads to a culture of government openness that positions urban residents to develop more positive evaluations of public goods and the performance of their local government. The next step is to empirically isolate the mechanism behind the link: the ability of deliberative practices to shift urban norms. However, such a task is arduous given the fact that the most optimal way of isolating the effect of deliberative practices requires the willingness of an entire municipal government to suddenly change the structure of their public hearings and forums, while a comparable community holds their governance practices fixed.

Nonetheless, this chapter makes a pair of critical contributions. First, it further buttresses the importance of extending the study of representation and political evaluations to the local level. Second, this chapter also deepens a conversation between deliberation theorists and empirical scholars of local and urban politics. Deliberative

democracy has experienced a wave of empirical testing, but the bulk of the research focuses on political communications. Theorists, however, engage deliberative democracy as a framework for governance. Thus, it is vital for empirical social scientists to test the impact of deliberative democracy in the policy-making environment. Local and urban environments should benefit most from the study of deliberative democracy as a governance tool. Yet, scholars studying these spaces rarely turn to frameworks from democratic theory for conceptualizing how politics works in these spaces. Both areas of study – deliberation [discourse] theory and local/urban politics – stand to benefit from the two engaging with one another.

<b>Table 4.1: Local Resident Evaluations of Overall School District Quality</b>					
			<b>Models</b>		
	<b>4.1A</b>	<b>4.1B</b>	<b>4.1C</b>	<b>4.1D</b>	<b>4.1E</b>
	<b>Deliberative Democracy</b>	<b>Racial Conflict</b>	<b>Minority Empowerment</b>	<b>Deliberation + PECE Factors</b>	<b>Deliberation + Controls</b>
<b>District-Level Factors</b>					
<i>Deliberative Democracy</i>					
Deliberative Democracy	0.008			0.008*	0.009***
	(0.005)			(0.004)	(0.004)
<i>PECE Typology Factors</i>					
Racial Conflict		-0.083**		-0.051	
		(0.040)		(0.041)	
Minority Empowerment			-0.069*	-0.076***	
			(0.041)	(0.031)	
<i>Aggregate-Level Political Factors</i>					
Ideology Alignment					0.046
					(0.040)
Political Awareness					-0.024*
					(0.013)
<i>Aggregate-Level Economic Factors</i>					
Percent Poverty (students)					-0.002***
					(0.0008)
<b>Individual-Level Factors</b>					
<i>Domestic Factors</i>					
Parent					-0.009
					(0.025)
Married					0.011
					(0.023)
<i>Socioeconomic Factors</i>					
Homeowner					-0.031
					(0.024)
Lower Class					-0.091**
					(0.040)
Working Class					-0.042
					(0.034)
Middle Class					0.001
					(0.030)
High School or Below					0.048
					(0.034)

Some College					0.002
					(0.034)
College Graduate					0.004
					(0.034)
<i>Citizenship Status</i>					
Citizen					-0.072***
					(0.027)
<i>Race and Ethnicity</i>					
Black					-0.010
					(0.033)
Latinx					0.033
					(0.034)
Asian					0.014
					(0.035)
<i>Political Ideology</i>					
Liberal					0.083
					(0.026)
Moderate					0.024
					(0.029)
<b>Source:</b> 2016 Los Angeles Region Leaders Outlook Survey, Los Angeles Leaders Public Opinion Survey, and Ed-Data Education Data Partnership					
<b>Notes:</b> districts n = 47; district residents n = 1890 Individual factors come from the Los Angeles Leaders Public Opinion Survey					

<b>Table 4.2: Local Resident Evaluations of District as a Place to Raise Children</b>					
			<b>Models</b>		
	<b>4.2A</b>	<b>4.2B</b>	<b>4.2C</b>	<b>4.2D</b>	<b>4.2E</b>
	<b>Deliberative Democracy</b>	<b>Racial Conflict</b>	<b>Minority Empowerment</b>	<b>Deliberation + PECE Factors</b>	<b>Deliberation + Controls</b>
<b>District-Level Factors</b>					
<i>Deliberative Democracy</i>					
Deliberative Democracy	0.006			0.003	0.008*
	(0.006)			(0.006)	(0.005)
<i>PECE Typology Factors</i>					
Racial Conflict		-0.089**		-0.071*	
		(0.041)		(0.044)	
Minority Empowerment			-0.083**	-0.078**	
			(0.043)	(0.038)	
<i>Aggregate Political Factors</i>					
Ideology Alignment					-0.037
					(0.038)
Political Awareness					-0.029*
					(0.016)
<i>Aggregate Economic Factors</i>					
Percent Poverty (students)					-0.002***
					(0.0008)
<b>Individual-Level Factors</b>					
<i>Domestic Factors</i>					
Parent					-0.011
					(0.024)
Married					0.094***
<i>Socioeconomic Factors</i>					
					(0.021)
Homeowner					0.045**
					(0.022)
Lower Class					-0.183***
					(0.037)
Working Class					-0.089***
					(0.032)
Middle Class					-0.048*
					(0.028)
High School or Below					0.040



					(0.032)
Some College					0.027
					(0.034)
College Graduate					-0.009
					(0.031)
<i>Citizenship Status</i>					
Citizen					-0.011
					(0.026)
<i>Race and Ethnicity</i>					
Black					-0.001
					(0.031)
Latinx					0.027
					(0.031)
Asian					-0.076**
					(0.033)
<i>Political Ideology</i>					
Liberal					0.062
					(0.027)
Moderate					0.030
					(0.027)
<b>Source:</b> 2016 Los Angeles Region Leaders Outlook Survey, Los Angeles Leaders Public Opinion Survey, and Ed-Data Education Data Partnership					
<b>Notes:</b> districts n = 47; district residents n = 1890 Individual factors come from the Los Angeles Leaders Public Opinion Survey					

<b>Table 4.3: Local Resident Evaluations of Local Government Transparency</b>					
			<b>Models</b>		
	<b>4.3A</b>	<b>4.3B</b>	<b>4.3C</b>	<b>4.3D</b>	<b>4.3E</b>
	<b>Deliberative Democracy</b>	<b>Racial Conflict</b>	<b>Minority Empowerment</b>	<b>Deliberation + PECE Factors</b>	<b>Deliberation + Controls</b>
<b>District-Level Factors</b>					
<i>Deliberative Democracy</i>					
Deliberative Democracy	0.010			0.012+	0.009
	(0.008)			(0.008)	(0.007)
<i>PECE Typology Factors</i>					
Race Conflict		-0.056		0.001	
		(0.062)		(0.070)	
Minority Empowerment			-0.106*	-0.117**	
			(0.058)	(0.054)	
<i>Aggregate Political Factors</i>					
Ideology Alignment					0.055
					(0.069)
Political Awareness					-0.056**
					(0.023)
<i>Aggregate Economic Factors</i>					
Percent Poverty (students)					-0.004***
					(0.001)
<b>Individual-Level Factors</b>					
<i>Domestic Factors</i>					
Parent					-0.026
					(0.044)
Married					0.044
					(0.040)
<i>Socioeconomic Factors</i>					
Homeowner					-0.079*
					(0.042)
Lower Class					-0.069
					(0.069)
Working Class					-0.014
					(0.060)
Middle Class					0.083
					(0.052)
High School or Below					0.033
					(0.059)

Some College					-0.095
					(0.063)
College Graduate					0.007
					(0.058)
<i>Citizenship Status</i>					
Citizen					-0.185***
					(0.048)
<i>Race and Ethnicity</i>					
Black					-0.022
					(0.057)
Latinx					0.024
					(0.058)
Asian					0.011
					(0.061)
<i>Political Ideology</i>					
Liberal					0.069
					(0.044)
Moderate					0.014
					(0.050)
<b>Source:</b> 2016 Los Angeles Region Leaders Outlook Survey, Los Angeles Leaders Public Opinion Survey, and Ed-Data Education Data Partnership					
<b>Notes:</b> districts n = 47; district residents n = 1890 Individual factors come from the Los Angeles Leaders Public Opinion Survey					

<b>Table 4.4: Local Resident Evaluations of Willingness to Pay More Taxes</b>					
			<b>Models</b>		
	<b>4.4A</b>	<b>4.4B</b>	<b>4.4C</b>	<b>4.4D</b>	<b>4.4E</b>
	<b>Deliberative Democracy</b>	<b>Racial Conflict</b>	<b>Minority Empowerment</b>	<b>Deliberation + PECE Factors</b>	<b>Deliberation + Controls</b>
<b>District-Level Factors</b>					
<i>Deliberative Democracy</i>					
Deliberative Democracy	-0.004			0.001	-0.004
	(0.005)			(0.001)	(0.006)
<i>PECE Typology Factors</i>					
Racial Conflict		0.050		0.017	
		(0.043)		(0.063)	
Minority Empowerment			0.075*	0.069	
			(0.041)	(0.048)	
<i>Aggregate Political Factors</i>					
Ideology Alignment					0.074
					(0.059)
Political Awareness					0.001
					(0.019)
<i>Aggregate Economic Factors</i>					
Percent Poverty (students)					0.002*
					(0.001)
<b>Individual-Level Factors</b>					
<i>Domestic Factors</i>					
Parent					0.017
					(0.037)
Married					0.075
					(0.033)
<i>Socioeconomic Factors</i>					
Homeowner					-0.123***
					(0.035)
Lower Class					-0.018
					(0.058)
Working Class					0.056
					(0.049)
Middle Class					-0.012
					(0.043)
High School or Below					-0.022
					(0.052)

Some College					-0.037
					(0.054)
College Graduate					0.053
					(0.050)
<i>Citizenship Status</i>					
Citizen					0.049
					(0.040)
<i>Race and Ethnicity</i>					
Black					0.0004
					(0.048)
Latinx					0.131***
					(0.049)
Asian					0.059
					(0.053)
<i>Political Ideology</i>					
Liberal					0.217
					(0.037)
Moderate					0.126
					(0.042)
<b>Source:</b> 2016 Los Angeles Region Leaders Outlook Survey, Los Angeles Leaders Public Opinion Survey, and Ed-Data Education Data Partnership					
<b>Notes:</b> districts n = 47; district residents n = 1890					
Individual factors come from the Los Angeles Leaders Public Opinion Survey					

## **Chapter 5:**

### **Deliberative Democracy and Institutional Norms: A Qualitative Examination of Superintendents and the Districts' Commitment to Deliberative Democracy**

Less than two months after that night of protest, chants, and speaker cards at the downtown office of the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), the superintendent announced that the governing board had reached a decision declaring that the district would no longer receive military weapons from the United States Department of Defense.<sup>25</sup> The grenade launchers, Mine-Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) military vehicle, and assault rifles would all be returned to from whence they came. The second largest school district in the country – a district where 90% of the students filling classrooms are children of color<sup>26</sup> and almost 80% of the students live in poverty<sup>27</sup> – listened and responded to the concerns of its constituents. While every story about a public deliberation will not have this same happy ending, the success of these types of stories deserve more than just attention from journalists covering the local beat. As we see, public deliberation can have extraordinary implications; public deliberation can literally carry the weight of an armored military vehicle. As a result, these types of stories of public deliberation exemplify why both studying and engaging in democracy matters tremendously.

This dissertation has taken a foundational step forward in attempting to study democracy in relatively different way. Specifically, this project has produced four significant contributions. First, this project has argued for the benefit of placing deliberation-based democracy at the center of the study of how local institutions shape behavior. Second, this project has provided theoretical parameters for how deliberation-

---

<sup>25</sup> See “L. A. Schools have Given up the Last of Their Defense Department-issued Rifles.” *Los Angeles Times*. February 26, 2016. <http://www.latimes.com/local/education/la-me-edu-school-weapons-returned-20160223-story.html>.

<sup>26</sup> See “Fingertips for L.A. Unified

<sup>27</sup> See “Los Angeles Unified.” *Ed-Data: Education Data Partnership*. <http://www.ed-data.org/district/Los-Angeles/Los-Angeles-Unified>.

based governance in the urban space interacts with the racial and ethnic politics of those spaces. Third, this project has outlined the way in which public school district governance is a prime site for observing deliberation-based governance. Lastly, this dissertation has surfaced and analyzed empirical evidence that supports the general argument, which is that this type of deliberation-based democratic governance is statistically related to the decisions and evaluations made by local elites and non-elites, particularly as those decisions and evaluations pertain to local government.

This concluding chapter takes the space to qualitatively describe what it means for districts to differ in terms of their commitments to democratic practices. Chapter 2 detailed the way in which this project conceptualizes democracy – through the deliberative democracy framework – and describes the parameters for how deliberation proceedings should interact with the racial and ethnic politics of the communities. Chapter 3 empirically tested and found evidence that local government administrators prioritize issues in accordance with the prevalence of deliberative democracy in their school districts. Chapter 4 tests the relationship between deliberative democracy at the school district level and the political evaluations of the individuals living in the districts, and I find evidence of a positive relationship between deliberative practices and favorable evaluations of local government. This conclusion chapter sheds light on what that variation in deliberative democracy looks like and substantively means.

The statistical measure used to identify deliberative democracy at the local level – the Deliberative Democracy Index Scale (DDIS) – is in itself an advancement. By allowing the school board superintendents to serve as an eye into the nature of school board public meetings, the DDIS is a systematic measure of the districts' commitment to deliberative



democracy as a cultural practice. As chapters 3 and 4 exhibit, the DDIS demonstrates explanatory power when used to predict the political attitudes of both elites and non-elites. Although the DDIS performed well in statistical models, it has its weaknesses. In particular, the measure fails to illustrate what the deliberation proceedings at the actual meetings actually look like and, perhaps even more importantly, what institutional mechanisms school districts put in place to promote deliberative democracy at these school board meetings. The empirical analysis in this chapter attempts to illustrate what public participation and deliberation look like in districts as they perform different levels of commitment to deliberative democracy.

### **Should Institutional Behavior Influence Democratic Participation?**

Public civic participation is a very complex behavior in that political scientists have offered a wide range of theories explaining why people participate in politics. Much of that research links one's decision to participate in politics to characteristics unique to the individual or some sort of social group that with he or she identifies. For example, partisanship and ideological self-identification are widely considered to be primary factors determining citizen participation in American politics (Campbell et al. 1960; Fiorina 1981; Niemi and Jennings 1991; Popkin 1994; Bartels 2000). Similarly, research has consistently linked one's socioeconomic class status - educational attainment and personal income - as well as factors like age and marital status to patterns in political participation (Verba and Nie 1972; Wolfinger and Rosenstone 1980; Rosenstone and Hansen 1993; Brady et al. 1994). Studies also measure the influence of candidate/party mobilization or strategies aimed at contacting and persuading individual voters (Gerber and Green 2000; 2005; 2015;

Leighley 1996; Arceneaux and Nickerson 2009). Yet, in illustrating the complexity of participation, parallel scholarship has found that participation patterns differ based on the racial or ethnic group that individuals identify with (Michelson 2003; Wong 2005; Barreto et al. 2004), and in particular, racial and ethnic minorities, while being less motivated by individualized factors, are often mobilized to participate at comparable or even higher rates than their white counterparts when candidates either provide descriptive representation or offer racial appeals (Bobo & Gilliam 1990; Barreto 2010). Much is known in terms of how individual and group-base factors shape participation patterns.

A smaller subset of the existing research has highlighted how the actions undertaken by formal political institutions motivate public participation as well. These studies tend to highlight how rule changes have influenced participation rates. For instance, studies provide evidence that changes in rules around voter registration impact the rate at which Americans turnout to vote (Rosenstone and Wolfinger 1978; Gilliam 1985; Nagler 1991; Ansolabehere and Konisky 2006). The differences in the voting calendar are also systematically related to differences in turnout (Boyd 1981; Hajnal and Lewis 2003). Research has also highlighted the influence of laws requiring voters to show photo identification at the polls on the rate that Americans, particularly African Americans and Latinx, cast ballots in elections (Hershey 2009; Barreto et al. 2009; Bentele & O'Brien 2013). The literature as a whole suggests that institutions do play somewhat of an impactful role in public political participation, but that literature is significantly thinner than the explanations that focus on individual and group behavior.

This chapter builds upon the existing literature that links institutional behavior to public participation. In particular, this chapter examines the extent to which local

institutions' levels of commitment to deliberation practices shapes public participation in public meetings. This chapter argues that the democratic nature of a jurisdiction depends on both the philosophical approach and behavioral strategies developed and deployed by local institutions. The next section provides more description of deliberative democracy and introduces a framework for how an institutional commitment to deliberation practices should influence public participation. The subsequent section outlines the research design utilized to test the argument of this chapter.

### **Deliberative Democracy Depends on Institutions**

Deliberative democracy is the idea that collective reasoning between the public and their representatives should lead to the most democratically made decisions (Habermas 1992; Dryzek 2000; Guttman and Thompson 2004). While deliberative democracy began as a framework debated amongst political theorists and philosophers, scholars interested in the capacity of deliberative democracy with an empirical concern have been making significant contributions to the literature as well. Much of the empirical testing has centered on the extent to which deliberation, as a practice, can foster the political preference malleability necessary for the collective reasoning to take place (See Ryfe 2005). While these studies make important contributions to our understanding of the capacity for deliberation in general to influence non-elite opinion formation, the vast majority of that research does not study deliberation within the context of the institution where policy decisions are actually made. The few studies that examine deliberation in the institutional setting focus on the incorporation of non-elites into the political process

without investigating the impact of deliberation on institutional elites (Fung 2004; Mendelberg and Oleske 2000).

This chapter offers a model of how an institutional commitment to deliberative democracy that is actualized by public officials should result in more reasoned discourse at public meetings. The model relies on specific theoretical expectations that theorists and empiricists have outlined in previous work. First, the legitimacy of the institution and the space it occupies for formal decision-making should motivate public participation. This step comes from deliberative theorists, in particular, who emphasize the central role that the legally binding aspect of deliberation plays in positioning members of the public to understand their stake in the outcomes of policy decisions. Second, public officials of the institution must deploy tactics that position individuals to engage with a focus on shared public interest as opposed to individual self-interest. Third, public officials must create and sustain a culture of listening to appeals made by the public and incorporate the substance of those appeals into the decisions made by the governing body. Figure 4.1 illustrates the full model of how spaces with strong commitments to deliberative democracy should in theory promote more substantive participation. The model shows that I expect that: 1) public officials begin by utilizing the legitimacy of the institution 2) officials should then position the public to pursue the shared public interest and 3) foster a culture of discursive engagement. The governing bodies that institutionalize these three steps should experience public meetings with substantive and civil engagement from members of the public.

## **Research Design**

In order to test this model of institutional commitment to deliberative democracy, this chapter takes a multi-methodological approach. I first turn to the quantitative data utilized in chapters 3 and 4 and reutilizes the deliberative democracy index scale (DDIS). The DDIS is an additive index comprised of 6 questions that were posed to 52 of the 80 school district superintendents throughout Los Angeles County.<sup>28</sup> Table 3.1 in Chapter 3 displays the actual question wording as well as the distribution of the responses. As Table 3.1 shows, each question tests a different principle embedded within the deliberative democracy framework: 1) viewpoint exchange between the public and the officials 2) community commitment to pursuing the shared interest 3) governing board's commitment to pursuing the shared interest 4) collective decision-making between the public and the officials 5) mutual justification of final policy decisions and 6) diversity amongst the deliberation participants. The superintendents' answers to the each question produce a relatively normal set of distributions across the four response options. In previous chapters, I use the DDIS to provide a statistical measure of how democratic districts are relative to one another based specifically on the deliberative democracy framework.

Along with assigning a DDIS score to each school district in the sample, I also, in partnership with the Loyola Marymount University Center for the Study of Los Angeles, performed face-to-face interviews with the superintendents to supplement the surveys used to compile the DDIS. The researchers asked the superintendents open-ended questions, and one of the questions centered on public participation in the school board meetings. Specifically, superintendents were asked:

---

<sup>28</sup> For more detailed explanations of the DDIS see: p. 57 and p. 92.

*“How does your school district encourage active participation in school board meetings?”*

Based on the model presented in the previous section, this chapter expects superintendents’ responses to the question to differ widely as their DDIS score also varies. Along with the correlation, this chapter expects the superintendents of the districts with high DDIS scores to also discuss more of a culture or philosophy around the way they structure public meetings, and this chapter expects that culture to center on: 1) utilizing the legitimacy of the institution 2) focusing public comments on the public interest and 3) active listening and response to public comment.

I only analyze a subset of the superintendent responses. The chapter selects responses based on the DDIS score in order to compare responses from superintendents of districts with DDIS scores that are high, average, or low. The selection is not done at random in order to ensure that districts also differed in terms of the wealth of the constituency. One of the primary concerns is that deliberative democracy might just be a proxy for wealthy districts where parents have the time to participate in school governance. The cases selected show that even wealthy districts can have issues with living up to the principles of deliberative democracy, and as a result, the cases very much highlight the importance of school board officials establishing a culture of deliberation regardless of amount of wealth in the district or the racial or ethnic composition of the community. The empirical question that the next section attempts to answer is: does that difference in commitment to deliberative democracy impact how institutions approach participation in public meetings?

## **Towards What Deliberative Democracy at the Local Level Looks Like**

### Average DDIS Institutions

The qualitative data reveal stark differences in how public officials approach school board participation between districts with different levels of commitment to deliberative democracy. This section begins with the responses from superintendents of districts with DDIS scores close to the average, which on a 1-18 scale equaled 11. The common theme amongst the superintendents of average DDIS scoring districts when responding to the question of how they encourage participation at the school board meetings is they tend to do the bare minimum that the state government expects them to do. For instance, Superintendent A of a district with a DDIS score of 11 states:

*“Basically we get the word out, in terms of we invite, we try to use our parent-training opportunities to kind of educate parents as far as being involved with meetings. We’re still in the situation [like] most places, people are not really involved unless there’s something bad.”*

As a function of the Brown Act,<sup>29</sup> governing bodies in the state of California are required to hold regular meetings and post notifications of meetings at least 48 hours in advance of the actual meeting. Superintendent A’s response suggests that the district performs the minimum requirements. They do invite people to meetings, but Superintendent A admits that attendance is low unless a controversial issue emerges. The district does employ the use of parent-trainings as a way to create a space for discursive interaction, but this effort appears to take place outside of the school board space where the legitimacy of the institution does not reach. Superintendent A’s district creates an

---

<sup>29</sup> The Brown Act or California Government Code 54950 is an act of the state legislature passed in 1953, and it that guarantees the public’s right to attend and participate in meetings of local legislative bodies. See “The Brown Act – State of California.” [http://ag.ca.gov/publications/2003\\_Intro\\_BrownAct.pdf](http://ag.ca.gov/publications/2003_Intro_BrownAct.pdf)

environment where deliberative democracy can occur, but they appear uncommitted to the steps needed to generate routinely substantive discourse at the actual public meetings.

Superintendent B's district does a better job of trying to draw participants into the policy-making space where the board's legitimacy exists.

*"Well one of the things they do, they have a bulletin board of the month and they--schools take turns up here decorating a board in the board room and it has to have an academic theme so that the night of the board meeting whatever school is on, the principal brings students to do the presentation to the board and the students bring their parents of course. So that's a nice way of engaging parents."*

However, by rotating the outreach to different schools each month, Superintendent B's district lacks a plan for focusing the participants on the district-wide interest. Instead, the district's approach pivots amongst the different interests of each individual school. The district utilizes creativity to attract members of the public into the governing space, but the board does not necessarily engage the public on policy issues.

District A and B share a common demographic makeup in that they both serve predominantly poor and minority-populated students. District C, however, is one of the wealthiest districts in the county, but it produced a DDIS score of 10, which is just slightly below the sample's average. The interview response from the superintendent reveals that, as one would expect from a wealthy district, encouraging participation does not require much effort. However, the strong level of engagement does not necessarily lead to exceptional democratic discourse. Superintendent C states:

*"We don't have to encourage it. It just happens. We are in a socially-activist community. I think my frame for this is very different than maybe being in other communities, but we obviously publicize our meetings, we are televised, though not live. We send out board notes to all of our constituents afterwards to let them know what happened. We have done a good job with letting people know. For example, there's this delicate balance that you try to have between having a business meeting—and its not a town hall [meeting], so there is a*



*constant—I have a lot of needy stuff I have to get to with the board—[to an office staffer]: Thank you!— and we have consultants that we’re paying, and lawyers, sometimes, who are sitting in the audience, and so it can be very expensive in a district where you have 98 people that speak in a meeting, and you didn’t know that was happening yet. What we have tried to do –and I think our board has done a good job—is for example, we have an item here that is really about: consider revising board policy—grades, evaluations, student achievement—we know that’s a hot topic, and we know that parents want to know and have input about: are we going to weigh GPAs? Are we not going to weigh GPAs? So when we have an item like that, and we know there’s interest in [it], we makes sure to send it to our PTA Council, we sent it out to our principals, and say “let the parents know we’re talking about this”. We talk about it at the different community groups we’re at. We are aware that parents want to know about this, but how do we let them know about that? I work with the board leadership on “how are we going to message this, how are we going to get this out?” So, I think we have an awareness and not wanting people to feel excluded. But, the reality is, we have lots of folks who show up to every board meeting, and who participate, and speak, and engage. [Interviewer: No pulling teeth to get folks to these meetings] There really isn’t. And they’re pretty good about sitting in the audience and texting each other. So, all of the sudden, fifteen people walk in because somebody is holding the seat, ready for them. So, I always like to give the flipside. When I was in [my previous district], we closed down three schools and FOUR people came to the school board meetings. So, that is a horrible thing. I mean, you want people to have way more outrage over the idea that their local school is being closed. So, we did a lot of prep work in the community. It just shows you the difference in agency. So, those folks just don’t feel as if they have any—if they come, what will they do? Here, there is so much agency that people know that if they come, and if they speak, the board may do something differently.”*

Superintendent C describes how, despite the high levels of attendance at public meetings, the board still confronts an issue with regard to getting the activists and engaged members of the public to embrace the shared interest of the public as a whole.

Still, the districts served by superintendents A, B, and C illustrate what the average commitment to deliberative democracy practices looks like. They demonstrate the baseline. These institutions do at least the bare minimum required to promote public engagement at board meetings, and the two districts with the significant poor and minority student populations utilized at least some sort of creative mechanism just to attract engagement. The wealthy district with an average commitment to deliberative democracy

experiences strong attendance, but it faces an issue coordinating that engagement toward a shared public interest.

### High DDIS Institutions

The districts that received high DDIS scores should, in theory, do a better job at not just encouraging engagement but cultivating a culture of discourse and deliberation.

Moreover, high-scoring districts should sustain this culture through utilizing legitimacy, framing debates around the public interest, and promoting back-and-forth discussion.

Furthermore, although it should look different; this culture should also be achievable in districts with high levels of poor and minority students. All things considered, we should expect to see a different set of institutional norms and practices in districts with high DDIS scores.

Superintendent D serves a district where less than a third of the students live in poverty and the student population boasts the high level of racial and ethnic diversity one would expect from a school district in Southern California. Also, in terms of enrollment sizes, Superintendent D presides over one of the more populated districts in Los Angeles County. That district also has a DDIS score of 13, which makes it one of the most democratic districts as well. Responding to the question of how the district encourages public participation at school board meetings, Superintendent D stated the following:

*“Encourage it? I discourage it! No, I’m just joking. I don’t know. You know, it’s an open meeting. We allow public comment. I-- we have several groups-- I have one tonight, in fact, the district advisory board. We have a parent communication council. So, those solicit input from our key parents on each of the campuses without them actually having to go to the board meetings. It’s not a particular day. So, there are other mechanisms by which they give their input. And, actually, that input carries a lot of weight. So, we make that real. As far as-- we don’t get a lot of community at our board meetings. One thing that draws people is we*

*have special reports that are of interest, because they may highlight one particular program and/or one particular school, and that draws a lot of people to the board meeting, but usually, when that report is over, they all get up and leave. [laughter] So, I don't know...we aren't doing real well in that area, I guess."*

From the statement, it becomes clear how Superintendent D's district differs from the districts that received average scores. Like the average districts, Superintendent D's district also fulfills the standard meeting obligations, but the superintendent describes mechanisms institutionalized by the district that extend beyond what is required. In particular, they decentralize the governance structure in order to funnel engagement into discourse that can be utilized in the policy-making environment. This decentralization also provides room for the back-and-forth discourse that is critical for the process of collective reasoning. Also, by bringing together parent representatives from each school, it positions these street-level agents to come together and discuss the common good of the district as a whole.

Superintendent E's district, which has a similar socioeconomic and racial composition as Superintendent D's district, also has a DDIS score of 13, but Superintendent E's district encourages deliberation by extending the legitimacy of the school district to the actual school sites. This tactic brings the decision-making environment to the parents and community members of each school. They also employ additional mechanisms to attract participation, foster substantive discourse around district issues, and extend the institutional legitimacy beyond the boardroom space.

*"We'll lets see... How do we encourage the active participation? Well I think it's a piece of a bigger picture, I think what we look for it's one of our district goals is it's called [program name removed for purposes of anonymity] so it's not just how do they get involved, it's how do you engage them, how do you empower them, how do you enlist them, and that's meaningful and it's gonna look different for different families based on what they can do and what they can bring to the table. And then from, from a partnership perspective it's not again as I alluded to before not*

*a partnership where you write a check, it's partnership that's programmatic, it's meaningful, it's addressing a particular student's need. So I think we try to create a culture where we're pretty aggressive about our communication, about our mission, about our vision, our success for all takes us all, that's an on-going weekly you know our weekly newsletter that goes out in dual language, lots of FAQ's, questions and answers, visibility at all the school sites. One of the things that we've done in the past is to take our board show on the road and have it hosted at each of the school sites which allows that school community to come because it's when they're hosting and there's more celebration about the unity. So that's cool, that's one the strategies that we use. I think if we have a particular topic where it's more of a work study and it's more education and we want it to be more interactive. We're very targeted in communicating and marketing what that's about. If it's about a bond project if it's about considering a particular policy or something like that where we know there's going to be some sensitivity we're proactive in communicating the literature and the rationale and question and answer. We just made a request that was approved by City Council to have our board meetings now in City chambers so it will be live and it will be televised and that's another participation. We engage a lot of presentations that come from the school sites which involves teachers and students. And so if there's kids involved at the board meetings then there's gonna be a whole bunch of community members there. Now, after they perform or present, they bail and the rest us stay there for the rest of the meeting. So we do things, we do things like that. You know? And there's times, I mean there are times that I will recognize that a brief and efficient meeting without much fanfare and not nineteen people going to the microphone is a strong indication of the faith and the comfort level the community has with the direction that we're going."*

While districts overseen by superintendents D and E might benefit from having a relatively wealthier constituency base, the statements from districts show similar patterns as these wealthy districts in districts that produced a high DDIS score, while the majority of the students in the district are both poor and Latinx. For example, over two-thirds of Superintendent F's district student population lives in poverty, and a vast majority of students in the district are Latinx. Still, when describing public participation at school board meetings, the superintendent stated the following:

*"That's a good question. I think our society in general is overwhelmed with just managing (laughs while speaks) their daily lives. (Interviewer laughs) And so coming out for a board meeting is not the highest priority of everyone. One thing--two things that we try to do--one thing--the majority of our school board meetings are held at schools. So we go out to the school sites to hold the board meetings, to be part of that school community, to listen to see other issues that they have, worries that they have. The second thing that we do to encourage and invite people are a lot of recognitions. Recognitions for teachers, for staff, for students, so*

*that there are a lot of people in the audience that get to see some of the work that the board does. But I would say, number one by location, number two by a lot of recognition.”*

One notices that, like Superintendent E’s district, Superintendent F’s district advances a deliberative environment by extending the legitimacy of the district board to the school sites. Similarly, another district with a large poor and Latinx population, Superintendent G’s district, utilizes a range of unrequired strategies to encourage engagement. Superintendent G reported the following:

*“We do agenda online so we are able to communicate with our entire constituency via the internet. We also remind all of our constituents of our upcoming board meetings through social media as well as the old fashion way on the phone. We do study sessions and invite the public. We have a community council that has a variety of people and it's opened to all that discuss education issues. The mayor here has a youth council and communicates with kids so we do a lot of outreach to insure that people are engaged. ”*

Superintendent G’s district utilizes a combination of the decentralization that we see also undertaken by Superintendent D’s district as well as a strong emphasis on outreach. While the Brown Act merely requires that boards post meetings in advance, Superintendent G’s district takes the initiative to navigate a range of communication strategies to inform constituents about meetings. This strong outreach operates as a more pronounced invitation in to the policy-making space, and the decentralization provides a space for active listening and engaged discourse. Overall, superintendents D, E, F, and G all illustrate the way in which districts with high DDIS scores implement a variety of institutional strategies that help explain what it means to have a district that produces a high score.

### Low DDIS Institutions

While the districts with high DDIS scores tend to exceed the requirements of the state of California, the districts with low DDIS scores primarily stick to the bare

requirements like the average districts, but the low DDIS scoring districts show less of a concern than the average district with dealing with conflict. Furthermore, there is evidence that districts, regardless of their socioeconomic makeup or racial composition, can have this problem. For instance, one district has balanced racial diversity amongst the student population and less than 20% of the students live in poverty, but the district produced a DDIS score of only 7. The head administrator of that district, Superintendent H, had this to say about the school board meetings:

*“Well the meetings obviously are posted, our board members go out to the PTA meetings and give board reports and are there to respond to questions, comments and hear people. So in a lot of ways our board goes out to listen as opposed to people coming in to speak I guess. Does that make sense? So they operate more externally to a board meeting itself but obviously the board meeting itself will post the agendas. They're on video and people are encouraged to come and speak if they have an issue or something they want to share. You know it's, knock on wood, our board meetings are relatively quiet I guess. As far as public comments and things like that. Once in while we have an issue where we get a room full of people and they speak and we move on and so that's basically it but the board stays in contact with people, it's a small town so they're able to get out. ”*

Aside from the regular meeting requirements, Superintendent H's district largely relies on interpersonal networks beyond the boardroom as the route to communicating with the public.

Another school district, which is one of the wealthiest districts in Southern California, produced one of the lowest scores in the sample: a DDIS score of only 6. When asked about the school board meetings at this wealthy district's central office, Superintendent J stated:

*“Well, most people try to stay away from our school board meetings—but, no. So, we have a lot of programs in [our district], like I say, that involve our community. So, many times, we're reporting out on those programs-- or things, or issues--that do involve our city. A lot of them do come to our board meetings, and they report out. That's about it. And, obviously, board*

*meetings aren't the greatest thing in the world to go to. Boring, and way too long, and they're argumentative, at times... It gets weird. I know you probably heard that a lot."*

Superintendent J largely describes a toxic environment for political discourse. The public tends to stay away from the meetings, and the meetings themselves are described as either "boring" or "argumentative," and it seems that the district really has no strategy or mechanism in place to reshape the conflict within the district into collective reasoning.

Superintendent K, who serves a small district where the overwhelming majority of the student populations are both poor and Latinx, gave an even more detailed account of the ways in which conflict disrupts the deliberation process. Superintendent K states:

*"What we try to encourage is positive interactions at school board meetings [laughs]. [Our district] has not been shy in terms of negative participation, and I think that goes back to the governance structure, and the community understanding that: even though it's your right to do so, going to the school board meeting to talk about your specific child or complain about a teacher is not a healthy way to address the needs of the students. What we need at school board meetings is people to come and speak openly about potential agendas items or, or items for discussion. So, for example, if we are thinking of closing a school, or opening a school, or we are thinking about instituting uniforms at a school, or we are thinking of adopting new a policy, or eliminating [sic] transportation, or we're thinking of buying iPads for all the kids, what we want is for people to come to the school board meetings and share their thoughts with us. What we don't want is for people to come and complain about people in the district, because that is what the administration is for. So, if you don't like your principal, you can come talk to the Director of Ed Services. If you don't like the food in the cafeteria, you can come and talk to the Director of Food Services. There are plenty of people that [are] available to address individualized needs. I think when I have seen school board meetings being most effective is when people are focused on the agenda, like, "Hey, look. I know you guys are thinking of buying iPads for every kid in the district. I think we should be careful, because of—this, that, and the other thing." But, not, go there and, say, pointing fingers and threatening the board: "if you vote for this iPads [sic], we're gonna recall you" [laughs]. That doesn't help. That's not very productive. So, I encourage positive participation in which the community can share their ideas with the board, so the board can help process these when they make policy recommendations or program changes."*

Superintendent K describes an environment where individual self-interest dominates discussions, which prevents deliberation and collective reasoning from occurring. According to the superintendent, not only are members of the public not

addressing the public interest, but they also appear to be engaging issues at inopportune times. As we can see from districts with higher DDIS scores, a portion of this problem can be resolved by thinking creatively about ways to restructure the discourse at district meetings. However, because of the greater vulnerability of the student population in Superintendent K's district relative to the other two low DDIS scoring districts, the stakes of the outcomes of the meetings are arguably higher. With almost every student in the district being either an English-language learner, eligible for free or reduced lunch, or a foster child, the district faces dire problems that have extraordinary implications for children who are already at odds to fail. Thus, the inability develop a culture of deliberative democracy practices could be the function of much larger issues.

Nonetheless, there are distinct traits that surface amongst districts with low DDIS scores. In particular, they often struggle with resolving conflict that often occurs over controversial education policy issues, and the districts – for varying reasons – appear unequipped to manage that conflict. As result, low scoring DDIS districts do the bare minimum in terms of holding public meetings, and superintendents of those districts seem to harbor feelings toward the public meetings that are neutral at best.

## **Conclusion**

The theoretical and empirical analysis of this chapter has attempted to edify the statistical measure of deliberative democracy. In the process, this chapter also describes how deliberative democracy between the public and the institutional elites begins with the institution championing deliberative democracy as a cultural practice. The leadership has to set the precedence, and as the responses from the superintendents suggest, that



precedence needs to be set by creative strategies that motivate participation. However, the mechanisms have to do more than just motivate participation broadly speaking.

Leadership must invite participation through: the use of institution's legitimacy, actively framing discourse around the public interest, and providing spaces where members of the public can engage in reciprocal dialogue with lawmakers. Qualitatively, these are the keys that emerge from a look at what the DDIS quantitative metric picks up throughout the dissertation.

### **Implications of this Dissertation**

This dissertation project begins with the question of whether or not public engagement influences what political institutions do. I do narrow the scope of that question to center on deliberative democracy as a way to conceptualize and operationalize public engagement and school districts as spaces through which to observe institutional behavior. That initial broad question, as this dissertation attempts to show, extends beyond disciplinary lines; no field has a monopoly on the answer or even the approach to answering the question. Instead, the questions we ask and the approaches to answering those questions that we develop provide opportunities for various disciplinary approaches to engage questions from an array of vantage points. As a result, this project offers implications for not only political science but also the study of public policy and education policy.

*Political Science*

Political science has a longstanding tradition of studying the questions of why people engage in politics and how do institutional elites make decisions. Consequently, this dissertation falls within that larger tradition. Although both normative and empirical political science are - to varying degrees - concerned with these central questions, modern political science experiences a divide between normative theory and empirical analysis. Researchers interested in empirical investigations of deliberative democracy have been making attempts to bridge the divide, as have scholars who have taken interest in other normative frameworks. This work aligns with the existing empirical studies of normative theories in attempting to demonstrate how important it is to bridge the divide between theory and data.

### *Public Policy*

The research on public policy has been able to explore, particularly through comparative analyses, how various social, economic, and political factors shape government decision-making. Studies of policy, however, often overlook the utility of normative theory. By demonstrating the relationship between deliberative democracy practices and the behavior of both public officials and members of the public, this project suggests that normative frameworks like deliberative democracy carry implications for how governments make public policies. There are tangible intellectual benefits to engaging normative political theory, when asking questions about policy. There are also benefits to testing the influence of political behavior, particularly public engagement, on how governments make policy decisions.

## *Education*

The research on education is vital to our society. Scholars of education have been particularly interested with how to close gaps in academic achievement and access to resources between white and Black, Latinx, and Asian Pacific-Island students as well as the gap between wealthy and poor students. With the bulk of the research in this area focused on classroom and school dynamics, the school district and school board dynamics tend to get overlooked. This work serves to highlight the importance of the politics happening at the school district level. In particular, this project underscores the importance promoting public engagement aimed at fostering deliberation at actual school board meetings and other school governance institutional spaces.

### **Questions Remaining**

This dissertation project represents a foundational step towards a larger understanding. As a result, it leaves several questions dangling. The major question is: who actually participates in public deliberation, and what factors go into why they choose to do so? A small set of political scientists have already begun attempts to engage these questions (Neblo et al. 2010; Esterling et al. 2011; Bowler et al. 2007), but we still need to know more in terms of sustained participation in public deliberations. What factors determine the extent to which people are willing to engage in public deliberations on a routine basis or over the course of several meetings? This question has received less attention.

What actors are best for evaluating and measuring deliberative democracy at the local level? This project uses responses from superintendents, but an ideal metric would

include both school board members and members of the public as well in order to filter through any bias that may emerge from the superintendent responses. Would different actors develop different perceptions of the state of deliberative democracy within their municipality? Would these potentially different perceptions in any way influence individuals' behavior? In other words, is there a difference between a district that *is* democratic and one that merely *seems* democratic? If so, are the perceptions of democracy stronger predictors of behavior than the actual state of deliberative democracy?

How reliable is this study beyond Southern California? Urban areas and municipalities, period, differ tremendously across the United States. How can one be sure that there is not something unique to the culture of Southern California that allows for the DDIS to perform relatively well? Will the DDIS work in a different urban area or even an area that is not a part of a large metropolitan area?

How reliable is the DDIS measure as a metric for democracy? If someone were to attend a series of meetings at each of the school districts in the sample, would what he or she sees match up with the DDIS score assigned to the district, or would the score actually capture something else? If so, what is the DDIS actually capturing, and what types of research strategies does one need in order to develop a DDIS that provides a reliable and robust measure of deliberative democracy?

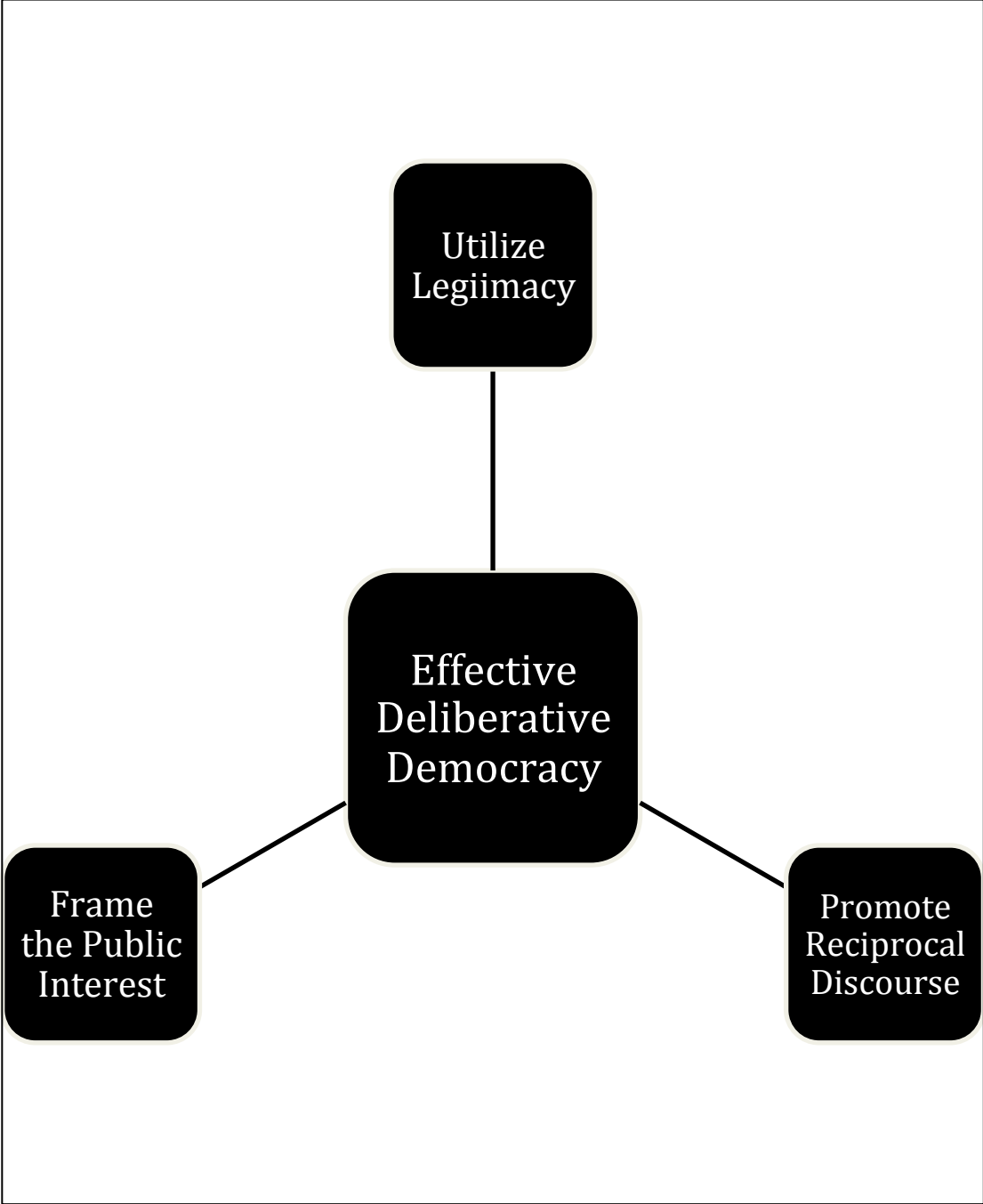
## **Future Research**

Future research will explore the questions that surface from this project. The first area of future research will look to take up the question of the reliability of the DDIS. This will be done by replicating and extending the initial study in this dissertation to other

urban areas and municipalities. Ideally, I would like to be able to develop a DDIS score for every municipality in the United States. However, the next step is to replicate, extend, and evaluate board meetings along the way in order to ensure that the DDIS is actually measuring deliberation and collective reasoning between public officials and members of the public.

Future research will also explore both why individuals decide to participate in public deliberations consistently as well as how public officials react to different approaches from members of the public who speak at meetings. Regarding why individuals participate, this will primarily center on conducting entry and exit interviews of members of the public who show up at public meetings. As far as how elites respond, this will involve a series of experiments in which I send members of the public into a public meeting around a specific issue and assign different frames to way the participants discuss the political issues. This will test the extent to which public officials engage in deliberation with members of the public. There are a number of different directions to take research in this area. This dissertation is but the first step toward a much longer and more in-depth agenda on how deliberative democracy influences political institutions.

**Figure 5.1: Model of Institutional Commitment to Deliberative Democracy**



**Appendix I**  
**Superintendent Survey Information**

## **Leaders Survey: Public School Superintendents of Los Angeles County**

### **SAMPLING**

The universe for the Leaders Survey was the 80 sitting superintendents of public school districts of Los Angeles County (interim and acting superintendents were included if necessary). The survey was completed by 52 of the 80 superintendents.

### **DATA COLLECTION**

In an initial letter sent to each of the 80 public school superintendents, the Center for the Study of Los Angeles explained the purpose of the survey and requested their participation in an in-person survey. Researchers followed up with email and phone requests. Surveys were conducted over a four and a half month period from October 2015 to February 2016. Superintendents were surveyed in meeting rooms or offices at their respective school districts. The survey consisted of three sets of questions which the superintendents were asked to complete on an iPad or on paper, and a set of open-ended interview questions. Surveys took about 45 minutes to complete.

The subject consent form took approximately five minutes to read and sign, including time for any questions from the superintendents for the researcher about the survey or the consent process. At any point the superintendent was allowed to opt out of the survey. In addition, superintendents were informed that there were minimal risks associated with this study, that no penalties existed if he or she chose not to participate, and that no individual responses would be reported without his or her explicit consent.



## Superintendent Survey Control Measures Question Wording

<b>Awareness 1</b>
"Do you believe parents in your district are aware of the following changes in [the Local Control Funding Formula]? Very aware, Somewhat aware, Not aware. " Coded "Very aware" as 1.
<b>Awareness 2</b>
"Do you believe parents in your district are aware of the following changes in [Common Core Standards]? Very aware, Somewhat aware, Not aware. " Coded "Very aware" as 1.
<b>Awareness 3</b>
"Do you believe parents in your district are aware of the following changes in [Smarter Balance Assessment]? Very aware, Somewhat aware, Not aware. " Coded "Very aware" as 1.
<b>Business Community</b>
"How would you characterize your relationship as superintendent to [the business community]? Positive relationship, neutral relationship, or negative relationship." Coded "Positive relationship" as 1.
<b>Teachers' Unions</b>
"How would you characterize your relationship as superintendent to [unions in your district]? Positive relationship, neutral relationship, or negative relationship." Coded "Positive relationship" as 1.
<b>Gender</b>
"What is your gender? Male, Female." Coded "Male" as 1.
<b>Native</b>
"Do you consider yourself an Angeleno?" Yes, No." Coded "Yes" as 1.
<b>Ideology of Superintendent</b>
"Politically, do you consider yourself to be very liberal, somewhat liberal, moderate, somewhat conservative, or very conservative?" Coded "Very liberal" and "somewhat liberal" as 1 (Liberal). Coded "Moderate" as 1 (Moderate). Coded "Somewhat conservative" and "Very conservative" as 1 (Conservative).
<b>Party of Superintendent</b>
"At your current address, what is your current voter registration status? Democrat, Republican, Independent, Other party, Not registered." Coded "Democrat" as 1 (Democrat), "Republican" as 1 (Republican), "Independent" as 1 (Independent), "Not registered" as 1 (No party).
<b>Superintendent Education</b>
"What is the last grade or level you completed in school? Elementary(8 or fewer years), Some high school(9 to 11 years), High school graduate(12 years), Technical vocational school, Some college, College graduate, Some graduate school, Graduate, professional, or doctorate degree." Coded "Graduate, professional, or doctorate degree" as 1.
<b>Salary</b>
"What is your current salary?" Coded as "< 200801" as 1, "> 200800 but < 220501" as 2, "> 220500 but < 242001" as 3, and "> 242000" as 4. (Divided salaries based on quartiles).
<b>Experience</b>
"How long have you been in your current superintendent position? Less than 1 year, 1 to 5 years, 6 to 10 years, 11 to 15 years, 16 or more years." Coded "Less than 1 year" as 1, "1 to 5 years" as 2, "6 to 10 years", "11 to 15 years, and "16 or more years" as 3.
<b>Age</b>
"In what year were you born? Coded "> 1965" as 1, "> 1960 but < 1966" as 2, "> 1954 but < 1961" as 3, and "< 1955" as 4.
<b>Race Relations</b>
"How would you rate the [race relations] of your district compared to other districts in Los Angeles County? Better, About the same, worse. Coded "Better" as 1.
<b>Race of Superintendent</b>
"What ethnic group do you consider yourself a part of or feel closest to? African-American/Black, Asian, Caucasian/White, Latino(a)/Hispanic, Other(open-ended)." Coded "African-American/Black" as 1 (Black), "Asian" as (Asian), "Caucasian/White" as 1 (White), "Latino(a)/Hispanic" as 1 (Latino), and "Other" as 1 (Other).

Source: 2016 Los Angeles Region Leaders Outlook Survey

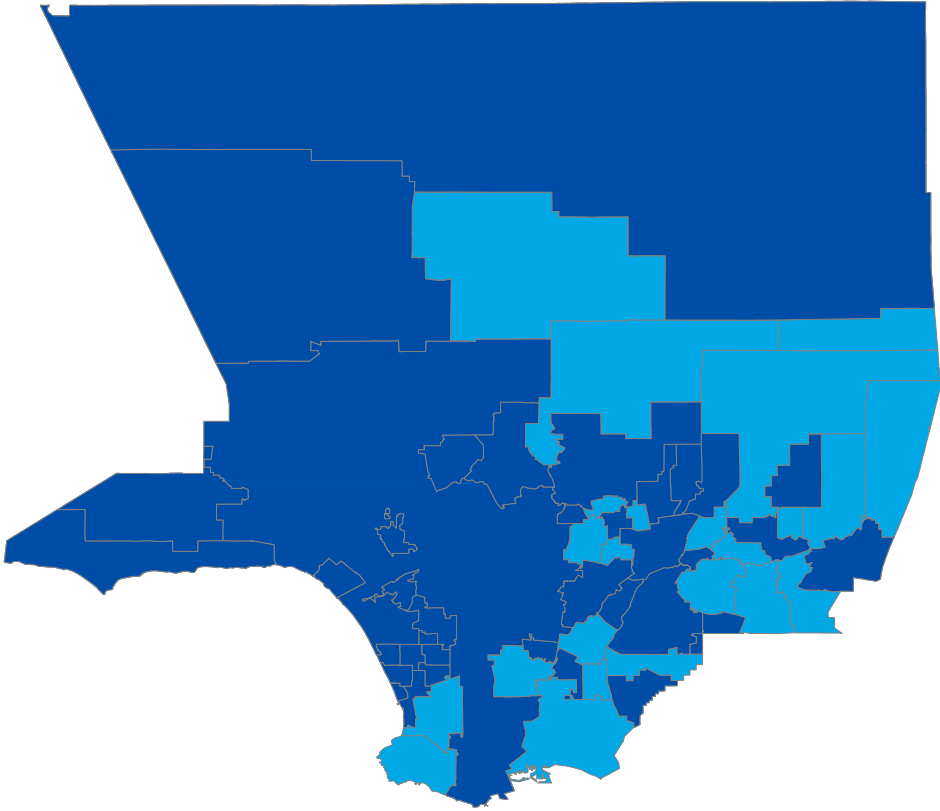
### Superintendent Survey Summary Statistics

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Mean(Data)</b>	<b>SD(Data)</b>	<b>Mean(Sample)</b>	<b>SD(Sample)</b>	<b>Range</b>
<b><i>Survey Measures</i></b>					
Deliberative Democracy	11.192	3.367	11.245	3.380	1,18
Exchange Viewpoints	1.923	0.682	1.975	0.676	0,3
Shared Interest(Community)	1.788	0.750	1.810	0.773	0,3
Shared Interest(Board)	2.385	0.745	2.380	0.706	0,3
Involved Citizens with Policy	1.634	0.742	1.605	0.743	0,3
Mutual Justification	1.885	0.832	1.915	0.819	0,3
Diversity(Deliberation)	1.577	0.915	1.560	0.889	0,3
Awareness	1.115	1.113	1.233	1.141	0,3
Racial Conflict	0.481	0.495	0.485	0.494	0,1
Empowerment	0.712	0.457	0.716	0.452	0,1
Minority Empowerment	0.346	0.480	0.344	0.476	0,1
Business Community	0.808	0.398	0.625	0.405	0,1
Teachers' Unions	0.865	0.345	0.725	0.343	0,1
Male	0.535	0.503	0.525	0.501	0,1
Native	0.596	0.495	0.620	0.487	0,1
Liberal	0.346	0.480	0.370	0.484	0,1
Moderate	0.481	0.505	0.495	0.501	0,1
Conservative	0.077	0.269	0.065	0.247	0,1
Democrat	0.712	0.457	0.755	0.431	0,1
Independent	0.077	0.269	0.080	0.272	0,1
Republican	0.17	0.382	0.130	0.337	0,1
Education (Grad. Degree)	0.865	0.345	0.890	0.314	0,1
Salary	2.500	1.129	2.335	1.144	1,4
Experience	2.096	0.748	2.075	0.715	1,3
Age	2.577	1.126	2.510	1.142	1,4
New Policy	0.135	0.345	0.140	0.348	0,1
Labor Costs	0.500	0.505	0.470	0.500	0,1
Multilingual Education	0.269	0.448	0.285	0.453	0,1
Special Education	0.519	0.505	0.510	0.501	0,1
<b><i>Aggregate District Measures</i></b>					
Enrollment	22086.580	88603.730	16233.925	63962.020	223, 646683
Poverty	57.479	29.141	59.061	38.790	2,96
Diversity Index	31.923	16.807	32.285	17.177	2,60
Percent Black	6.335	8.191	6.765	8.696	0,40
Percent White	22.675	23.703	22.043	23.528	0,76
Percent Latinx	57.338	28.346	56.643	28.347	7,98
Percent Asian	8.431	13.049	9.280	14.041	0,65
Average Teacher Salaries	77045.500	7189.446	78429.340	7204.200	66000, 91000
Percent English Language Learners	20.306	13.467	21.541	14.035	1,58
Percent Free Reduced Lunch/ English Language Learners/Foster Youth	61.071	28.762	62.763	28.343	3,98

Source: 2016 Los Angeles Region Leaders Outlook Survey & Ed-Data Education Data Partnership

Notes: Appendix features both the original sample of superintendent responses and aggregate information on their districts as well as the larger sample of cases randomly sampled with replacement from the original sample cases.

# Map of School Districts whose Superintendents were Surveyed



■ District with superintendent interviewed (52)  
■ District without superintendent interviewed (28)

**PLEASE NOTE:**  
*Some districts overlap (i.e., an elementary school district overlaps with a high school district). All areas shaded as interviewed indicate at least one (often both) of the superintendents in that geographic area were interviewed.*

**Appendix II**  
**Public Opinion Survey Information**

## Los Angeles Public Opinion Survey

### SAMPLING

Since the primary purpose of this study was to gather representative input from adult residents within the Los Angeles region, an initial random digit dial (RDD) sample was employed. The RDD sample was drawn by determining the active phone exchanges (the first three numbers of a seven-digit phone number) and blocks with a given sampling area (in this case, by the zip codes that comprise the county). A random list of all active residential and cell phone numbers in the area was produced. This method included both listed and unlisted phone numbers. Listed samples were used to meet particular quotas for racial/ethnic categories and geographic location.

### SCREENERS

The protocol for this study involved asking potential respondents a series of questions, referred to as screeners, which were used to ensure that the person lived within the county and was at least 18 years old. The target sample size was 1,200 residents from the city of Los Angeles and 1,200 residents from Los Angeles County who live outside the city of LA. The first quota was a random digit dialing of approximately 1,300 residents (with 30% cell phone). Upon completion of each wave, the remaining necessary quotas were determined, and the racial/ ethnic and geographic quotas were employed: 250 African American residents, 400 Asian residents, 400 residents from the San Fernando Valley (only within the city of Los Angeles) and 400 residents from the San Gabriel Valley. Given the demographic proportion of Latino and white residents in the region, both groups were expected to naturally fall out from the initial wave of 1,300 subjects.

### DATA COLLECTION

Telephone interviews were conducted the first four full weeks in January 2016 and first two weeks in February between the hours of 4:30pm and 9pm during the week, 10am to 4pm on Saturday, and 10am to 5pm on Sunday. The survey was translated into Spanish, Mandarin, and Korean. Translators who spoke Spanish, Mandarin, and Korean were available to conduct interviews for residents who only spoke, or were more comfortable speaking any of those languages.

The margin of error is  $\pm 3.0\%$  for the entire sample of 2,425 residents.

**Public Opinion Survey Summary Statistics**

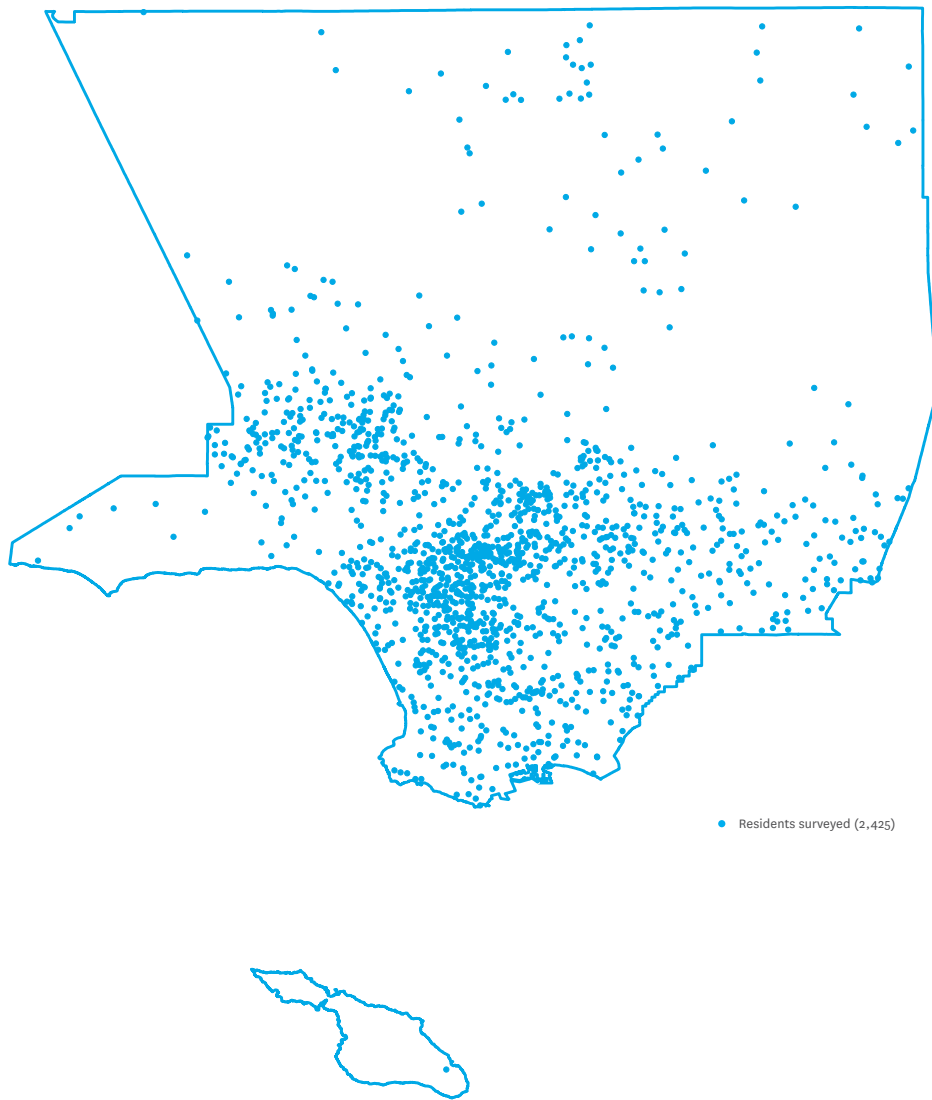
<b>Variable</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Range</b>
<i>District-Level</i>			
Deliberative Democracy	8.457	3.081	1,18
Racial Conflict	0.820	0.615	0,1
Minority Empowerment	0.807	0.394	0,1
Ideology Alignment	0.100	0.300	0,1
Political Awareness	1.630	0.865	0,3
Percent poverty (students)	71.083	14.699	2,96
<i>Individual-Level</i>			
Parent	0.280	0.449	0,1
Married	0.503	0.500	0,1
Homeowner	0.330	0.470	0,1
Lower Class	0.147	0.354	0,1
Working Class	0.252	0.434	0,1
Middle Class	0.399	0.490	0,1
Upper Class	0.146	0.353	0,1
High School or Below	0.366	0.482	0,1
Some College	0.200	0.400	0,1
College Graduate	0.244	0.430	0,1
Beyond College	0.174	0.379	0,1
Citizen	0.600	0.490	0,1
Black	0.178	0.382	0,1
Latinx	0.271	0.445	0,1
Asian	0.218	0.413	0,1
White	0.302	0.459	0,1
Liberal	0.370	0.483	0,1
Moderate	0.240	0.427	0,1
Conservative	0.302	0.459	0,1
<i>Political Evaluations</i>			
School District Quality-Satisfied	0.651	0.477	0,1
Good Place to Raise Children	0.717	0.451	0,1
Local Government Transparent	0.841	0.822	0,2
Willing to Pay More Taxes	0.263	0.440	0,1

**Public Opinion Survey Dependent and Control Variable Question Wording**

<b>Quality of K-12 Public Education Good</b>
As they relate to your city, how would you rate the quality of K-12 public education using the scale good, fair, or poor? <i>Coded as 1 for "good"</i>
<b>Place to Raise Children</b>
If someone was interested in moving to your neighborhood, would you recommend it as a place to raise children, yes or no? <i>Coded as 1 for "yes"</i>
<b>Local Government Transparent</b>
Do you feel that your local government is open and transparent about its operations? <i>Coded as 1 for "Somewhat" and 2 for "Yes"</i>
<b>Pay More Taxes</b>
If the state said it needed more money to maintain current funding for K-12 public education, would you be willing to pay higher taxes for this purpose? Yes or no. <i>Coded as 1 for "Yes"</i>
<b>Parent</b>
How many children 17 years or younger live in your household? <i>Coded as 1 for all responses except "none" or "DK/refused"</i>
<b>Married</b>
Are you currently single, married, divorced, separated, widowed, or in a domestic partnership? <i>Coded as 1 for "married" or "domestic partnership"</i>
<b>Homeowner</b>
Do you rent your home, are you buying it with a mortgage, or is it entirely paid for? <i>Coded as 1 for "mortgage" or "paid for"</i>
<b>Class</b>
A person's social class is determined by a number of things including education, income, occupation, and wealth. If you were asked to use of these five names for your social class, which would you say you belong in: upper class, upper-middle class, middle class, working class, or lower class? <i>Coded separately as 1s for each category</i>
<b>Education Attainment</b>
What is the last grade or level you completed in school? <i>Coded separately as 1s for each category</i>
<b>Citizen</b>
Are you a U.S.-born citizen, a foreign-born naturalized citizen, or are you not a citizen? <i>Coded as 1 for citizen</i>
<b>Racial Identification</b>
The first question is: What ethnic group do you consider yourself a part of or feel closest to? <i>Coded separately as 1s for each group</i>
<b>Political Ideology</b>
Politically, do you consider yourself to be very liberal, somewhat liberal, moderate, somewhat conservative, or very conservative? <i>Coded separately as 1s for each group</i>



## Map of Public Opinion Survey Respondents' Location



## References

Ackerman, Bruce A., and James S. Fishkin. *Deliberation day*. Yale University Press, 2004.

Ansolabehere, Stephen, and David M. Konisky. "The introduction of voter registration and its effect on turnout." *Political Analysis* (2006): 83-100.

Arceneaux, Kevin. "Partisan Mobilization, Persuasion, and Knowledge: A Field Experiment." (2004).

Arnold, R. Douglas. *The logic of congressional action*. Yale University Press, 1992.

Arnold, R. Douglas, and Nicholas Carnes. "Holding mayors accountable: New York's executives from Koch to Bloomberg." *American Journal of Political Science* 56, no. 4 (2012): 949-963.

Ashworth, Scott, and Joshua D. Clinton. "Does advertising exposure affect turnout?." *Quarterly Journal of Political Science* 2, no. 1 (2007): 27-41.

Barber, Benjamin R. *Strong democracy: Participatory politics for a new age*. Univ of California Press, 2003.

Barreto, Matt A. *Ethnic cues: The role of shared ethnicity in Latino political participation*. University of Michigan Press, 2010.

Barreto, Matt A., Gary M. Segura, and Nathan D. Woods. "The mobilizing effect of majority-minority districts on Latino turnout." *American Political Science Review* 98, no. 01 (2004): 65-75.

Bartels, Larry M. "Partisanship and voting behavior, 1952-1996." *American Journal of Political Science* (2000): 35-50.

Benetsky, Megan J., Charlynn A. Burd, and Melanie A. Rapino. "Youth Adult Migration: 2007-2009 to 2010-2012." *United States Census Bureau*. 2015.  
<https://www.census.gov/library/publications/2015/acs/acs-31.html>

Benhabib, Seyla. "Toward a deliberative model of democratic legitimacy." *Democracy and difference: Contesting the boundaries of the political* (1996): 67-94.

Benhabib, Seyla. *Democracy and difference: Contesting the boundaries of the political*. Princeton University Press, 1996.

Bentele, Keith G., and Erin E. O'brien. "Jim Crow 2.0? Why states consider and adopt restrictive voter access policies." *Perspectives on Politics* 11, no. 04 (2013): 1088-1116.

Berry, Christopher R., and William G. Howell. "Accountability and local elections: Rethinking retrospective voting." *Journal of Politics* 69, no. 3 (2007): 844-858.

Berry, Jeffrey M., Kent E. Portney, and Ken Thomson. *The rebirth of urban democracy*. Brookings Institution Press, 2002.

Bickford, Susan. *The dissonance of democracy: Listening, conflict, and citizenship*. Cornell University Press, 1996.

Bloomfield, Dan, Kevin Collins, Charlotte Fry, and Richard Munton. "Deliberation and inclusion: vehicles for increasing trust in UK public governance?." *Environment and planning C: Government and Policy* 19, no. 4 (2001): 501-513.

Bobo, Lawrence, and Franklin D. Gilliam. "Race, sociopolitical participation, and black empowerment." *American Political Science Review* 84, no. 02 (1990): 377-393.

Boyd, Richard W. "Decline of US Voter Turnout Structural Explanations." *American Politics Quarterly* 9, no. 2 (1981): 133-159.

Brady, Henry E., Sidney Verba, and Kay Lehman Schlozman. "Beyond SES: A resource model of political participation." *American Political Science Review* 89, no. 02 (1995): 271-294.

Brender, Adi. "The effect of fiscal performance on local government election results in Israel: 1989–1998." *Journal of Public Economics* 87, no. 9 (2003): 2187-2205.

Bock, R. Darrell, ed. *Multilevel analysis of educational data*. Elsevier, 2014.

Browning, Rufus P., Dale Rogers Marshall, and David H. Tabb, eds. *Racial politics in American cities*. Longman Publishing Group, 1997.

Campbell, Angus, Philip E. Converse, Warren E. Miller, and Donald E. Stokes. "The American voter." (1960).

Caren, Neal. "Big city, big turnout? Electoral participation in American cities." *Journal of Urban Affairs* 29, no. 1 (2007): 31-46.

Chambers, Simone. "Deliberative democratic theory." *Annual review of political science* 6, no. 1 (2003): 307-326.

Chambers, Simone. *Reasonable democracy: Jiirgen Habermas and the politics of discourse*. Vol. 11. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996.

Cohen, Joshua. "Deliberation and democratic legitimacy." *1997* (1989): 67-92.

Craw, Michael. "Deciding to provide: Local decisions on providing social welfare." *American Journal of Political Science* 54, no. 4 (2010): 906-920.

Dahl, Robert. "Who govern." *New Haven: Yale* (1961).

Dahlgren, Peter. "The Internet, public spheres, and political communication: Dispersion and deliberation." *Political communication* 22, no. 2 (2005): 147-162.

Dawson, Michael C. *Behind the mule: Race and class in African-American politics*. Princeton University Press, 1995.

Druckman, James N., and Kjersten R. Nelson. "Framing and deliberation: How citizens' conversations limit elite influence." *American Journal of Political Science* 47, no. 4 (2003): 729-745.

Dryzek, John S. *Deliberative democracy and beyond: Liberals, critics, contestations*. Oxford University Press on Demand, 2000.

Erie, Steven P., and Vladimir Kogan. "Machine Bosses, Reformers, and the Politics of Ethnic and Minority Incorporation." *The Oxford Handbook of American Immigration and Ethnicity* (2016): 302.

Esterling, Kevin M., Michael A. Neblo, and David MJ Lazer. "Means, Motive, And Opportunity In Becoming Informed About Politics A Deliberative Field Experiment With Members Of Congress And Their Constituents." *Public Opinion Quarterly* (2011).

Fenno, Richard F., and Richard F. Fenno Jr. *Home style: House members in their districts*. HarperCollins, 1978.

Fiorina, Morris P. "Retrospective voting in American national elections." (1981).

Fishkin, James S., and Peter Laslett, eds. *Debating deliberative democracy*. John Wiley & Sons, 2003.

Fishkin, James S. *When the people speak: Deliberative democracy and public consultation*. Oxford University Press, 2011.

Fishkin, James S. "Consulting the public through deliberative polling." *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* 22, no. 1 (2003): 128-133.

Fishkin, James S. *Democracy and deliberation: New directions for democratic reform*. Vol. 217. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991.

Fishkin, James S. *The voice of the people: Public opinion and democracy*. Yale university press, 1997.

Fishkin, James S., and Robert C. Luskin. "Experimenting with a democratic ideal: Deliberative polling and public opinion." *Acta Politica* 40, no. 3 (2005): 284-298.

Fishkin, James S., Baogang He, Robert C. Luskin, and Alice Siu. "Deliberative democracy in an unlikely place: Deliberative polling in China." *British Journal of Political Science* 40, no. 02 (2010): 435-448.

Frasure-Yokley, Lorrie. *Racial and Ethnic Politics in American Suburbs*. Cambridge University Press, 2015.

Frey, William. "A Big City Growth Revival?" *Brookings Institute*. 2013.  
<https://www.brookings.edu/opinions/a-big-city-growth-revival/>

Fung, Archon. *Empowered participation: reinventing urban democracy*. Princeton University Press, 2004.

Fung, Archon, and Erik Olin Wright. "Deepening democracy: innovations in empowered participatory governance." *Politics & Society* 29, no. 1 (2001): 5-41.

Fung, Archon, and Erik Olin Wright. "Deepening democracy: innovations in empowered participatory governance." *Politics and society* 29, no. 1 (2001): 5-42.

Gastil, John. *By popular demand: Revitalizing representative democracy through deliberative elections*. Univ of California Press, 2000.



Gerber, Alan S., and Donald P. Green. "The effects of canvassing, telephone calls, and direct mail on voter turnout: A field experiment." *American political science review* 94, no. 03 (2000): 653-663.

Gerber, Alan S., and Donald P. Green. "Correction to Gerber and Green (2000), replication of disputed findings, and reply to Imai (2005)." *American Political Science Review* 99, no. 02 (2005): 301-313.

Gilliam Jr, Franklin D. "Influences on voter turnout for US House elections in non-presidential years." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* (1985): 339-351.

Gilliam Jr, Frank D. "Exploring minority empowerment: Symbolic politics, governing coalitions and traces of political style in Los Angeles." *American Journal of Political Science* (1996): 56-81.

Gilliam, Franklin D., and Karen M. Kaufmann. "Is there an empowerment life cycle? Long-term black empowerment and its influence on voter participation." *Urban Affairs Review* 33, no. 6 (1998): 741-766.

Green, Donald P., Alan S. Gerber, and David W. Nickerson. "Getting out the vote in local elections: results from six door-to-door canvassing experiments." *Journal of Politics* 65, no. 4 (2003): 1083-1096.

Green, Donald P., and Alan S. Gerber. *Get out the vote: How to increase voter turnout*.  
Brookings Institution Press, 2015.

Gutmann, Amy, and Dennis Thompson. "Democratic disagreement." (1999).

Gutmann, Amy, and Dennis Thompson. *Why deliberative democracy?*. Princeton University  
Press, 2005.

Habermas, Jürgen. "The theory of communicative action, volume I." *Boston: Beacon* (1984).

Habermas, J., 1996. *Between facts and norms: Contributions to a discourse theory of law and  
democracy*. Mit Press.

Hajnal, Zoltan L. *America's uneven democracy: race, turnout, and representation in city  
politics*. Cambridge University Press, 2009.

Hajnal, Zoltan L., and Paul G. Lewis. "Municipal institutions and voter turnout in local  
elections." *Urban Affairs Review* 38, no. 5 (2003): 645-668.

Hajnal, Zoltan L., and Jessica Trounstein. "Who or what governs?: The effects of economics,  
politics, institutions, and needs on local spending." *American Politics Research* 38, no. 6  
(2010): 1130-1163.

Henig, Jeffrey R., Richard C. Hula, Marion Orr, and Desiree S. Pedescleaux. *The color of school reform: Race, politics, and the challenge of urban education*. Princeton University Press, 2001.

Hess, Frederick M. "A License to Lead? A New Leadership Agenda for America's Schools." (2003).

Hess, Frederick M. *Spinning wheels: The politics of urban school reform*. Brookings Institution Press, 2011.

Howell, Susan. *Race, Performance, and Approval of Mayors*. Springer, 2007.

Howell, Susan E., and William P. McLean. "Performance and race in evaluating minority mayors." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 65, no. 3 (2001): 321-343.

Howell, Susan E., and Huey L. Perry. "Black mayors/white mayors: Explaining their approval." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 68, no. 1 (2004): 32-56.

Hunter, Floyd. "Community power structure A study of decision makers." (1953).

Iyengar, Shanto, Robert C. Luskin, and James S. Fishkin. "Facilitating informed public opinion: evidence from face-to-face and online deliberative polls." In *Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Philadelphia, PA*. 2003.

Jones-Correa, Michael, ed. *Governing American cities: Inter-ethnic coalitions, competition, and conflict*. Russell Sage Foundation, 2001.

Junn, Jane, and Natalie Masuoka. "Asian American identity: Shared racial status and political context." *Perspectives on Politics* 6, no. 04 (2008): 729-740.

Karpowitz, Christopher F., Tali Mendelberg, and Lee Shaker. "Gender inequality in deliberative participation." *American Political Science Review* 106, no. 03 (2012): 533-547.

Kaufmann, Karen M. "Black and Latino voters in Denver: Responses to each other's political leadership." *Political Science Quarterly* 118, no. 1 (2003): 107-125.

Kaufmann, Karen M. *The urban voter: Group conflict and mayoral voting behavior in American cities*. University of Michigan Press, 2004.

Kramer, Gerald H. "Short-term fluctuations in US voting behavior, 1896–1964." *American political science review* 65, no. 01 (1971): 131-143.

Lazarsfeld, Paul Felix, Bernard Berelson, and Hazel Gaudet. "The peoples choice: how the voter makes up his mind in a presidential campaign." (1948).

Leib, Ethan J. *Deliberative democracy in America: A proposal for a popular branch of government*. Penn State Press, 2010.

Levine, Myron. *Urban Politics: Cities and Suburbs in a Global Age*. Routledge, 2015.

Lewis, Jeffrey B., and Keith T. Poole. "Measuring bias and uncertainty in ideal point estimates via the parametric bootstrap." *Political Analysis* 12, no. 2 (2004): 105-127.

Lewis-Beck, Michael S. *Economics and elections: The major Western democracies*. University of Michigan Press, 1990.

Lewis-Beck, Michael S., and Mary Stegmaier. "Economic determinants of electoral outcomes." *Annual Review of Political Science* 3, no. 1 (2000): 183-219.

Lindeman, Mark. "Opinion quality and policy preferences in deliberative research." *Political decision making, deliberation and participation* 6 (2002): 195-224.

Logan, John R., and Harvey Luskin Molotch. *Urban Fortunes: The Political Economy of Place*. Univ of California Press, 1987.

Lupia, Arthur. "Can online deliberation improve politics? Scientific foundations for success." *Scientific Foundations for Success* (2009).

Luskin, Robert C., and James S. Fishkin. "Deliberative polling, public opinion, and democracy: the case of the National Issues Convention." In *Slightly revised from a paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, Boston*. 1998.

Luskin, Robert C., James S. Fishkin, and Roger Jowell. "Considered opinions: Deliberative polling in Britain." *British Journal of Political Science* 32, no. 03 (2002): 455-487.

Mansbridge, Jane J. *Beyond adversary democracy*. University of Chicago Press, 1983.

Mansbridge, Jane. "Everyday talk in the deliberative system." (1999).

Mayhew, David R. *Congress: The electoral connection*. Yale University Press, 1974.

Mendelberg, Tali. *The race card: Campaign strategy, implicit messages, and the norm of equality*. Princeton University Press, 2001.

Mendelberg, Tali. "The deliberative citizen: Theory and evidence." *Political decision making, deliberation and participation* 6, no. 1 (2002): 151-193.

Mendelberg, Tali, and John Oleske. "Race and public deliberation." *Political Communication* 17, no. 2 (2000): 169-191.

Michelson, Melissa R. "Getting out the Latino vote: How door-to-door canvassing influences voter turnout in rural central California." *Political behavior* 25, no. 3 (2003): 247-263.

Miller, Wakken E., and Donald E. Stokes. "Constituency influence in Congress." *American political science review* 57, no. 01 (1963): 45-56.

McClain, Paula D. "The Changing Dynamics of Urban Politics: Black and Hispanic Municipal Employment—Is There Competition?." *The Journal of Politics* 55, no. 02 (1993): 399-414.

Meier, Kenneth J., and Joseph Stewart. "Cooperation and conflict in multiracial school districts." *The Journal of Politics* 53, no. 04 (1991): 1123-1133.

Meier, Kenneth J., Paula D. McClain, J. L. Polinard, and Robert D. Wrinkle. "Divided or together? Conflict and cooperation between African Americans and Latinos." *Political Research Quarterly* 57, no. 3 (2004): 399-409.

Mueller, Dennis C., Robert D. Tollison, and Thomas D. Willett. "Representative democracy via random selection." *Public Choice* 12, no. 1 (1972): 57-68.

Moe, Terry M. *Special interest: Teachers unions and America's public schools*. Brookings Institution Press, 2011.

Nagler, Jonathan. "The effect of registration laws and education on US voter turnout." *The American Political Science Review* (1991): 1393-1405.

Neblo, Michael A., Kevin M. Esterling, Ryan P. Kennedy, David MJ Lazer, and Anand E. Sokhey. "Who wants to deliberate—and why?." *American Political Science Review* 104, no. 03 (2010): 566-583.

Niemi, Richard G., and M. Kent Jennings. "Issues and inheritance in the formation of party identification." *American Journal of Political Science* (1991): 970-988.

Oliver, J. Eric. *Democracy in suburbia*. Princeton University Press, 2001.

Oliver, J. Eric, Shang E. Ha, and Zachary Callen. *Local elections and the politics of small-scale democracy*. Princeton University Press, 2012.

Oliver, J. Eric, and Shang E. Ha. "Vote choice in suburban elections." *American Political Science Review* 101, no. 03 (2007): 393-408.

Orfield, Gary, and Erica Frankenberg. "Increasingly segregated and unequal schools as courts reverse policy." *Educational Administration Quarterly* 50, no. 5 (2014): 718-734.

Orr, Marion. *Black Social Capital: The Politics of School Reform in Baltimore, 1986-1998*. *Studies in Government and Public Policy*. University Press of Kansas, 1999.



Parker, Christopher S., and Matt A. Barreto. *Change they can't believe in: the Tea Party and reactionary politics in America*. Princeton University Press, 2013.

Peterson, Paul E. *City limits*. University of Chicago Press, 1981.

Peterson, Paul E. "The Price of Federalism." (1995).

Pitkin, Hanna Fenichel. *The concept of representation*. Univ of California Press, 1967.

Poole, Keith T., and Howard Rosenthal. *Congress: A political-economic history of roll call voting*. Oxford University Press on Demand, 2000.

Popkin, Samuel L. *The reasoning voter: Communication and persuasion in presidential campaigns*. University of Chicago Press, 1994.

Putnam, Robert D. *Bowling alone: The collapse and revival of American community*. Simon and Schuster, 2000.

Rosenstone, Steven, and John M. Hansen. "Mobilization, participation and democracy in America." (1993).

Rosenstone, Steven J., and Raymond E. Wolfinger. "The effect of registration laws on voter turnout." *American Political Science Review* 72, no. 01 (1978): 22-45.

Ross, Bernard H., and Myron A. Levine. *Urban politics: Cities and suburbs in a global age*. ME Sharpe, 2011.

Rossi, Peter H., and Anne B. Shlay. "Residential mobility and public policy issues: "Why families move" revisited." *Journal of Social Issues* 38, no. 3 (1982): 21-34.

Rumberger, Russell W. "Dropping out of middle school: A multilevel analysis of students and schools." *American educational Research journal* 32, no. 3 (1995): 583-625.

Ryfe, David Michael. "The practice of deliberative democracy: A study of 16 deliberative organizations." *Political Communication* 19, no. 3 (2002): 359-377.

Sances, Michael W. "The Distributional Impact of Greater Responsiveness: Evidence from New York Towns." *The Journal of Politics* 78, no. 1 (2016): 105-119.

Sanders, Lynn M. "Against deliberation." *Political theory* 25, no. 3 (1997): 347-376.

Schattschneider, Elmer E. "The Semi-Sovereign People: A Realist's View of Democracy in America." (1950).

Segura, Gary M., and Helena Alves Rodrigues. "Comparative ethnic politics in the United States: Beyond black and white." *Annu. Rev. Polit. Sci.* 9 (2006): 375-395.

Sharkey, Patrick. "Residential mobility and the reproduction of unequal neighborhoods." *Cityscape* (2012): 9-31.

Sonenshein, Raphael. *Politics in black and white: Race and power in Los Angeles*. Princeton University Press, 1993.

Spence, Lester K., and Harwood McClerking. "Context, black empowerment, and African American political participation." *American Politics Research* 38, no. 5 (2010): 909-930.

Stein, Robert M., Stacy G. Ulbig, and Stephanie Shirley Post. "Voting for minority candidates in multiracial/multiethnic communities." *Urban Affairs Review* 41, no. 2 (2005): 157-181.

Stimson, James A., Michael B. MacKuen, and Robert S. Erikson. "Dynamic representation." *American Political Science Review* 89, no. 03 (1995): 543-565.

Stone, Clarence N., Jeffrey R. Henig, Bryan D. Jones, and Carol Pierannunzi. *Building Civic Capacity: The Politics of Reforming Urban Schools. Studies in Government and Public Policy*. University Press of Kansas, Lawrence, KS, 2001.

Stone, Clarence Nathan. *Regime politics: governing Atlanta, 1946-1988*. Univ Pr of Kansas, 1989.

Stuart Mill, John. "On liberty." (1859).

Sunstein, Cass R. "The law of group polarization." *Journal of political philosophy* 10, no. 2 (2002): 175-195.

Tate, Katherine. *From protest to politics: The new black voters in American elections*. Harvard University Press, 1994.

Tate, Katherine. *Black faces in the mirror: African Americans and their representatives in the US Congress*. Princeton University Press, 2003.

Tausanovitch, Chris, and Christopher Warshaw. "Representation in municipal government." *American Political Science Review* 108, no. 03 (2014): 605-641.

Thompson, Dennis, and Amy Gutmann. "Democracy and disagreement." (1996): 48.

Trounstine, Jessica. *Political monopolies in American cities: The rise and fall of bosses and reformers*. University of Chicago Press, 2009.

Trounstine, Jessica. "Representation and accountability in cities." *Annual Review of Political Science* 13 (2010): 407-423.

Tufte, Edward R. "Determinants of the outcomes of midterm congressional elections." *American Political Science Review* 69, no. 03 (1975): 812-826.

Tyson, Vanessa C. *Twists of Fate: Multiracial Coalitions and Minority Representation in the US House of Representatives*. Oxford University Press, 2016.

Verba, Sidney, and Norman H. Nie. "Participation in America: Political Democracy and Social Equality." (1972).

Walton, Hanes. *Invisible politics: Black political behavior*. SUNY Press, 1985.

Warren, Mark E., and Hilary Pearse, eds. *Designing deliberative democracy: The British Columbia citizens' assembly*. Cambridge University Press, 2008.

Welch, Susan, and Timothy Bledsoe. *Urban reform and its consequences: A study in representation*. University of Chicago Press, 1988.

Wilson, William Julius. *The truly disadvantaged: The inner city, the underclass, and public policy*. University of Chicago Press, 2012.

Wolfinger, Raymond E., and Steven J. Rosenstone. *Who votes?*. Vol. 22. Yale University Press, 1980.

Wong, Janelle S. "Mobilizing Asian American voters: A field experiment." *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 601, no. 1 (2005): 102-114.

Wong, Kenneth K. "Economic constraint and political choice in urban policymaking." *American Journal of Political Science* (1988): 1-18.

Wright, Scott, and John Street. "Democracy, deliberation and design: the case of online discussion forums." *New media & society* 9, no. 5 (2007): 849-869.