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CONNECTIONS

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2012

EDUCATING FOR DEMOCRACY

Stories of
INNOVATION
in
**HIGHER
EDUCATION**





NEW from Kettering Foundation Press

Democratizing Deliberation

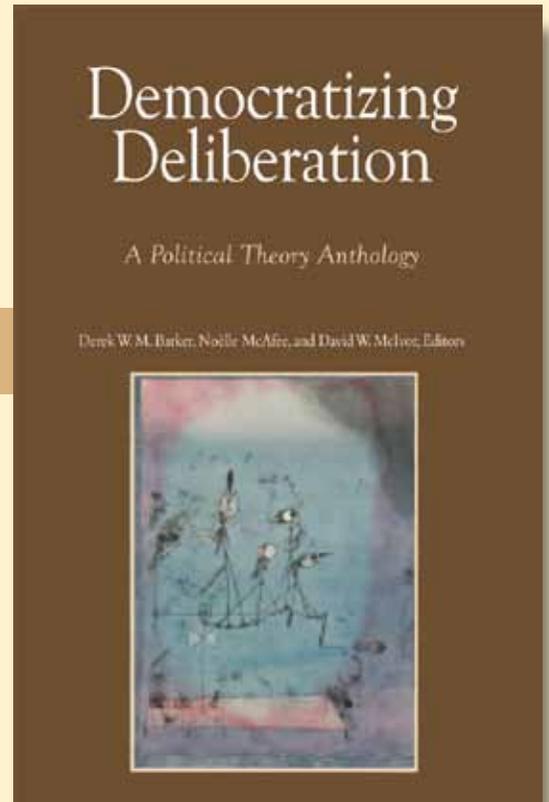
A Political Theory Anthology

Edited by Derek W. M. Barker, Noëlle McAfee, and David W. McIvor

Democratizing Deliberation brings together recent and cutting-edge political theory scholarship on deliberative democracy. The collection reframes deliberative democracy to be sensitive to the deep conflicts, multiple forms of communication, and aspirations for civic agency that characterize real public deliberation. In so doing, the book addresses many of the most common challenges to the theory and practice of deliberative democracy.

Kettering Foundation Press | 2012

\$15.95 • 184 pages • ISBN 978-0-923993-41-2



To read excerpts and purchase this book, visit www.kettering.org.

The Kettering Foundation is a nonprofit, operating foundation rooted in the American tradition of cooperative research. Kettering's primary research question is, what makes democracy work as it should? Kettering's research is distinctive because it is conducted from the perspective of citizens and focuses on what people can do collectively to address problems affecting their lives, their communities, and their nation. The foundation seeks to identify and address the challenges to making democracy work as it should through interrelated program areas that focus on citizens, communities, and institutions. The foundation collaborates with an extensive network of community groups, professional associations, researchers, scholars, and citizens around the world. Established in 1927 by inventor Charles F. Kettering, the foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization that does not make grants but engages in joint research with others. For more information about KF research and publications, see the Kettering Foundation's website at www.kettering.org.

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Editors

Derek W. M. Barker
Melinda Gilmore

Copy Editor

Lisa Boone-Berry

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Deliberative Pedagogy:

An Education that Matters

Joni Doherty

Many problems in the public sphere can't be resolved through debate, compromise, or even simply "stating the facts." Issues like climate change and abortion embody the tensions that arise when differing beliefs, values, and priorities come into sharp conflict. Finding answers to "What should we do?" dilemmas, which are so common in diverse and democratic societies, present daunting challenges to everyone personally affected by the issue and undermine confidence in our institutions, both public and private.

Deliberation is a set of practices that foster the conditions needed to understand and address these kinds of dilemmas. Participants in deliberative forums are encouraged to consider not

only statistics and expert analysis, but also the experiential and value-laden aspects. Everyone affected by the issue needs to feel both welcome and encouraged to participate in defining and addressing the problem. Public deliberation requires each person to think critically and creatively, listen attentively, examine assumptions, value differences, engage in respectful and honest dialogue, and reach well-reasoned judgments. Deliberating together is about deepening understanding of the problem in order to craft solutions, not about winning a debate or standing your ground. Deliberation can be understood as the cultivation of a set of capacities that can lead to a new construction of knowledge, one that comes out of the public's work together.

Higher education has long embraced the expert construction of knowledge. Although this is changing, traditionally colleges and universities have conducted research and educated students on principles guided by this assumption. For example, many instructors focus on "covering" the course material through methods that ensure the efficient "delivery" of discipline-specific knowledge. This model, in which each side has clearly designated positions, may have secured the desired outcomes in a political, social, and economic environment where roles and responsibilities were categorically and hierarchically structured and in situations where everyone shared a common set of values and experiences. However, in rapidly changing and diverse societies, things are far messier.

Deliberative Pedagogy

Today, because of the overlap of private, professional, and public realms, knowledge is pluralistic and situated. Situated knowledge is context specific. “What is known to be true” depends on its relationship to other conditions present in any particular situation. Multiple understandings might exist around one event or a common understanding may emerge over time. This isn’t relativism but instead requires that we take into account the dynamic interplay of shifting contexts, diverse perspectives, and competing demands.

Deliberative pedagogies call for a rethinking and restructuring of the activities of teaching and learning. Through calling on each person to engage with others in democratic, inclusive, and respectfully discursive practices, deliberative pedagogies help students better understand differing perspectives and the complexity of persistent problems that spring from ethical dilemmas. Deliberative democracy minimizes or avoids the traditional leader/follower or expert/novice structure and foregrounds teamwork, intercultural knowledge, ethical reasoning, and action. For instructors who chose to fully employ deliberative democratic pedagogies, the shifts in teaching and learning would be far-reaching. Some of these would include a restructuring of traditional hierarchies and an interrogation of the very nature of what we understand to be knowledge and truth.

Teaching and learning based on the principles of deliberative democracy are valuable in all fields, not just those related to communication, public policy, or politics. The need to make complex decisions about matters of common concern extends across every discipline. Deliberative pedagogies provide the interdisciplinary perspective and social and communicative skills necessary for successfully navigating and engaging in a post-industrial and increasingly diverse society. Connecting discipline-specific knowledge to concrete problems that transcend disciplinary boundaries opens pathways for students to become engaged with public and professional issues both inside and outside the classroom. The primary goal isn’t civic education per se, but for students to develop the commitment, knowledge, and skills necessary for creating and maintaining equitable, diverse, and democratic spaces, whether it be in the local community, the workplace, the nation, or the world.

Instructors using deliberative pedagogies commit to cultivating strong listening, oral, and written communication skills, as well as critical-thinking skills, in their students. Both instructor and stu-

dents share the responsibility of creating a learning environment where everyone feels welcome to share ideas and ask questions. Deliberative approaches to teaching and learning can be as straightforward as including multiple (but not simply opposing) perspectives in course readings, lectures, and discussions or by a fuller immersion into deliberative pedagogies, such as integrating issue framing and deliberative forums into coursework and affirming that the outcome of these efforts is valid. There is no “right” answer.

Connecting discipline-specific knowledge to concrete problems that transcend disciplinary boundaries opens pathways for students to become engaged with public and professional issues both inside and outside the classroom.

Experiential and community-based learning can be an important part of a course.

In 1998, the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) called on higher education to rethink its mission for the 21st century. Instead of focusing on nonvocational intellectual and personal development, the AAC&U’s board believes a liberal education

- fosters a well-grounded intellectual resilience, a disposition toward lifelong learning, and an acceptance of responsibility for the ethical consequences of our ideas and actions; and
- requires that we understand the foundations of knowledge and inquiry about nature, culture, and society; that we master core skills of perception, analysis, and expression; that we cultivate a respect for truth; that we recognize the importance of historical and cultural context; and that we explore connections among formal learning, citizenship, and service to our communities.

In this vision of higher education, deliberative pedagogies don’t represent



Deliberative Pedagogy



“add-ons” to already heavily burdened course agendas but instead redefine the mission of higher education as one in which the boundaries between the “ivory tower,” professional life, and the body politic are blurred. Because deliberative pedagogies emphasize integrative learning, they are an effective means for realizing this goal. Further, several of the 10 strategies identified by the AAC&U as high-impact practices that benefit student learning align closely with deliberative pedagogies. These include collaborative assignments and projects in which students “work and solve problems in the company of others” and sharpen their understanding “by listening seriously to the insights of others, especially those with different backgrounds and life experiences.” Because it encourages students to explore “cultures, life experiences, and worldviews different from their own” (what AAC&U calls “difficult differences”), deliberative pedagogies can be used to foster diversity and global learning. All of these practices enhance student retention and engagement. The AAC&U’s essential learning outcomes are knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world; intellectual and practical skills (including inquiry and analysis, critical and creative thinking, written and oral communication, information literacy, and teamwork and problem solving); and personal and social responsibility. The use of deliberative teaching and learning approaches can help instructors realize these outcomes.

Deliberation is “political” in the broad sense of addressing controversial public issues. However, while enhancing students’ sense of personal and social responsibility, engaging with public issues in the classroom does not have to mean advocating for a particular political or social cause. Nor is it the same as community service or service learning, although it may overlap. Deliberative pedagogical approaches are similar to more traditional civic-engagement initiatives in that they foster civic knowledge and engagement. However, they differ in that—at the minimum—they invite students to enter a discursive public realm with the aim of being cocreators with the public of some new insight or knowledge. Students are not *doing for* or *learning about*, but rather are engaged in relationships marked by reciprocity.

I have employed the deliberative approaches described above and have also made use of deliberative forums. At the most basic level, students have participated in a forum in class. In some courses, I have taught students how to moderate deliberative forums and then had them lead a forum on a topic selected by other community members or groups. This is essentially a community-service or service-learning project. To move this learning experience to the level of reciprocal engagement, students would need to team up with community members to identify an issue, create an issue brief, convene and moderate one or more forums, and then work together to implement

the outcomes. Everyone who participates in the project, students and community members alike, possess some kind of skill or insight essential for the project’s success. As student participation increases, I have definitely played more the role of a guide than a traditional instructor, assisting with keeping things on track but no longer the primary source of information and power.

The New England Center for Civic Life is part of a network of organizations—many of which are located at colleges and universities around the country—that partner with the National Issues Forums (NIF). NIF is a nonpartisan network of organizations committed to fostering the practice of public deliberation and is a resource for faculty and students as well as communities who wish to engage with the theory and practices of deliberative democracy. Members of the NIF network convene public forums on issues of local and national concern; prepare guides for deliberation; teach educators, students, and community members how to develop issue guides; and moderate deliberative forums. Members of the network may work together on a regional or national issue and then present the outcomes of these public deliberations to elected officials and policymakers.

While some of these organizations are primarily focused on student life, others, like the New England Center for Civic Life, work to more fully integrate deliberative theory and practices into the curriculum. The center is dedicated to the teaching, practice, and study of deliberative democracy. We generate activities that bring together community members and faculty and students from across the disciplines, either as creators or participants in various academic programs and university and community projects. For us, democracy is not simply a form of government nor a group of people, but a continual flow of interactions and initiatives based on principles of equality, inclusivity, empathy, and the idea that legitimate decisions depend upon well-reasoned discourse informed by a goodwill effort to understand the perspectives, values, and experiences of others.

The New England Center for Civic Life is located within the Academic Affairs Division at Franklin Pierce University. As

director of the center, I report to the provost; the university provides an annual operating budget that is supplemented with grants and research contracts. An advisory council consisting of university faculty, staff, a graduate student, and community members meets regularly. In addition, teams comprised of council members, other faculty, and community members work on specific projects. While some make a long-term commitment to the center's mission, others are drawn in through their interest in a particular project. Our work doesn't rely on the efforts of one or two committed individuals, nor is it entirely dependent on external funding, although both were crucial in the early years. Our current administrative and fiscal structure provides both stability and flexibility. The center's activities fall into three areas. We design and implement curricular and cocurricular initiatives on campus; serve as a resource for using deliberative democratic practices for engaging the local, regional, and university communities; and are active regionally and nationally, often collaborating with other centers in the NIF network.

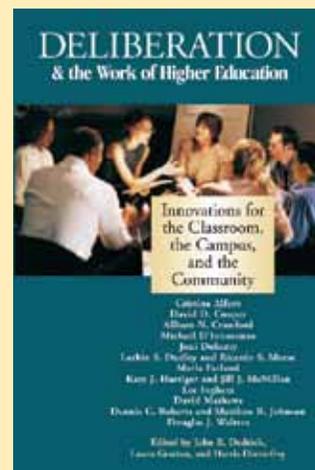
Some community members are surprised that a small private university supports a center whose mission is so civically minded. "What's in it for Franklin Pierce?" they ask. For the past 12 years, we have been one way for the university to fulfill its mission to be a civically engaged institution and a good neighbor. Franklin Pierce's new mission statement, adopted in 2011, is inspired by the AAC&U's vision of liberal education in the 21st century. For the university, "an education that matters" is one in which students achieve "academic success through the integration of liberal arts and professional programs." This will ensure that its graduates are "prepared for the professional, personal, and social demands of the 21st century" and "ethical leaders and catalysts for positive change within and beyond their communities." Deliberative democracy is an increasingly important educational philosophy and set of pedagogical practices for integrating theoretical and applied knowledge in liberal education today.

Joni Doherty is the director of the New England Center for Civic Life and teaches in the American Studies program at Franklin Pierce University. She can be reached at DohertyJ@franklinpiercedu.

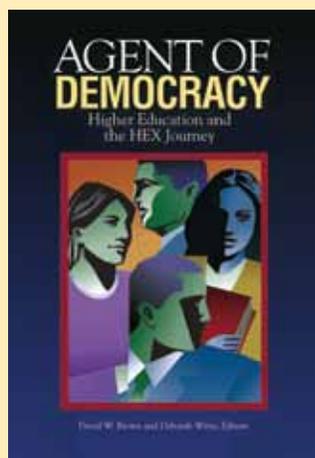
Deliberation and the Work of Higher Education: Innovations for the Classroom, the Campus, and the Community

Edited by John R. Dedrick,
Laura Grattan, and Harris Dienstfrey

This collection of essays demonstrates how deliberation can help higher education renew its mission of preparing citizens to sustain democracy and stimulate civic involvement on college campuses around the country. It also describes how deliberative dialogue can promote learning and problem solving amidst a culture of argument, debate, and polarization that is prevalent on campus and in society.



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Agent of Democracy: Higher Education and the HEX Journey

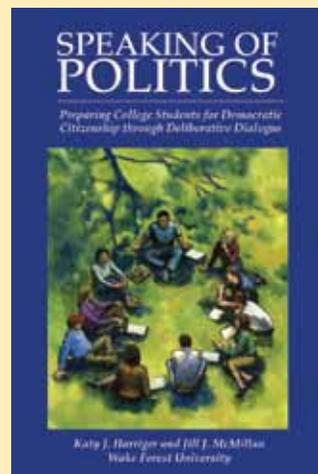
From the editors of the *Higher Education Exchange*, David W. Brown and Deborah Witte

Ten thoughtful theorists and practitioners address how higher education prepares citizens for public life, how (and why) universities engage in the larger community, and how we can rediscover the civic roots of higher education. This book of essays is a contribution to a resurgent movement bent on strengthening higher education's democratic mission and fostering a more democratic culture throughout American society.

Speaking of Politics: Preparing College Students for Democratic Citizenship through Deliberative Dialogue

By Katy J. Harriger and Jill J. McMillan

The authors in this study follow a group of 30 college students during their 4 years at Wake Forest University to discover whether their experiences in learning and practicing deliberation might counteract the alienation from public life that has overtaken so many young Americans today. Their research design included classroom learning and practical experiences in organizing and conducting deliberative forums both on campus and in the larger community.



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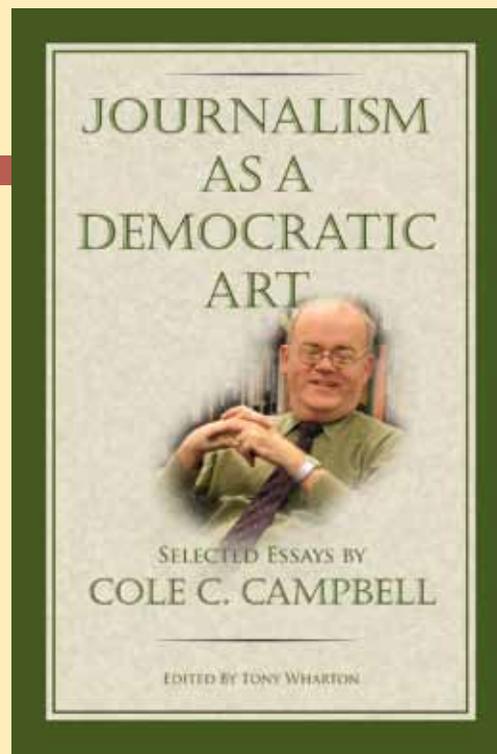
NEW from Kettering

Journalism as a Democratic Art: Selected Essays **by Cole C. Campbell**

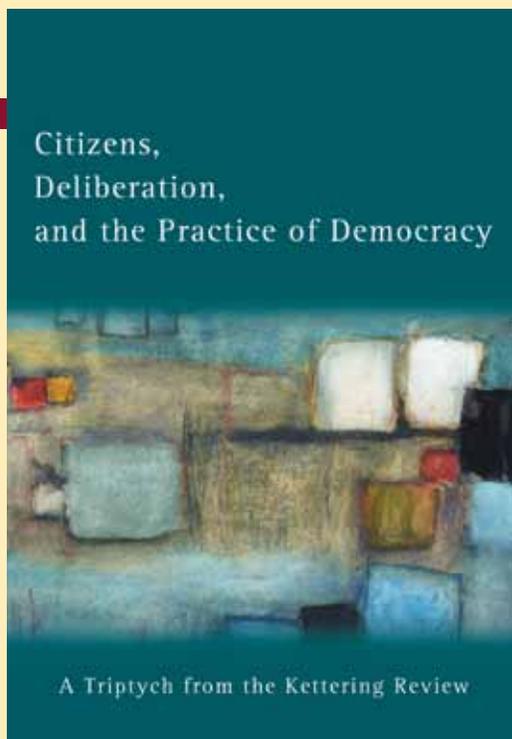
Edited by Tony Wharton

Journalism as a Democratic Art expresses at its heart Cole Campbell's belief that "people expect the press to help their communities solve problems." As one-time editor of the Virginian-Pilot in Norfolk, Virginia, and then the Post-Dispatch in St. Louis, Missouri, Campbell worked to align his profession with that belief, often facing considerable resistance from other journalists.

Campbell's essays address a variety of subjects, including a partly finished dictionary for journalists; timely essays written in the months after Hurricane Katrina and 9/11; and an interview by Jay Rosen, longtime professor of journalism at New York University.



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\$15.95 • 196 pages • ISBN 978-0-923993-40-5



Citizens, Deliberation, and the Practice of Democracy: A Triptych from the Kettering Review

Citizens, Deliberation, and the Practice of Democracy brings together writing by 19 leading thinkers on the contemporary challenges of democracy. These provocative essays, first published in three issues of the Kettering Review to celebrate 25 years of the National Issues Forums, challenge readers to rethink conventional notions of democracy, public deliberation, and citizenship.

Kettering Foundation Press | 2012
\$15.95 • 236 pages • ISBN 978-0-923993-44-3

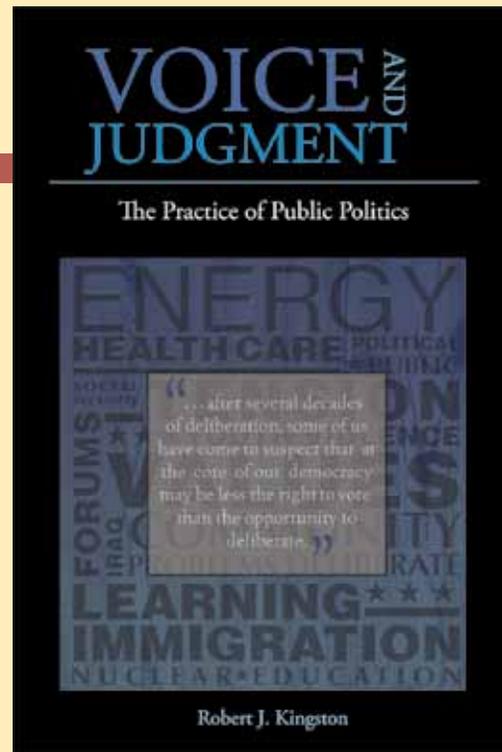
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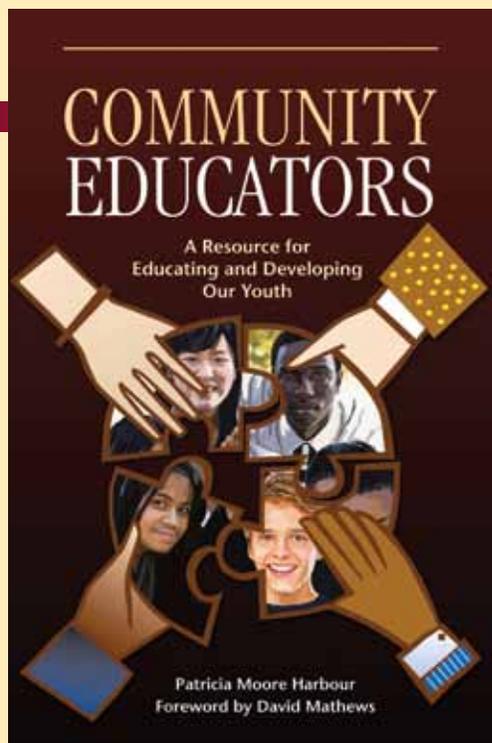
Voice and Judgment: The Practice of Public Politics

By Robert J. Kingston

"We are victims of argument and instruments, from time to time, of circumstance or the influence of others' whims. Our civic movement, however, is from a state of anxiety, puzzlement, blame, defensiveness, or anger, toward the place where contraries meet, where unavoidable tensions remind us that no life is lived without risk . . . or collaboration. A deliberative public begins with opinions but shares experiences; it recognizes shared concerns or 'values' in unexpected, sometimes unfamiliar circumstances; it responds to the divisive with restraint. . . . Public deliberation reveals not a verdict but the making of a 'public,' the formulation of a public will that can be described and put to use."



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Community Educators: A Resource For Educating and Developing Our Youth

By Patricia Moore Harbour

Community Educators asserts that the relationship between education, community, and democracy are inseparable and illustrates that education is broader than just schooling. Current thinking about education is challenged and reveals how the public participates in the education and development of youth. This book is a call for action and responsibility—both individual and collective—to transform education beyond simply reforming schools.

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