An Experiment Studying Experiments
By David Mathews p. 2

From Opinions to Judgments: Insights from the First 40 Years of the National Issues Forums
By Jean Johnson and Keith Melville p. 35

COVID-19 Community Response and the Appetite for Civic Engagement
By Michele Archie p. 55

The Work of Democratic Citizenship
The Kettering Foundation is a nonprofit, operating foundation rooted in the American tradition of cooperative research. Kettering's primary research question is, what does it take to make 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.

*Connections* is published by the Kettering Foundation, 200 Commons Road, Dayton, Ohio 45459. The articles in *Connections* reflect the views of the authors and not necessarily those of the foundation, its directors, or its officers.

© Copyright 2020 by the Kettering Foundation
ISSN 2470-8003
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>An Experiment Studying Experiments</td>
<td>David Mathews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Leaderful Communities: Exploring Citizen-Leaders</td>
<td>James (Ike) Adams and Erin Payseur Oeth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Historic Decisions: Looking Deliberatively at the Past</td>
<td>Joni Doherty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>The Issue Guide as a Pedagogical Tool</td>
<td>Samantha Fried</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>From Opinions to Judgments: Insights from the First 40 Years of the National Issues Forums</td>
<td>Jean Johnson and Keith Melville</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>The Library as Community Hub</td>
<td>Marie Pyko, Lissa Staley, and Debbie Stanton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>Faith and Democracy</td>
<td>Elizabeth Gish and Ekaterina Lukianova</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>COVID-19 Community Response and the Appetite for Civic Engagement</td>
<td>Michele Archie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62</td>
<td>In It Together: Opening American Education</td>
<td>Damien Conners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67</td>
<td>Deliberation in Everyday Conversation</td>
<td>Wendy Willis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73</td>
<td>Deliberative Democracy Institute 2020: An Opportunity to Innovate and to Reinvigorate Networking</td>
<td>Maxine S. Thomas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79</td>
<td>With the People: Connecting Campuses and Communities across the Country</td>
<td>Betty Knighton and Kara Lindaman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85</td>
<td>The Citizen Workers of Democracy</td>
<td>Harry C. Boyte</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
would only have to tweak the rest of our 2020 calendar to accommodate the delay caused by the virus, but it soon became clear that 2020 was going to offer an abundance of new challenges and opportunities. The only thing that remained unclear was how we would respond.

Our largest international meetings happen annually in July at the Deliberative Democracy Exchange (DDEx). By mid-March, planning for these meetings was well under way. We knew that 2020 DDEx would be very different, and the possibility of moving it online was daunting. For several years, a small committee had been at work designing an online curriculum for participants who were attending the Deliberative Democracy Institutes (DDI) meetings, part of DDEx. We were over-subscribed each year and still others could not come due to visa issues or other situations. Now a new team would have to move everything online and do so quickly. We successfully moved DDI and DDEx online. In the process, we gained important insights about both our in-person and our online sharing of democratic ideas.

For the last several years, we have been working to transform DDI from a large meeting led by Kettering staff to a truly multinational meeting led by leaders from around the world. This made it easier for us to pivot
For the last several years, we have been working to transform DDI from a large meeting led by Kettering staff to a truly multinational meeting led by leaders from around the world.

to online learning. We were already accustomed to working together, and we easily formed small multinational teams to carry out the work.

NEW OPPORTUNITIES, NEW CHALLENGES
While the task now would include online constraints, in many ways it brought out the best of what was already a collaborative process. With this core multinational DDI leadership group, we created 2-member leadership teams to work with groups of 8 to 15 participants so that every participant would be a part of a small DDI pod for meetings. This meant the groups could be divided up among those who were in similar time zones, or who spoke similar languages, or who were in countries geographically nearer to the members of each leadership team. This new intimacy allowed deeper conversations and clearer understandings due to shared experiences.

The new approach also created challenges. In such small groups, it was hard for people to get a sense of the whole of DDEx or, indeed, even of DDI. One of the key elements of Kettering meetings in Dayton is the plenaries that include all participants. We saw the need to offer similar opportunities and responded by creating early in the DDI experience a chance for all DDI participants to join a Zoom plenary during which they could become aware of the whole of DDEx.

Once we realized that we were all going to meet on Zoom, a new opportunity presented itself. Kettering has long tried to improve connections with the multinational network. The Zoom call provided an opportunity for us to invite multinational network alumni to that opening plenary. We also invited them to additional plenaries on framing the pandemic for deliberative conversations. It was amazing to have so many from the network that we knew as former residents, DDI members, or multinational associates. It was, for me, a highlight of DDEx 2020.
An early decision by the DDI leadership team was to extend DDI to six weeks. The thought was that this would provide more time than the usual week in Dayton for participants to exchange, reflect, and think together. While it did allow for such reflections, what we did not consider was the multitasking that completing DDI during a pandemic—while working, caring for family, and/or experiencing internet connectivity issues—would expose. In the end, we realized that for many, even though they were very excited about the ideas, six weeks during a pandemic

“Last year was overwhelming. This year we had time to process the information. It gave me an opportunity to share with my family.”

– DDI II participant from Italy
was too long for participants to give their undivided attention. But we also learned that some preliminary online work was exceedingly helpful in allowing participants to connect with small groups. When we hold DDI in Dayton, it is often extremely difficult for participants who do not get over jet lag before it is time to go back home to truly process the experience. Clearly, some combination of online work, both pre and post, even when we have an in-person DDI, would be preferred.

Another advantage of the Zoom-based DDI is it allowed participants to share the experience with those with whom they worked or to connect with alums who were in their communities. If the network is to grow, these kinds of connections are critical. Because we were meeting by Zoom, we decided to invite multi-national alums to join our framing
They participated in the Zoom calls and worked in small breakout groups to consider how to frame an issue on the pandemic. DDI members would go on to continue this effort, and at the close of the program, we invited yet another group of alums to engage around the framings. We closed DDI 2020 encouraging any who were interested to get together and move these or other framings forward. We wanted to see what would happen organically if Kettering was not in the center. We have been delighted at what we have learned about the vibrancy of the network. Small groups met over the summer and into the fall developing framings. Our hope is that we can come together to reflect on what allowed this to grow naturally. What we learn, then, will inform how we network with multinational alums in the future.

CONNECTING IN SPITE OF LIMITATIONS

But we must realize that for many around the world who are on the frontlines, even DDI online is a challenge. Often people complained about others’ internet connectivity issues. We must ask ourselves, How can we better connect with those who will not and cannot have stable internet? Don’t they deserve to know of these ideas as well? Our challenge is to understand nonexclusive ways of sharing these ideas. David Mathews has written several books and publications that are central to understanding this work, and we have worked to make sure that these are translated for use in communities around the world. But translations are not enough. Networks both global and regional will be an important part of this mix, and local and regional meetings or pods are part of it as well.

I am eternally grateful to all those who worked so hard this summer as leadership teams, participants, and Kettering staff. I was reminded each time I joined an early Zoom that many others had participated at odd times of day for them as well. We ended the experience tired yet enthusiastic. It provided an opportunity to see just how these ideas were being received and to test the strength of our networks. Again and

“If this changed my perspective on how to work.”

—DDI I participant from India
How Kettering would respond to 2020 is now very clear. We have taken the challenges as an opportunity to innovate and to reinvigorate networking, to ask new questions, to begin new research, to find new answers, and to explore new hypotheses, in short, to break new ground while we stay the course.

again, we were made aware of alums who were continuing to work in their communities and to reach out to newbies to join DDI and this work. The emails of alums interested in the organic pandemic framing were even more exciting. Kettering has invested deeply over the last 30 years in a network that we now see is vibrant and alive and continuing to explore the role of deliberative democracy in communities.

The year 2020 has provided many challenges, but if there is a silver lining, it is that it shook us out of patterns that we had been following so long we did not even realize they were patterns. It also introduced new online technologies as it reminded us that just because an app was available did not mean it should be used—Teams, Zoom, Padlets, Slack, etc., the list goes on. We must take this opportunity to discern what works best where, when a phone call is better than a Zoom call, when an email is better than Slack, and so forth. These are exciting and challenging times, and I am delighted to be a part of so much learning.

How Kettering would respond to 2020 is now very clear. We have taken the challenges as an opportunity to innovate and to reinvigorate networking, to ask new questions, to begin new research, to find new answers, and to explore new hypotheses, in short, to break new ground while we stay the course. Six months after the pandemic changed our work, in September Dayton Days we began reimagining Kettering’s multinational exchanges in 2021 and how DDI and DDEx will change, comfortable with the challenges and opportunities next year will present.

Maxine S. Thomas is vice president, secretary, and general counsel at the Kettering Foundation. She can be reached at mthomas@kettering.org.
Kettering Foundation
200 Commons Road
Dayton, OH 45459