

Deliberating with Critical Friends: A Strategy for Teaching Deliberative Democratic Theory

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Abstract: Standard methods for teaching Deliberative Democratic Theory (DDT) in the philosophy classroom include presenting theories in the historical order in which they originated, by theorist (or groups of theorists) or in various thematic categories, including criticisms of the theories. However, if Simone Chambers is correct and DDT has truly entered “a working theory stage,” whereby the theory and practice of deliberation receive equal consideration, then such approaches may no longer be appropriate for teaching DDT. I propose that DDT be taught using the Critical Friends (CF) discussion protocol. This protocol enables high quality deliberation in the context of a supportive intellectual community. The key advantage of my proposal is that the CF pedagogical framework empowers students to conceive DDT through the lens of their own and others’ deliberative practices. By referring to *a* rather than *the* strategy, this proposal does not specify the single right way to teach DDT, but suggests one among a field of possibilities.

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Standard methods for teaching Deliberative Democratic Theory (DDT) in the philosophy classroom include presenting theories in the historical order in which they originated, by theorist (or groups of theorists) or in various thematic categories, including criticisms of the theories. However, if Simone Chambers is correct and DDT has truly entered “a working theory stage,” whereby the theory and practice of deliberation receive equal consideration, then such approaches may no longer be appropriate for teaching DDT. I propose that DDT be taught using the Critical Friends (CF) discussion protocol. This protocol enables high quality deliberation in the context of a supportive intellectual community. The key advantage of my proposal is that CF pedagogical framework empowers students to conceive DDT through the lens of

their own and others' deliberative practices. By referring to *a* rather than *the* strategy, this proposal does not specify the single right way to teach DDT, but suggests one among a field of possibilities.

The paper is organized as follows. In the first section, I offer a brief sketch of recent developments in DDT, particularly the moves to test the feasibility of theories and institutionalize deliberation—what James Bohman calls DDT's "coming of age" and Simone Chambers refers to as its entrance into "a working theory stage."² The second section summarizes the brief extant literature on teaching deliberative democratic theory. In the third section, I outline the several features of the CF discussion protocol, including three types of feedback, the pattern of a one-on-one conference as well as the steps and roles in a group consultancy process. The fourth section outlines a course design integrating the CF protocol with individual research projects and summarizes the results of a small-scale test of the method I conducted in my social-political philosophy course. In the experiment, students deliberated about deliberative democratic theory and practice in a structured forum emphasizing reflective critique of each other's work. The paper concludes by considering the implications of the CF discussion protocol as a mechanism to guide all discussions in a community of deliberative scholars, teachers and learners.

Background: Deliberative Democracy Comes of Age

In the last twenty years, democratic theory has undergone a deliberative revolution.³ In what John Dryzek terms the "deliberative turn," many democratic theorists and practitioners have shifted their models of democratic legitimacy to account for "the ability or opportunity to participate in effective deliberation on the part of those subject to collective decisions."⁴ This deliberative turn or revolution has been motivated in large part by the need to create complements or alternatives to purely aggregative models of democracy, which reduce democratic decision-making to registering privately formed preferences through majoritarian voting procedures.⁵ One of the core commitments of deliberative democratic theory is what might be called the *public justification tenet*. It states that in order for a political decision to be democratic and legitimate, the views and interests expressed in it must withstand the test of deliberation, wherein each participant publicly justifies his position and preferences to his fellow deliberators.⁶ In other words, through the process of discussing and contesting each other's claims, deliberators face the prospect of arriving at qualitatively improved or enlightened collective choices. As a corollary to this tenet, citizens of a deliberative democracy must be capable of changing their own and other citizens' preferences about the issues under discussion; meaning

that, when subject to the test of public justification, the outcomes one prefers are presumed to be negotiable and open to transformation.⁷ Even if preferences do not submit to the transformative effects of deliberation, participants may still be more sympathetic to accepting the decision if they feel that their voice has been heard.⁸ Also, deliberation may constitute a search for right solutions to shared problems (sometimes referred to as its *epistemic* function), promoting creative inquiry, problem-solving and conflict mediation.⁹

What I am concerned to highlight is not so much democratic theory's deliberative turn as the turn *within* DDT towards greater emphasis on the application and institutionalization of deliberative theories. As mentioned, Simone Chambers insists that "Deliberative democratic theory has moved beyond the 'theoretical statement' stage and into the 'working theory' stage."¹⁰ She is not alone. James Bohman similarly claims that DDT "has 'come of age' as a complete theory of democracy rather than simply an ideal of legitimacy."¹¹ To clarify, DDT has entered a "working theory stage" or "come of age" in at least two respects: (i) More deliberative theorists are concerned with the practical implications of their theories, including how to test and verify their feasibility and (ii) many deliberative theorists are exploring how their theories might be institutionalized, for instance, in deliberative forums that involve the public in policymaking and promote civic education. First, deliberative theorists have partnered with empirical researchers to determine how deliberation affects judgment, consensus formation, preference change (and polarization) as well as information gathering.¹² Second, National Issues Forums, citizen assemblies, deliberative polls, consensus conferences, planning cells, citizen juries, study circles and Twenty-First Century Town Meetings are just some of the institutional experiments in deliberative decision-making to emerge through the efforts of scholars and practitioners in the last decade and a half.¹³ Another pressing issue that some deliberative democrats confront is how DDT might contribute to the creation of a civic-minded culture—a move that typically requires shifting from a purely theoretical research agenda to one that is more empirically or institutionally oriented.¹⁴ If we, as educators, are to take seriously this turn within DDT (its entrance into "working theory stage" or its "coming of age"), then we ought to teach more than just the theory of deliberative democracy. Indeed, we might take up the challenge of teaching how DDT translates, empirically- and institutionally-speaking, into deliberative practice. The question then becomes: What is the best way to tackle this pedagogical challenge?

How to Teach DDT: A Brief Literature Review

While there is widespread agreement that deliberative activities in the classroom improve student learning,¹⁵ the literature on how to teach DDT is not substantial. To supplement the small literature review which follows, I examined a small sample of syllabi (not necessarily representative), available both online and by personal request (n=42). The outcome of my inquiry was a tentative observation that the dominant method of teaching the subject-matter is through the presentation of theories in the historical order in which they were developed, by theorist (or groups of theorists) or in various thematic categories, including grounds for criticizing the theories. Very few of the collected syllabi contained sections addressing the practical turn in DDT and even fewer examined actual deliberative experiments. In this section, three articles will receive attention: (i) Matthew Pamental's "What Is it Like to Be a Deliberative Democrat?," (ii) Reilly Hirst's "Deliberative Democracy and Emancipatory Learning in Action," and (iii) Sarah Stitzlein's "Deliberative Democracy in Teacher Education."¹⁶

Pamental's essay speaks to the issue of how to teach DDT by drawing attention to one shortcoming of the DDT literature. The author reviews two landmark works in DDT: Amy Gutmann's *Democratic Education* and Amy Gutmann and Dennis Thompson's *Democracy and Disagreement*.¹⁷ Through a close reading of these texts, Pamental seeks to "understand what kind of citizens are necessary to fulfill this [deliberative] ideal . . . [or] what it is that the citizen is required to do in taking up his or her share in ruling." Unfortunately, neither book delivers.¹⁸ *Democratic Education* states the minimal commitments a democratic society should make to its citizens (e.g., universal education in moral reasoning, nonrepression and nondiscrimination).¹⁹ *Democracy and Disagreement* makes a persuasive argument that deliberation ought to offer both procedural and substantive principles to ensure that the process and outcomes of deliberation are fair and just.²⁰ For Pamental, Gutmann and Thompson's highly theoretical discussion of deliberation does not settle the matter of what it is (or should be) like for a citizen to be a deliberative democrat. What is left open is "the question of what a citizen needs from . . . [his or her] education in order to participate in democratic governing."²¹ Should students in a course on DDT be taught how to deliberate? On the one hand, it could be objected that Pamental equivocates between two senses of education: (i) educating students *about* a subject-matter (in this case, DDT) and (ii) educating democratic citizens *to* master a skill (in this case, how to deliberate). On the other hand, acknowledging the genuine benefits of experiential learning, educating *about* versus educating *to* might be nothing more than a distinction without a difference. In other words, learning *about* DDT, especially how it can be effectively tested and institutionalized,

should involve students in practicing *to* deliberate, in much the same way as democratic citizens would be expected to practice the art of deliberation in order to become more proficient deliberators. Parental appreciates both as exercises in civic education.

Sarah Stitzlein's "Deliberative Democracy in Teacher Education" addresses how education professors employ deliberative teaching methods and how deliberative democracy serves as an aspirational ideal in teacher education. Although teacher education and philosophical training might appear disconnected, this is certainly not the case if we consider the parallel process of training philosophy students to become effective teachers. Stitzlein describes what it means to be part of a deliberative learning process: "To be active and informed participants . . . involves critically reflecting on one's own way of living and learning to give good reasons to support it, while simultaneously being open to learning other, better ways from peers. Students, then, need to learn to listen to and appreciate the arguments and point of view of their peers."²² Furthermore, Stitzlein insists that "students must master that ability to carefully listen to the ideas and arguments expressed by others. They should learn how to ask insightful and respectful questions that clarify an interlocutor's perspective or request more explanation. Students must learn to identify underlying assumptions and biases."²³ Deliberative learning involves self-criticism, openness to others' perspectives and the capacity to interrogate claims, not for the purpose of winning the argument, but to reach a higher level of clarity and understanding. Besides teasing out the generic features of deliberative learning, Stitzlein identifies a form of reflexive critique at work in specific educational programs with a deliberative learning component. For instance, as part of a Social Foundations of Education course offered at Kent State University, "students . . . reflect on the deliberative process, problematic aspects of reaching consensus too quickly, participation patterns, and on their own changing positions throughout the endeavor."²⁴ While learning and deliberating about social justice issues, especially topics of economic inequality and educational disparity, the students critically scrutinized their own deliberations, including their tendencies to marginalize some speakers and to force a consensus in a process known as *groupthink*. Most of the educational programs and courses with a deliberation element, Stitzlein notes, are at the graduate level.²⁵

In "Deliberative Democracy and Emancipatory Learning in Action," Reilly Hirst argues that integrating deliberative democracy and political science education requires more than a purely didactic approach to teaching and a passively receptive mode of learning.²⁶ Instead, it demands the introduction of a "deliberative, collaborative and non-linear mode of learning" into the political science classroom.²⁷ Hirst

makes cooperative inquiry the center-piece of a deliberative approach to learning: “Democratic theory in general certainly has significant import when discussing how a political science classroom operates. . . . Deliberative democratic theory has special significance for our discussion . . . [of] cooperative inquiry in the classroom.”²⁸ Cooperative inquiry involves students in a four-step process—reflection, research, action and planning—that, similar to deliberation, requires participation, discussion and a degree of empowerment. For Hirst, it also entails a special kind of research: “Cooperative inquiry has been included as . . . [a form of] action research. The reason for this becomes clear when in some of the stages the [learning] group decides to engage some action together outside of the actual meeting times of the group [such as participating in rallies or letter writing campaigns].”²⁹ In this way, cooperative inquiry plunges the learner deep into the activity researched (especially in the action and planning stages), making its meaning more familiar through direct experience. Hirst believes that treating students as serious inquirers obliges the instructor to keep them critically engaged in the deliberative process: “If we are sincere about taking our students seriously then we need to respect the knowledge and full humanity they bring to the classroom. If we wish to help them critically engage . . . then being participants in deliberative democracy becomes significant.”³⁰

Critical Friends: A Discussion Protocol

The CF discussion protocol was first developed by the Coalition of Essential Schools, and later the Annenberg Institute for School Reform, at Brown University to promote collegial dialogue among faculty and administrators at all levels of education. It has also been extended into curricular and staff development programs. Currently, the protocol is employed by almost 35,000 professionals at 1,500 institutions. Arthur Costa and Bena Kallick define a “critical friend” as

a trusted person who asks provocative questions, provides data to be examined through another lens, and offers critique of a person’s work as a friend. A critical friend takes the time to fully understand the context of the work presented and the outcomes that the person or group is working toward. The friend is an advocate for the success of the work.³¹

It is important for critical friendships to be trusting relationships. Critical friends ought to be open with learners about the nature of the interaction, that it involves integrity, active listening and value judgments only at the learner’s request.³²

What follows is an outline of the CF protocol, including (i) the three situations in which the protocol is appropriate, (ii) the three types of feedback, (iii) the basic pattern for a two-person conference between

a learner and critical friend and (iv) a more extensive CF process, termed “consultancy,” involving a small group of individuals, each filling one of three roles.

Three Situations

The three “occasions” for critical reflection are (i) peer observations, (ii) refining a teaching artifact (such as a lesson plan, student assignment or assessment instrument) and (iii) consulting about an issue that the participants have not been able to resolve individually.³³

Three Types of Feedback

The three types of feedback are (i) warm (statements that show support and appreciation for the learner’s work), (ii) cool (constructive criticism, more distanced than warm feedback, offering different perspectives and posing questions) and (iii) hard (interrogation of the assumptions behind the work, raising concerns and challenging the learner’s way of thinking). Participants in the CF process are supposed to extend either warm or cool (not hard) feedback, as well as couple the feedback with actionable advice.³⁴

Basic Format of a One-on-One Conference

1. Description of the learner’s work with a request for feedback: For instance, the learner presents a project in progress and asks the critical friend for comments and suggestions for improvement.
2. Questioning of the learner by the critical friend: Probing questions are directed at the learner for purposes of better understanding the project and clarifying the context of the work. For example, the critical friend might ask, “What do you wish the audience to take away after reading this paper?”
3. Establishing desired goals for conference: By setting the desired outcomes, the learner demonstrates that he or she ultimately controls the process and the feedback.
4. Provision of feedback to the learner by the critical friend: Pointing out what is important and its wider implications, the critical friend helps the learner see the project in new ways. Indeed, the feedback stage is often compared to the ophthalmologist’s procedure of substituting new lenses in order to bring the patient’s vision into crisper focus.³⁵
5. Renewed questioning and criticism to enlarge perspective: The critical friend offers more constructive feedback, “nudging the learner to see the project from different

- perspectives”³⁶—or, to borrow Hans-Georg Gadamer’s expression, fusing the horizons of multiple perspectives.
6. Reflection and writing by learner and critical friend: Finally, the learner writes down his or her reflections on the conference. The critical friend reciprocates by writing a set of suggestions or recommendations. In reading the critical friend’s comments, the learner need not respond to the critical friend. “Instead, the learner reflects on the feedback without needing to defend the work to the critic.”³⁷

The Consultancy Process

In the consultancy process, the number of participants is larger than the conference. Usually the group is composed of four to seven people. The three roles are (i) facilitator, (ii) presenter (or learner) and (iii) discussants (or critical friends):

1. Facilitator: This participant is responsible for reviewing the process from beginning to end, especially if the participants are unfamiliar with it. The facilitator can also take partake in the deliberations, but should be on the alert for discussants who wish to be involved, but are otherwise marginalized or excluded. The facilitator also keeps track of time, adjusting based on the level and intensity of participation. In addition, the facilitator serves as a referee, reminding participants of their roles in the process, the norm of using warm and cool (not hard) feedback and the need to stay on topic. Lastly, the facilitator directs the debriefing and ensures that during this phase participants do not return to the deliberations.
2. Presenter: This person prepares and presents the issue or work for consultancy. The presenter states the kind of feedback he or she is looking for in the form of a series of specific questions. Unlike most deliberations, the presenter does not engage in the group discussion. Instead, the presenter sits outside of the group, with no eye contact and writes notes, gauging the feedback. Later, the presenter responds to the feedback, noting what was helpful and what was not.
3. Discussants: These people address the issue and deliberate about the work brought before them by the presenter. In a supportive tone, they offer warm (positive) or cool (critical) feedback accompanied by actionable suggestions.³⁸

What follows is a list of the **six steps of the CF process** with a brief list of tasks involved in each step:

1. Facilitator Overview (3 minutes): facilitator reviews the process, set time limits;
2. Presenter Overview (5–10 minutes): presenter shares the issue or work, contextualizes the issue or work, asks questions that direct attention to specific areas where feedback is needed;
3. Probing or Clarifying Questions (5 minutes): discussants ask the presenter questions to learn more about the issue or work, but do not offer advice or discuss;
4. Discussant Group Discussion (12 minutes): group of discussants deliberate about the issue, give warm and cool feedback, group offers advice, and the presenter is silent while taking notes on the periphery of the group (no eye contact);
5. Presenter Response (5 minutes): presenter gives response to group feedback;
6. Debriefing (5 minutes): facilitator leads final discussion, criticizing the process and suggesting ways to improve it.

The entire session lasts from 35 to 40 minutes.³⁹

Application and Testing: Learning among Critical Friends

What I am specifically interested in exploring is how the CF discussion protocol could be applied in an undergraduate course on DDT. Having more sophisticated students as presenters and discussants makes sense, as we will see, because the rationale for employing the CF protocol is to allow students to conceive DDT through the lens of their own and others' deliberative practice—a point that might be lost on undergraduates. So, an advanced undergraduate or Honors course might be more suitable. In the CF process, presenters could (i) share their analyses of assigned articles and receive feedback or (ii) present their own research project in progress and solicit valuable advice from the instructor and peers on how to proceed.

Student Readings

In some undergraduate courses, instructors will assign every student in the course one or more articles to summarize and analyze. That course requirement coincides with the dominant and inferior method of teaching DDT, that is, through the presentation of theories in the historical order in which they were developed, by theorist (or groups

of theorists) or in various thematic categories. However, assigning the students the task of presenting the material also has the advantage of steering the mode of instruction away from the didactic, whether by the instructor or the student presenter, and toward the dialogical. For instance, after having read Bruce Ackerman and James Fishkin's "Deliberation Day," a student presenter might ask and discuss with his peers whether a single day spent deliberating can really make citizens more critical and informed voters (what they call the "leveraging strategy").⁴⁰ While competition between students is perhaps an inevitable feature of classroom discussion and peer review, it might also be helpful for instructors to model a more cooperative method of teaching and learning, such as the CF discussion protocol. The constraints on the CF process—particularly the rules that discussants offer warm and cool (not hard) feedback and that the presenter sits out and listens when the group deliberations occur—encourage a supportive, rather than an adversarial, learning environment. One reason is that the protocol resembles an active learning exercise more than a traditional student presentation followed by a question/answer period.⁴¹ Another is that it has the potential to pique student interest in experiential learning (perhaps even action research), understanding DDT through the lens of their own experience of deliberating.

Student Research

One requirement of student research projects in a DDT course could be that students present them as part of a CF consultancy process. Done properly, the expected learning outcome is that students gain helpful feedback and recommendations from their instructor and peers. Struggling through the process of researching, outlining and writing their research papers, students would normally request feedback from the instructor alone. The CF process provides an opportunity to receive feedback from several researchers with differing perspectives, as well as constructive advice that might tie multiple projects together and make the endeavor more collective, less solitary. A suggestion for a possible research project assignment (one that would bring the working-theory/coming-of-age theme to the fore) is to examine an actual deliberative event or institution, asking: Does the practical experiment in deliberative democracy reflect the principles of one or more DDTs? Indeed, this is the kind of project that I collaborated with Idil Boran on in order to gain a more balanced understanding of the 2007 Ontario Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform, both in terms of the theory and practice of deliberation.⁴² The lesson of this collaboration—namely that deliberative theory can inform deliberative practice—influenced my decision to redesign a section of my Social and Political Philosophy

course so that I could test my hypothesis that a better way to teach DDT would involve sessions modeled after the CF protocol.

Testing the Protocol in the Classroom

A test run of the CF protocol was conducted in eight sessions with a group of thirty undergraduate students in my Introduction to Social and Political Philosophy course. The course assignment, which presenters prepared for critically evaluation, was a ten to twelve page paper on the question “How do we make deliberative democracy work?” Students were tasked in the paper to evaluate a deliberative practice (e.g., a citizen jury, study circle, deliberative poll, etc.) by reference to the principled commitments of two deliberative theories. Rather than requiring all students to present, I requested volunteers and awarded them extra credit. The eight students who volunteered presented on successive days. I served as the facilitator every day. The remaining students served as discussants or critical friends. The consultancy process was followed exactly (see the **six steps of the CF process** above) with only a few mistakes, most during the initial two days. I conducted informal surveys of all participants before and after the CF process, roughly resembling pretests and posttests in classic experimental research designs:⁴³ The pretest questions were “What are your expectations for the CF process?” (to set a baseline for what students thought would happen during the process and as its outcome) and “What does it mean to be a critical friend?” (to test if the students knew the difference between warm, cool and hard feedback and understood which was appropriate). The posttest questions were “How do you think the process went and what did you learn during it?” (to see if the students were appreciating DDT through the reflexive lens of their own deliberative practice) and “What do you think the outcomes of the process were and were they important?” (to determine whether the students valued the process because of its tangible results, e.g., because it helped them better comprehend the material or because it gave the student presenter quality feedback). A third posttest question was administered only to presenters: “Were you satisfied with the feedback you received and the way in which it was delivered?” (to see if the quality and tone of the feedback were acceptable to the presenter).

Overall, the CF process produced quality discussion and feedback for presenters, as well as a mixed bag of answers to the survey questions. Almost all student discussants adhered to the rule of limiting their feedback to the cool and warm (not hard) varieties. While a supermajority (93%) of the participants had high expectations for the process and its outcomes, a slim majority (53%) were satisfied with how the consultancy process went and what the results were. The surprising result was that a clear majority (67%) appreciated that what they were

engaged in was a deliberative practice similar to those deliberative processes and theories that the presenters were evaluating. One student commented that “We’re doing something like what Fishkin and Ackerman said we should do on deliberation day!” Another student found the connection more perplexing, writing “It’s hard to imagine doing all this discussing and feedbacking [*sic*] to reach every decision in my life. I’m sure my decisions would be better, but it’d be tiring.” Some students were entirely unimpressed by the process and the results, but they were in the minority. All the presenters were satisfied with the content and tone of the feedback they received.

Some Possible Objections

1. Unsuited to Undergraduates: One challenge to employing the CF protocol to teach DDT in the philosophy classroom is that the consultancy process is better suited for a graduate-level DDT course. Recall Stitzlein’s observation that all the teacher education courses with a deliberative component were at the graduate level. Undergraduates are just not sophisticated enough, so the objections goes, to appreciate deliberative theories reflexively or through the lens of their own deliberative practice. Moreover, undergraduate students lack the capability to fruitfully engage in the CF process. However, students in my course did not lack the ability to participate as presenters and discussants in the CF process. In addition, a majority of the students did make the vital connection between their own practice of deliberating and the deliberative processes and theories covered in the course and presentations.
2. Unfaithful to the Principles of Deliberative Democracy: The CF discussion protocol is supposed to model a deliberative process. It might be objected that the CF exercise really does not model a deliberative event at all, though, particularly because the presenter is not allowed to participate in the deliberations. Though not identical with any specific deliberative forum design, the process includes a deliberative stage (step four: discussant group discussion) and is structured to produce valuable learning outcomes. The constraint that presenters cannot deliberate (or even make eye contact) with the discussants is important, since it promotes collegial dialogue, reducing the risk of confrontations that all too often occur when peers publicly evaluate each other’s work.
3. Too Structured: Another challenge is that the CF process has too many constraints or rules, making it too structured.

While the constraint that the presenter cannot engage in deliberations is slightly unorthodox, it is not unheard of. In citizen juries, experts will often present testimony and be questioned by deliberators, yet not be allowed to deliberate.⁴⁴ Students discover through first-hand experience of the CF process that deliberative forums are not unstructured, free-for-all discussions, but are often highly structured, rule-governed events. A less rule-grounded protocol could be employed as an alternative. The present proposal to administer the CF discussion protocol is *a* rather than *the* strategy for teaching DDT. I do not intend for it to be an exhaustive account of how DDT should be taught in every learning context.

4. Excludes the Presenter from the Deliberations: The rule that the presenter sits out (taking notes) during the discussion stage (step 4) prevents deliberative engagement between the presenter and discussants. Even acknowledging the presenter's later opportunity to formally respond to the participants' feedback, the result, it could be complained, is a kind of ersatz deliberation. In the role of presenter, listening to the discussions and not participating in them can be an unnerving experience. For some, it feels similar to being marginalized from a peer group—an experience most would not like to have, but one that nevertheless helps the student appreciate why deliberative forums should be more, not less, inclusive. For others, it presents a unique opportunity to fill both participant and observer roles. One effective way to anticipate and prevent feelings of marginalization in the presenter is for the facilitator to discuss the rationale for the presenter's exclusion from the deliberations.
5. Only a Low-stakes Simulation: The last objection I would like to discuss is one that is often leveled at highly abstract deliberative theories: the CF process is a simulation or model of an actual deliberation and so it is not a genuine high-stakes practice. The only meaningful outcome of the activity is that the participants will learn more about DDT and the presenter will receive quality feedback for improving his or her paper. However, the same challenge could be made to almost any classroom exercise involving experiential learning. Appealing to the ophthalmologist metaphor, the CF process offers a way for students to use DDT as a lens through which to better appreciate their own and others' deliberative practice. In turn, the experi-

ence of participating in a CF process enriches students' knowledge of DDT, particularly the turn *within* DDT toward applying, testing and institutionalizing theories of deliberation. And it might also help students to realize that academic communities have great potential as deliberative spaces where members can engage in protracted philosophical discussions, share new ideas, collaborate on group projects and learn how to communicate in a civil and tolerant fashion—a prospect to which the paper will presently turn and conclude.

Conclusion: Toward a Deliberative Academic Community

I would like to briefly explore how the CF discussion protocol affects the dynamics of a Philosophy department understood as a deliberative academic community. To what extent does the CF protocol help cultivate the bonds of an intellectual community? Before addressing the matter, we must have some sense of how such a community functions:

Intellectual community affects how people wrestle with ideas (is there honest exchange or hostile subversion?); how teaching is valued (do people recognize which faculty and graduate students are good teachers?); how students learn to engage with senior colleagues (do faculty patronize students or are they open to the potential of junior colleagues?); how failure is treated (are risks supported or avoided?); how people work together (is collaboration actively promoted by the structures of the department?); how independence and creativity are encouraged (do students have multiple, planned opportunities to tackle new questions and projects?); how the department and its members stay connected to the field (is there energy and excitement in work that is pushing new frontiers?)⁴⁵

Perhaps the CF protocol dulls the force of uncensored criticism by prohibiting *hard* feedback. This is a genuine possibility. Indeed, some departments pride themselves on cultivating a competitive environment in which students and faculty can level the harshest intellectual blows at each other's scholarly work and still meet for a friendly drink afterwards.⁴⁶ However, it seems that extremely harsh feedback more typically engenders animosity between and among students and faculty. Potentially, this could lead not only to the disappearance of collegial dialogue, but also to the weakening of those bonds that hold an academic community together. Second, one might wonder whether the CF protocol truly lives up to the deliberative ideal and, thus, encourages a more deliberative community—a concern parallel to the second objection above (unfaithful to the principles of deliberative democracy). Recall that the *public justification tenet* states that in order for a political decision to be democratic and legitimate, the views and interests it expresses must withstand the test of deliberation, wherein

each participant publicly justifies his position and preferences to his or her fellow deliberators. If the CF process becomes a regular feature of a course (or even an activity that students emulate in group work outside of class), it offers students the opportunity to improve each other's work and course performance by operating in the capacity of critical friends. As previously noted, employing the CF discussion protocol is merely one (not *the*) strategy for teaching DDT, a suggestion for enriching pedagogic practice and cultivating a genuinely deliberative academic community.

Notes

1. Simone Chambers, "Deliberative Democratic Theory," *Annual Review of Political Science* 6 (2003): 307–26, 307.
2. James Bohman, "The Coming of Age of Deliberative Democracy," *The Journal of Political Philosophy* 6:4 (1998): 400–25, 401; Chambers, "Deliberative Democratic Theory," 307. For the seminal collection on deliberative democracy's turn toward practice and institutionalization, see *The Deliberative Democracy Handbook: Strategies for Effective Civic Engagement in the 21st Century*, ed. John Gastil and Peter Levine (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2005).
3. The expression "deliberative democracy" was coined by Joseph Bessette, "Deliberative Democracy: The Majority Principle in Republican Government," in *How Democratic is the Constitution?*, ed. R. Goldwin and W. Shambaugh (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1980), 102–16. The two seminal collections on deliberative democratic theory are *Deliberative Democracy: Essays on Reason and Politics*, ed. James Bohman and William Rehg (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1997); and *Deliberative Democracy*, ed. Jon Elster (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).
4. John Dryzek, *Deliberative Democracy and Beyond: Liberals, Critics, Contestations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 1.
5. See David Miller, *Market, State, and Community: Theoretical Foundations of Market Socialism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 254–55; Mark E. Warren, "Democratic Theory and Self-Transformation," *The American Political Science Review* 86:1 (1992): 8–23; J. O'Neill, "The Rhetoric of Deliberation: Some Problems in Kantian Theories of Deliberative Democracy," *Res Publica* 8:3 (2002): 249–68, 249; and Samuel Freeman, "Deliberative Democracy: A Sympathetic Comment," *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 29:4 (2000): 371–418, 372.
6. See Jürgen Habermas, *Communication and the Evolution of Society* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1979), 178; Stephen Macedo, *Liberal Virtues: Citizenship, Virtue, and Community in Liberal Constitutionalism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 303; and Joshua Cohen, "Deliberation and Democratic Legitimacy," in Bohman and Rehg, *Deliberative Democracy*, 67–91, 72.
7. See James S. Fishkin, *Democracy and Deliberation* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1991); and Jane J. Mansbridge, "A Deliberative Theory of Interest Representation," in *Politics of Interest*, ed. Mark Petracca (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1992), 32–57.
8. See Ian Shapiro, "Optimal Deliberation," in *Deliberating about Deliberative Democracy* (Austin: University of Texas Law School, 2000), 1–12, 4.

9. See David Estlund, *Democratic Authority: A Philosophical Framework* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2008); and Robert Talisse, *Democracy after Liberalism: Pragmatism and Deliberative Politics* (New York: Routledge, 2005). William Caspary, *Dewey on Democracy* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2000).

10. Chambers, "Deliberative Democratic Theory."

11. Bohman, "The Coming of Age of Deliberative Democracy."

12. See John Gastil and James P. Dillard, "Increasing Political Sophistication through Public Deliberation," *Political Communication* 16 (1999): 3–23; Cass Sunstein, "Deliberative Trouble? Why Groups Go to Extremes," *Yale Law Review* 110 (2000): 71–119; id., "The Law of Group Polarization," *Journal of Political Philosophy* 10 (2002): 175–95; Robert Goodin and Simon J. Niemeyer, "When Does Deliberation Begin? Internal Reflection versus Public Discussion in Deliberative Democracy," *Political Studies* 51 (2003): 627–49; David M. Ryfe, "Does Deliberative Democracy Work?," *Annual Review of Political Science* 8 (2005): 49–71; and Patrick Sturgis, Caroline Roberts, and Nick Allum, "A Different Take on the Deliberative Poll: Information, Deliberation and Attitude Constraint," *The Public Opinion Quarterly* 69:1 (2005): 30–65.

13. See Keith Melville, Taylor L. Willingham, and John R. Dedrick, "National Issues Forums: A Network of Communities Promoting Public Deliberation," in Gastil and Levine, *The Deliberative Democracy Handbook*, 37–58; Idil Boran and Shane J. Ralston, "Deliberative Democracy in Action: Evaluating the Ontario Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform," presented at the Copenhagen Conference on Epistemology, Copenhagen (August 15, 2010); Mark E. Warren and Hilary Pearse, *Designing Deliberative Democracy: The British Columbia Citizens' Assembly* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008); James S. Fishkin, *The Voice of the People: Public Opinion and Democracy*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1995); James S. Fishkin and Cynthia Farrar, "Deliberative Polling: From Experiment to Community Resource," in Gastil and Levine, *The Deliberative Democracy Handbook*, 68–79; Carolyn M. Hendricks, "Consensus Conferences and Planning Cells: Lay Citizen Deliberations," in Gastil and Levine, *The Deliberative Democracy Handbook*, 80–110; Ned Crosby and Doug Nethercut, "Citizens Juries: Creating a Trustworthy Voice of the People," in Gastil and Levine, *The Deliberative Democracy Handbook*, 111–19; Patrick L. Scully and Martha L. McCoy, "Study Circles: Local Deliberation as the Cornerstone of Deliberative Democracy," in Gastil and Levine, *The Deliberative Democracy Handbook*, 199–212; and Carolyn J. Lukensmeyer, Joe Goldman, and Steven Brigham, "A Town Meeting for the Twenty-first Century," in Gastil and Levine, *The Deliberative Democracy Handbook*, 154–63.

14. See Robert Putnam, *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1993); id., "Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital," *Journal of Democracy* 6:1 (1995): 65–78; and id., *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000). Mark Button and David Ryfe write: "If we have in mind a theory of deliberative democracy that connects it to a larger concern about the formation and sustainability of a civic culture, then the empirical assessment side of this account must be calibrated so as to judge how well deliberation cultivates people who see themselves as democratic citizens—persons with skills, qualities, dispositions, and virtues necessary to undertake the rights and obligations of citizenship effectively." Button and Ryfe, "What Can We Learn from the Practice of Deliberative Democracy?" in Gastil and Levine, *The Deliberative Democracy Handbook*, 20–33, 30.

15. Reilly Hirst writes: "Participating in a deliberative, collaborative and non-linear mode for learning, research and decision-making is a process that may be employed to

good advantage in the political science classroom and research lab.” Hirst, “Deliberative Democracy and Emancipatory Learning in Action: Using Cooperative Inquiry for Teaching Political Science,” paper presented at the American Political Science Teaching and Learning conference, Baltimore, February 18, 2006, pp. 1–25, 2.

16. Matthew Pamental, “What Is it Like to Be a Deliberative Democrat?,” paper presented at the Philosophy of Education Society conference, San Diego, 1998, pp. 1–8; Hirst, “Deliberative Democracy and Emancipatory Learning in Action”; and Sarah Stitzlein, “Deliberative Democracy in Teacher Education,” *Journal of Public Deliberation* 6:1 (2010): 1–18.

17. Any Gutmann, *Democratic Education* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1987). Amy Gutmann and Dennis Thompson, *Democracy and Disagreement* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1986).

18. Pamental, “What Is it Like to Be a Deliberative Democrat?,” 1.

19. *Ibid.*, 2–3.

20. *Ibid.*, 4–5. In the process of deliberation, agents must regulate their behavior in accordance with a set of procedural principles, which Gutmann and Thompson define as (i) “reciprocity,” (ii) “publicity,” and (iii) “accountability,” as well as a series of substantive principles, including (i) “basic liberty,” (ii) “basic opportunity” and (iii) “fair opportunity.” Gutmann and Thompson, *Democracy and Disagreement*, 153–63, 199–229.

21. Pamental, “What Is it Like to Be a Deliberative Democrat?”

22. Stitzlein, “Deliberative Democracy in Teacher Education,” 5.

23. *Ibid.*, 11.

24. *Ibid.*, 7.

25. *Ibid.*, 13.

26. In contrast to the present work, Hirst suggests that cooperative inquiry and action research, not the CF discussion protocol, are the proper pedagogical techniques for combining political science, not philosophy, teaching and deliberative democracy. Also different from this project, he does not emphasize the teaching of DDT over any other subject-matter in the curriculum. Hirst, “Deliberative Democracy and Emancipatory Learning in Action,” 5–6.

27. *Ibid.*, 3. DDT is taught in the political science classroom, typically in political theory courses.

28. *Ibid.*, 5–6.

29. *Ibid.*, 20.

30. *Ibid.*, 24.

31. Arthur Costa and Bena Kallick, “Through the Lens of a Critical Friend,” *Educational Leadership* 51:2 (1993): 49–51, 49.

32. See Richard Colwell, “Can We Be Friends?,” *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education* 166 (2005): 75–91.

33. Community Campus Partnerships for Health, “Critical Friends: A Process Built on Reflection,” University of Washington, 2007, accessed on November 18, 2010, at http://depts.washington.edu/ccph/pdf_files/CriticalFriends.pdf.

34. *Ibid.*

35. Costa and Kallick write: “It is only when you change the lens through which you view student learning—or your own practice—that you discover whether a new focus is better or worse. But if you never change the lens, you limit your vision.” Costa and

Kallick, "Through the Lens of a Critical Friend," 49. Also, see Jon Appleby, *Becoming Critical Friends: Reflections of an NSRF Coach* (Providence: The Annenberg Institute for School Reform at Brown University, 1998).

36. Costa and Kallick, "Through the Lens of a Critical Friend," 50.

37. *Ibid.*, 51.

38. Community Campus Partnerships for Health, "Critical Friends."

39. *Ibid.*

40. Bruce Ackerman and James S. Fishkin, "Deliberation Day," *The Journal of Political Philosophy* 10:2 (2002): 129–52, 135.

41. One possible objection is that following the CF protocol does not prepare graduate students for the presentations that they will give as conference panelists and job candidates. This is a valid criticism and would be one reason to also include traditional conference-style or job-talk presentations in courses. However, in a DDT course, I believe that the reason for using the CF discussion protocol (i.e., conceiving DDT through the lens of one's own and others' deliberative practice) is weightier than this reason against it.

42. Boran and Ralston, "Deliberative Democracy in Action."

43. Chava Frankfort-Nachmias and David Nachmias write: "One measurement, the pretest, is taken for all cases prior to the introduction of the independent variable in the experimental group; a second, the posttest, is taken for all cases after the experimental group has been exposed to the independent variable." Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias, *Research Methods in the Social Sciences*, 6th edition (New York: Worth Publishers, 2000), 90.

44. Crosby and Nethercut, "Citizens Juries," in Gastil and Levine, *The Deliberative Democracy Handbook*, 115–16. Goodin and Niemeyer, "When Does Deliberation Begin?," 630–31.

45. George E. Walker, Chris M. McGolde, Laura Jones, Andrea C. Buescher, and Pat Hutchins, *The Formation of Scholars: Rethinking Doctoral Education for the Twenty-First Century* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2008), 122.

46. When I partook in a workshop on public choice theory at the Center for the Study of Public Choice (George Mason University) in summer 2005, several of the participating economists mentioned that such hard-hitting feedback was the norm in their academic community and the result was, more often than not, higher quality scholarship.

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