



Does Group Deliberation Mobilize? The Effect of Public Deliberation on Willingness to Participate in Politics

C. Daniel Myers¹ · Hunter G. Gordon¹ · Hyungjin Myra Kim² · Zachary Rowe³ · Susan Dorr Goold⁴

Published online: 6 October 2018

© Springer Science+Business Media, LLC, part of Springer Nature 2018

Abstract

Proponents of public deliberation suggest that engaging in deliberation increases deliberators' subsequent participation in other forms of politics. We evaluate this “deliberative participation hypothesis” using data drawn from a deliberative field experiment in which members of medically underserved communities in Michigan deliberated in small groups about the design of that state's Medicaid program. Participants were randomly assigned to deliberate about the program in a group or to think about the decision individually, and then completed a post-survey that included measures of willingness to engage in a variety of political acts. We measured willingness to engage in common forms of political participation, as well as willingness to participate in particularistic resistance to adverse decisions by insurance bureaucracies. Contrary to the claims of much of the existing literature, we find no impact of deliberation on willingness to engage in political participation. These results suggest that the ability of public deliberation to increase broader political engagement may be limited or may only occur in particularly intensive, directly empowered forms of public deliberation.

Keywords Political participation · Turnout · Deliberation · Medicaid · Health policy · Particularistic resistance

Electronic supplementary material The online version of this article (<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-018-9507-z>) contains supplementary material, which is available to authorized users.

✉ C. Daniel Myers
cdmyers@umn.edu

¹ Department of Political Science, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, USA

² Consulting for Statistics, Computing and Analytics Research, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, USA

³ Friends of Parkside, Detroit, USA

⁴ Center for Bioethics and Social Sciences in Medicine, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, USA

Democratic theorists have long suggested that participation in the democratic process can make people better citizens (Mansbridge 1999). The claim that participation in the political process can lead to more participation, originating in Tocqueville's observations of civil society in the early American republic and Mill's utilitarian defense of political liberty and representative government (Tocqueville 2000/1840; Mill 1991/1861; see Mansbridge (1999) for a review of the history of this idea), forms the core of theories of participatory democracy (Pateman 1970). While theorists usually discuss this effect as the result of "subtle changes in character" over many years (Mansbridge 1999, p. 291) many proponents of public deliberation hope that deliberative events such as citizens' juries, national issues forums, and Deliberative Polls™, collectively referred to as deliberative mini-publics (Smith 2009; Grönlund et al. 2015), can cause a more immediate effect on citizen engagement. These scholars and practitioners argue that the intensive and extra-ordinary kind of participation that takes place in deliberative mini-publics should lead to increased political participation after the event concludes (Burkhalter et al. 2002; Gastil et al. 2008; Fishkin 2009; Jacobs et al. 2009). Such participation might be normatively preferable to participation motivated by partisan polarization or negative affect toward out-groups (Huddy et al. 2015; Mason 2018, Ch. 7).

Gastil and co-authors call this the "deliberative participation hypothesis" (2008).¹ According to this hypothesis, "deliberative participation in one form of public life can increase the likelihood of civic or political participation in other settings." Properly structured deliberation,² per this hypothesis, builds civic skills, feelings of efficacy and ownership, and consequently a willingness to engage in more participation in the future. If true, this mobilization effect would allow deliberative mini-publics to have effects beyond the brief period that most last. In a series of studies, Gastil and co-authors find evidence that, for at least some people, deliberating as part of a criminal jury has a mobilizing effect (2002, 2008, 2010).

Despite these findings, whether group deliberation outside of the jury room can have a similar mobilizing effect is an open question. While Gastil et al. (2008) phrase their argument as a general hypothesis about deliberative participation, without reference to specific deliberative institutions like the criminal jury, they express caution about generalizing their results to the broader class of deliberative mini-publics. Specifically, they speculate that juries' combination of high-quality deliberation, direct decision-making power, and high degree of perceived legitimacy might allow them to have a uniquely powerful mobilizing effect—deliberative experiences

¹ For similar statements of the hypothesis, see Fishkin (2009, p. 141), Jacobs et al. (2009, pp. 87, 88 and 158).

² In describing his version of the "deliberative participation hypothesis," Fishkin draws an explicit contrast between deliberation in mini-publics and Mutz's finding that everyday political discussion with those who hold different political views depresses political participation. "Without efforts to create a safe public space or civil discourse, exposure to strong partisan differences may well depress participation" (p. 3, fn 7). We are primarily concerned here with the potential educative effects of deliberative mini-publics, but also note that other scholars have found mixed support for Mutz's basic finding of conflict between participation and deliberation (Pattie and Johnston 2009; Klostad et al. 2013; Minozzi et al. 2017).

that lack these qualities might have a weaker or non-existent effect. Indeed, other studies that examine the effect of deliberative participation on subsequent political participation have mixed findings, though these studies are limited by their reliance on observational data.

In this paper, we offer an experimental test of the effect of group deliberation in a mini-public format on willingness to engage in other forms of political participation.³ Drawing on data from a field experiment in which subjects were randomly assigned to deliberate in a group about Michigan's Medicaid program or to an individual-reflection control condition, we find no effect of group deliberation on willingness to participate in a variety of discursive and non-discursive political acts, including acts of particularistic resistance to Medicaid bureaucracy (Michener 2018). This finding suggests that, while it may have many benefits, group deliberation as it is practiced in many common forms of deliberative engagement may not have a straight-forward mobilizing effect.

The Deliberative Participation Hypothesis

The claim that participation in democratic processes can have beneficial effects on participants has long been a central justification for democracy. Theorists like Mill and Pateman argue that participating in collective decisions gives participants an awareness of the importance of active participation in the public sphere, producing a mobilizing effect in which participation leads to more participation. Notably, both Mill and Pateman identify political institutions that encourage discussion about small-scale decisions as the institutions most likely to produce this kind of mobilizing effect (Mill 1991/1861, pp. 255, 328; Pateman 1970, Chs. 3–5). Thus, it is not surprising that proponents of deliberative mini-publics have argued that these democratic innovations could serve as the “schools of public spirit” described by Mill (1991/1861, p. 255; Fishkin 2009, p. 141). Burkhalter et al. (2002), for example, argue that deliberation can be “self-reinforcing” as deliberative habits and political skills developed during deliberation predispose participants to take advantages of future opportunities for discursive participation. This development of skills and a sense of responsibility is expected to spill over into non-discursive forms of participation as well (Gastil et al. 2002; Fishkin 2009; Jacobs et al. 2009, Ch. 5; Gastil et al. 2010). For example, a Kettering Institute publication claims that the National Issues Forums can “increase participants’ political efficacy ... raise participants’ interest in politics ... and increase the frequency of participants’ political information seeking and political activity” (Loyacano 1992, quoted in Gastil 2000, pp. 117–118).

³ Our study compares group deliberation to an individual-reflection control condition in which participants were given educational materials about Medicaid and asked to perform the same prioritization task, though as individuals instead of in a group. These control-group participants may have engaged in what Goodin (2000; Goodin and Niemeyer 2003) refer to as “deliberation within.” Thus, our test evaluates the added value of *group* deliberation above and beyond this kind of individual reflection.

Gastil et al. (2008) state this “deliberative participation hypothesis” most clearly: “deliberative participation in one form of public life can increase the likelihood of civic or political participation in other settings.”⁴ In a series of works, Gastil and co-authors (2002, 2008, 2010) test this hypothesis by evaluating the impact of jury service on broader political participation. Drawing on the quasi-experimental assignment of potential jurors to different kinds of trials, they find that deliberating as part of a criminal jury increases subsequent voting (2002, 2008, 2010, Ch. 3), and other forms of political participation at least among some subgroups of jurors (2010). While Gastil and colleagues specifically study jury deliberation, they argue that these findings “suggest that other meaningful deliberative events, beyond jury service, may yield participation effects” (2010, p. 50). These findings—and the suggestion that it might extend to other deliberative bodies—were hailed by proponents of deliberative democracy. Jane Mansbridge and Benjamin Barber offered back cover reviews lauding the research as “data ... showing indisputably that taking civic responsibility in one realm promotes taking civil responsibility later in another,” and “powerful evidence showing how jury service can create social capital and transform citizens.”

Yet, despite this enthusiasm, Gastil and co-authors are cautious in generalizing their results broadly. While they speculate that these findings suggest that deliberation outside the jury room “can spark a ‘participation effect’” (Gastil et al. 2008, p. 364), they note that several features of jury service make it unique among forms of discursive participation. Criminal juries hold direct decision-making power, sometimes literally over life and death, while most forms of discursive participation are limited to educating participants, advising decision-makers, or serving as a decision-making cue to the broader public. The long history of the jury gives juries an institutional legitimacy that is missing from most other forms of public deliberation. This institutional history, and the ways juries have been embedded in our culture for centuries, gives them “an air of gravity and cultural ritual,” that other forms of deliberation can only try to mimic (2008, p. 364). Finally, Gastil and co-authors argue that deliberation in juries is generally of high quality, and perceived as such by jurors, something that may not be true for other instances of deliberation (Gastil et al. 2007). Thus, while Gastil and co-authors provide strong evidence for the deliberative participation hypothesis in criminal juries, it is far from clear whether this finding extends to deliberation in other forms.

Evidence about the “deliberative participation hypothesis” from studies of non-jury deliberative mini-publics is mixed, but is hobbled by reliance on observational data. Several studies find a mobilization effect. Luskin and Fishkin (2002) study follow-up surveys conducted 10 months after a deliberative poll and find a mobilizing effect across a wide range of activities, and Knobloch and Gastil (2015)’s study of follow-up surveys from the Australian Citizens’ Parliament and Oregon Citizens’ Initiative Review find an increase in discursive political participation (e.g. “talking

⁴ Similarly, Fishkin (2009, p. 103) hypothesizes that “once citizens are actively engaged in the discussion of politics, particularly if it is in a context where they feel their voice matters, they may want to continue engagement.”

to others about voting choices”) though no increase in more institutional forms of participation (e.g. “volunteering for parties of candidates”). Jacobs et al. (2009, Ch. 5) draw on a nationally representative survey to argue that discursive participation causes increased participation in a variety of ways, but the same book’s study of follow-up surveys filled out by participants in the Americans Discuss Social Security project found no impact on willingness to participate; they nevertheless conclude that “attending deliberative forums can prompt participants to increase their subsequent engagement in civic activities, contacting influential elites, and voting” (p. 158). The *Connecting to Congress* study finds that deliberative events about immigration reform and detainee policy increased political discussion about the topic of the event, but did not increase general political discussion (Lazer et al. 2015) or voter turnout (Minozzi et al. 2017). Wojcieszak (2011) actually finds that deliberation *decreases* the willingness of participants to engage in future political discussions, though others have found the opposite (Christensen et al. 2016).

Perhaps most importantly, almost all studies of the effects of deliberation outside the jury room on subsequent political participation have drawn on observational data.⁵ Most studies in this literature use a pre-post design comparing pre-deliberation participation to self-reported participation in the months following the deliberative event (Luskin and Fishkin 2002; Jacobs et al. 2009, Ch. 6; Grönlund et al. 2010; Wojcieszak 2011; Knobloch and Gastil 2015).⁶ Such designs suffer from two weaknesses. First, any change in subsequent participation might be the result of aspects of the deliberative event other than deliberation itself such as information provided in briefing materials or simply being asked to think about a public issue. Second, within-subject designs that rely on follow-up surveys taken some time after the deliberative event may pick up the effects of events that take place in between the deliberative mini-public and the survey.⁷ Other studies rely on observational data comparing survey respondents who report participating in deliberative meetings to those who do not (Jacobs et al. 2009, Ch. 5). Thus, it is perhaps unsurprising

⁵ Frustration with the difficulty in testing the educative hypothesis is evident in Mansbridge’s 1999 summary of the history of the idea. Notably, she bemoans the difficulty in conducting internally and externally valid experiments that have sufficient power to conclusively rule in favor or against the hypothesis (pp. 315–320).

⁶ There are some differences in methodology between these studies. In addition to the pre-post comparison among attendees, Jacobs et al. (2009, Ch. 6)’s study of ADSS compare deliberators to a set of people who were invited to attend the forum and declined, as well as a random sample of the population from who the invitation list was drawn. Neither of these are particularly compelling quasi-control groups: given the small number of people who self-select into attending mini-publics (Jacquet 2017), both those who decline the invitation and a general population sample are almost certainly different in important ways than those who choose to accept an invitation. Grönlund et al. (2010) do randomly assign subjects to two different deliberative conditions, but do not have a non-deliberation control condition. Thus, most of their conclusions about the effect of deliberation on political participation are drawn based on comparison of pre- and post-survey responses within experimental conditions.

⁷ For example, Luskin and Fishkin (2002) compare self-reported participation before the National Issues Convention to self-reported participation in the 10-month period following the event; however, the 10-month period after the National Issues Convention included most of the 2000 Presidential Election Cycle, a time when we might expect participants to have many more opportunities to participate in politics.

that these studies have produced inconsistent results. To our knowledge, only the *Connecting to Congress Study* (Lazer et al. 2015; Minozzi et al. 2017) randomly assigned subjects to deliberation and information-only control conditions and examined the impact of this manipulation on political participation. However, these authors only examine the effect of deliberation on subsequent political discussion and voter turnout, not a broader range of participatory acts.

We provide a more rigorous test of whether the deliberative participation hypothesis holds outside of the jury room using data from a field experiment where participants were randomly assigned to deliberate about an important public issue or to an individual-reflection control condition in which they learned about the issue and expressed their views without discussing them with others. We evaluate the impact of deliberation by measuring self-reported willingness to engage in a wide range of political acts. Drawing on the above described literatures, we test three hypotheses. The first is a simple deliberative participation hypothesis.

H1 (Deliberative Participation Hypothesis): Participants assigned to deliberate in a group will be more willing to engage in other forms of political participation than subjects assigned to the individual-reflection control.

In addition, we test two conditional hypotheses. Drawing on Gastil et al. (2010)'s finding that jury deliberation increases participation among infrequent voters, but not among those who already vote frequently, we expect that the effect of deliberation on willingness to participate will be conditional on subjects' prior participation.

We express this conditional hypothesis in two different ways depending on the type of political participation. We expect that the effect of deliberation on standard forms of political participation will be conditional on prior electoral participation, which we measure using past voting behavior.

H2a (Participation Conditional on Prior Participation Hypothesis): Among subjects with low rates of previous political participation, subjects assigned to deliberate in a group will be more willing to engage in other forms of political participation than subjects assigned to the individual-reflection control.

In addition to familiar forms of electoral-representative and discursive political participation, the fact that this field experiment invited members of minority and medically-underserved communities to deliberate about Medicaid gives us an opportunity to evaluate the impact of deliberation on what Michener (2018) calls *particularistic resistance*. Scholars of the welfare state argue that for many Americans, particularly those in what Soss and Weaver (2017) term Race-Class Subjugated Communities, participation through the electoral-representative process is less important than interactions with "governing institutions and officials that exercise social control" at the local level. In such a context, Michener (2018, Ch. 5) argues that individuals who resist bureaucratic decisions that have negative consequences for their lives are engaging in an important form of political participation. This participation includes actions "to challenge, reverse or amend decisions made by agents

of state welfare bureaucracies,” such as filing an official complaint or demanding a hearing (Michener 2018, Ch. 5). We expect that deliberation will make people more willing to engage in particularistic resistance. However, following the logic of Gastil et al. (2010)’s finding regarding voting, we expect that the effect may be conditional on whether deliberators previously engaged in particularistic resistance.

H2b (Participation Conditional on Prior Particularistic Resistance Hypothesis): Among subjects who had not previously engaged in particularistic resistance, subjects assigned to deliberate in a group will be more willing to engage in particularistic resistance than subjects assigned to the individual-reflection control.

Method

This paper draws on data collected from the Michigan Medicaid CHAT Project, a deliberative exercise that engaged members of low-income, minority, and medically underserved communities in a discussion that would help set priorities for the state’s Medicaid program. The primary aims of the project were to design and evaluate Medicaid CHAT, a tool for facilitating these deliberative conversations, and to report the results of these deliberations to state policy makers who were involved in decisions about the design of Medicaid in Michigan.⁸ However, the project also randomly assigned participants to treatment and individual-reflection control conditions with the goal of evaluating the impact of group deliberation, as opposed to individual learning and decision-making, on individual attitudes and behaviors. We take advantage of this field experiment to evaluate the effect of deliberation on willingness to participate in politics outside of the deliberating group.

The Deliberative Exercise

The deliberative procedure centered around CHAT (CHoosing All Together), an exercise developed to facilitate deliberation about the allocation of scarce resources across multiple areas of possible spending (Goold et al. 2005). In CHAT, participants are presented with a circular board (Fig. 1) divided into “slices,” where each slice represents an area where resources can be allocated, and a set of “markers” representing the resources that can be allocated to these areas. Each area has two to three levels of possible funding, with higher levels of funding requiring more markers. Participants choose a level of funding for each area by placing a number of markers in the area equal to the cost of the chosen level; they can also choose not to fund an area by not allocating any markers to that area. Importantly, participants are not given enough markers to fund all areas at the highest level. This requires them to make trade-offs between areas; high levels of funding in one area require lower

⁸ Myers et al. (2018) describe the development of the Medicaid CHAT tool and the priorities chosen by participants in greater detail.

levels of funding, or no funding at all, in other areas. In Medicaid CHAT, the areas represent different areas of health insurance coverage for Medicaid recipients, such as “Mental Health” and “Primary Care,” while the levels represented different levels of coverage within each area.⁹ CHAT can be played alone, as it was in our individual-reflection control condition, but participants generally complete the exercise as a group of eight to fifteen people in which all members of the group must deliberate together to decide on their group’s allocation of resources.

CHAT typically includes four rounds. In the first round, participants individually make allocations. In the second round, small groups of two to four discuss to reach a decision about allocation. In the third round, the full group deliberates about how to allocate the resources. This deliberation, led by a trained facilitator, generally occupies the bulk of the CHAT session. In the fourth round, participants again make individual allocations. Following each round, participants are presented with several events that illustrate the consequences of their allocation decisions. For example, the event might present participants with a vignette about a relative needing medication; the outcome of the event would depend on the level of coverage selected in the “Meds and Supplies” category.

Participants and Experimental Procedure

Participants were recruited from low-income, minority, and medically underserved communities in Michigan through a network of community based organizations as well as newspaper, radio, and Craigslist advertisements. Recruitment materials focused on the study as a chance to make one’s voice heard on the issue of Medicaid, and that the goal of the study was “to find out what Medicaid benefits and programs are most important to your community.” Participants were told that the priorities selected in the session would be reported to decision makers in the state government and elsewhere, though not that they would have any direct effect on Medicaid policy. Recruitment was intended to disproportionately represent low-income and minority residents. We excluded those who were under 18 or who worked in healthcare or health research. Those who were selected for the study were asked to attend a session at a site in their community, such as a community center, library, or the office of a local non-profit. We conducted 22 sessions with a total of 390 participants between December 2015 and September 2016. To reach minority communities, three sessions were conducted in Arabic and two sessions were conducted in Spanish.

Participants were randomly assigned to the group-deliberation treatment or individual-reflection control arm of the study by flipping a coin, which resulted in 209

⁹ For example, in the “Hospitals” area, participants could choose no funding (0 markers), level 1 funding (15 markers), or level 2 funding (21 markers). The no funding level was described as “Medicaid does not pay for inpatient care,” level 1 as “People who have an emergency do not have to pay for inpatient care. Other admissions cost \$50.” and level 2 as “Admission to hospitals is covered at no cost.” The costs and benefits of each level were chosen to reflect actual policy options, and to reflect the actual costs of providing coverage (see Myers et al. 2018 for details).

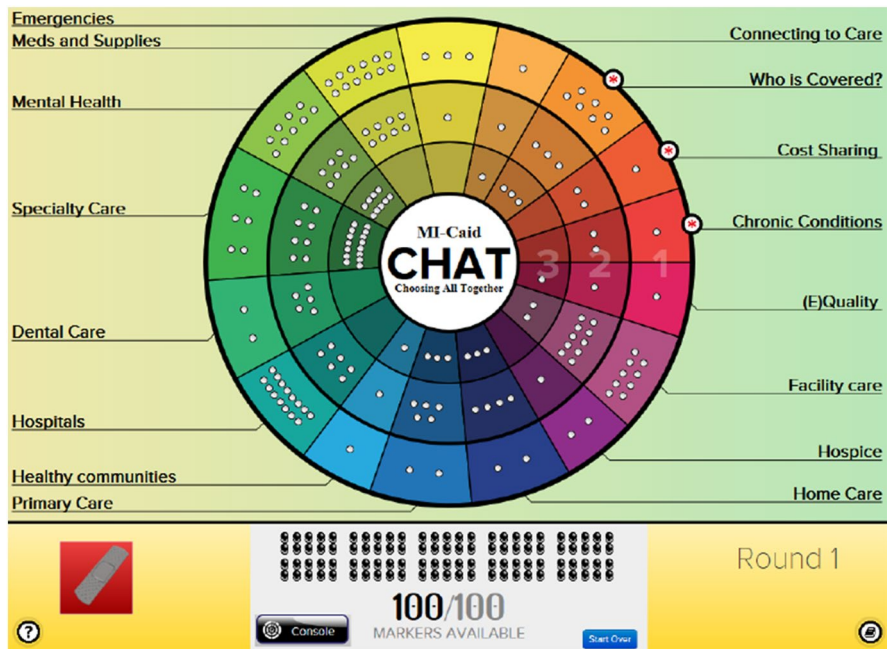


Fig. 1 Screen shot of the CHAT wheel. Each wedge represents a category of spending. Descriptions of each category and what is provided by the different levels of investment (level 1 = outer ring, level 2 = outer + middle rings, level 3 = outer + middle + inner rings) appear with clicking on a wedge. For each wedge, participants can choose not to allocate any of their 100 available markers, or they can use the number of markers needed for level 1, 2 or 3

participants assigned to the treatment condition and 181 to the control condition.¹⁰ Participants in both arms of the study completed a pre-survey and then viewed a video presentation that provided basic information about Medicaid and the services covered by Medicaid. After the video presentations, participants in the treatment arm completed all four rounds of Medicaid CHAT. Participants in the control arm completed only rounds one and four. In other words, those in the control arm received the same educational materials as those in the treatment arm, but did not deliberate with or in any other way interact with other participants. Sessions lasted from two and a half to three hours in the treatment condition including time to

¹⁰ This method of simple random assignment, as opposed to complete random assignment, produced slightly different sample sizes in the two arms of the study. 15 subjects in the treatment condition and 8 in the control condition dropped out prior to completing the political participation battery on the post-survey, producing final sample sizes of 194 in the treatment condition and 173 in the control condition. We report the demographic characteristics of the treatment and control groups in Appendix Table A1, and pre-survey measures of whether they had participated in politics in the last 6 months in Table A2. We observe only one statistically significant difference in demographic characteristics between the treatment and control groups: 57% of the treatment group was at or below the federal poverty level, versus 45% of the control group. However, these two groups did not differ significantly on any pre-survey measure of participation in politics, suggesting that the two groups were balanced on underlying propensity to participate in politics.

assign participants to conditions and provide instructions; in the treatment condition this included an average of 64 minutes of face-to-face deliberation.¹¹ At the end of the session, both treatment and control participants completed a post-survey, were thanked for their participation and paid an honorarium of 45 dollars.

We describe the content and quality of discussion in these groups more extensively elsewhere (Myers et al. 2018). Briefly, deliberation in round three generally began with one deliberator suggesting a category that they thought was of particular importance along with the reasons why they thought it was important and a preferred funding level. If there was disagreement about this, discussion followed, with others, sometimes prompted by the facilitator, offering reasons why they favored a different funding level. Once a funding level was agreed to, discussion continued to another category. As discussion proceeded, groups frequently revisited previous decisions, particularly as their pool of available markers dwindled. Deliberation influenced individual priorities, as measured by the change in individuals' allocations between Round 1 and Round 4 (Myers et al. 2018). Participants in the group deliberation condition increased their allocations to eligibility, mental health, and medications and supplies, while reducing spending on specialty care, community health, and primary care. There was no change in average priorities selected by participants in the individual-reflection control.

We measured deliberators' perceptions of the quality of deliberation using a 14-item scale which asked participants how much they agreed or disagreed with a series of statements about the discussion on a five-point scale from Strongly Agree (5) to Strongly Disagree (1) (Cronbach's $\alpha=0.8$; this scale is described in more detail in Online Appendix C). The mean response on this scale, which included five reverse-coded negative statements about deliberation, was 3.9 out of 5. Deliberators expressed the most positive views with statements related to mutual respect and having their views fairly considered.¹² Deliberators expressed the most negative views of deliberation on two statements about the behavior of others in the discussion.¹³

Measures

We evaluate the impact of group deliberation on participation using self-reported measures of willingness to engage in 13 participatory acts, listed in Table 1. These

¹¹ Subjects in the treatment condition spent an average of 18 minutes in round one setting priorities individually and then reviewing educational materials on their own. They spent an average of 16 minutes in round two and 48 minutes in round three deliberating in small groups and then as a complete group. They then spent 6 minutes in round 4 again deciding priorities individually. Subjects in the information-only control spend 21 minutes in round 1 selecting individual priorities and then reviewing educational materials. They then spent an average of seven minutes in round 4 again setting priorities individually.

¹² Specifically, the highest rating was 4.6 (out of 5) on "Discussion during the game was open and honest," 4.5 on "During the exercise, I was treated with respect," and 4.4 (out of 5) on "All positions were considered with equal respect," and "I had lots of chances to share my views".

¹³ Specifically, the most negative statements were two negatively coded statements: "A few people dominated the discussion" (3 out of 5) and "People in the group argued by referring to what would be best for themselves" (2.8 out of 5).

acts were selected to span a range of different kinds of participation, including standard forms of electoral and representative participation, such as voting and contacting an elected official; confrontational forms of participation, such as taking part in a protest or a rally; discursive forms of participation, such as discussing politics with others or attending a public meeting; and participation online, such as signing an online petition or posting news stories to social networks. Finally, we measured willingness to engage in particularistic resistance using two items that measure willingness to contact the agency or company that provides the participant with health insurance and willingness to file a formal complaint or lawsuit against that agency or company.¹⁴

The post-survey asked participants to report how willing they were to engage in each of thirteen political acts in the next 6 months using 5-point scale (1 = not at all willing to 5 = extremely willing). Self-reported measures of willingness to participate have advantages and disadvantages. While it is easier for participants to report willingness to participate than to actually participate, these measures are highly correlated with measures of actual participation (Pattie and Johnston 2009). Nevertheless, like measures of intention to vote, these measures likely overstate the effect of explanatory factors (such as an experimental intervention) relative to self-reports of actual participation or measures like validated voting (Achen and Blais 2015). However, measuring willingness to participate allows the measurement propensity to participate in activities independent of actual opportunities to engage in those activities. For example, over any given period of time not every person will be asked to volunteer for a candidate, invited to attend a protest, or have a problem with their insurance that requires them to engage in particularistic resistance. Such opportunities are not evenly distributed across the population and are particularly uncommon for members of low-SES groups like the members of our study population (Rosenstone and Hansen 1993; Verba et al. 1995). Measures of actual participation conflate willingness and opportunity; measuring willingness allows us to focus on the effects of deliberation on participants themselves.

To control for baseline propensity to engage in each of these political acts, the pre-survey asked participants whether they had, in the last 6 months, engaged in each act (pre-survey differences are also reported in Online Appendix A as a balance check between experimental arms). For each of the 13 questions assessing participatory acts, we considered statistical power to detect a minimally important between-arm difference of 0.6 standard deviation (SD). With 22 groups per arm and an average group size of 8 persons and within-CHAT group correlation of 0.05, we expected the study to have 97% statistical power to detect a 0.6 SD between-arm difference using a two-sided 0.004 (reduced to account for 13 tests) significance level tests.

¹⁴ Thanks to Jamila Michener for helping to write these survey questions.

Table 1 Measures of willingness to engage in political participation

Type of participation	Survey item
Conventional political participation	
Contact a public official	“Contact a public official at any level of government to express your opinion”
Attend a public meeting	“Attend a public meeting (not including today’s activity) to discuss a political or social issue”
Attend a protest, march, rally, or demonstration	“Attend a protest, march, rally, or demonstration”
Be an active member of a group	“Be an active member of any group, other than a political party, that tries to influence public policy or government”
Work or volunteer for a political candidate or party	“Work or volunteer for a political candidate or party, or any other political organization or cause”
Post to a social networking site	“Post thoughts, comments, or links to articles about political or social issues to a social networking site like Facebook or Twitter”
Sign an online petition	“Sign an online petition about a political or social issue”
Discuss politics with <i>anyone</i>	“Discuss politics with <i>anyone</i> ”
Discuss politics with people who generally <i>agree</i> with you	“Discuss politics with people who generally <i>agree</i> with you about political or social issues”
Discuss politics with people who generally <i>disagree</i> with you	“Discuss politics with people who generally <i>disagree</i> with you about political or social issues”
Vote in the 2016 Presidential Election?	“How willing are you to vote in the 2016 Presidential Election?”
Particularistic resistance	
Contact someone about a problem with insurance	“Contact someone at the agency or insurance company to try to address a problem you had with your insurance”
File an official complaint or a lawsuit	“File an official complaint or a lawsuit to try to address a problem you had with your insurance”

Question stem for measures of conventional political participation: “In the next 6 months, how willing would you be to do any of the following activities?” Question stem for measures of particularistic resistance: “The next two questions are about your relationship with the agency or insurance company that provides your health insurance. If you have a problem with your health insurance in the future, how willing would you be to do the following things?” All items measured on 1–5 scale: not at all willing (1)—a little willing (2)—moderately willing (3)—very willing (4)—extremely willing (5)

Analysis

To evaluate the deliberative participation hypothesis, we compared post-deliberation willingness to participate between subjects assigned to the treatment group to those assigned to the control group using each of 13 items of different types of participation. For each political act, we compared between arms using a linear mixed-effects regression model with post-deliberation willingness to participate as the dependent variable. Our primary predictor of interest is the deliberation arm indicator (group deliberation vs. control); we also controlled for whether the respondent reported

having engaged in that political act in the prior 6 months. We included random intercepts to account for correlation of responses among participants within-CHAT group by study arm. We used the significance of the deliberation arm indicator to test for the between-arm difference adjusting for baseline level of participation.¹⁵

For the hypothesis of increased participation conditional on prior participation, we repeated the analyses after stratifying the data by the three-level self-reported voting status in 2012: those who voted, those who did not vote, and those who did not report whether they voted. We also tested for whether group deliberation had greater impact on willingness among subjects with low rates of previous political participation using the data combined across all three levels of 2012 voting status and fitting a linear mixed-effects model with interactions of deliberation arm by 2012 voting status indicators. Lastly, for the hypothesis of increased participation conditional on prior particularistic resistance, we repeated the analyses after stratifying the data by whether or not in the last 6 months they had contacted or filed a complaint against their insurance provider.

Results

We first test the simplest version of the deliberative participation hypothesis. Table 2 shows the difference between deliberation and control groups in willingness to participate in the 13 political acts, as measured in the post survey. We find no substantively or statistically significant difference between the two conditions on any of the political acts. Across all acts, the treatment and control groups are at most 0.2 from each other on a five-point scale. The largest difference, on the measure of willingness to contact someone about a problem with insurance, is in the opposite of the hypothesized direction. Group deliberation appears to have no mobilizing effect.

Although all differences show small, statistically insignificant effects, interpreting these findings as evidence for a negligible effect of deliberation on participation requires additional tests that rule out a substantively meaningful effect (see Jones et al. 1996; Rainey 2014). To do this, we conducted equivalence tests to show that this data is consistent with a negligible effect. We consider a difference between treatment and control groups of less than 0.5 standard deviation (SD) as a substantively negligible difference. For our 13 measures of interest, SDs ranged from 1.2 to 1.8, and hence the standardized effect size of 0.5 corresponds to mean differences ranging from 0.6 (e.g., willingness to contact someone about a problem with insurance assuming a common SD = 1.2) to 0.85 (e.g., willingness to vote in 2016 presidential election assuming a common SD of 1.8). We can conclude that there is a negligible difference if the 90% confidence interval centered on the observed mean difference lies entirely between ± 0.5 standard deviation. Based on this simple check for equivalence testing, all measures shown in Table 2 allow conclusion

¹⁵ As a simpler test, we also conducted a series of *t*-tests that compare the mean willingness to participate in the deliberation and control arms. The results, reported in Online Appendix B, are substantively the same.

Table 2 Willingness to engage in various forms of political participation (mean (SD), 1 = not at all willing to 5 = extremely willing)

Activity	Deliberation N = 194	Control N = 173	Between-arm difference ^a (p-value)	90% CI
Contact a public official	2.6 (1.3)	2.7 (1.4)	0.03 (0.91)	(−0.37, 0.42)
Attend a public meeting	2.7 (1.3)	2.7 (1.4)	0.15 (0.54)	(−0.24, 0.54)
Attend a protest, march, rally, or demonstration	2.3 (1.3)	2.4 (1.3)	0.00 (1.00)	(−0.31, 0.31)
Be an active member of a group	2.5 (1.3)	2.4 (1.3)	0.03 (0.88)	(−0.33, 0.39)
Work or volunteer for a political candidate or party	2.4 (1.3)	2.3 (1.4)	0.12 (0.45)	(−0.15, 0.40)
Post to a social networking site	2.5 (1.4)	2.5 (1.5)	0.14 (0.50)	(−0.20, 0.48)
Sign an online petition	2.5 (1.4)	2.7 (1.5)	−0.12 (0.62)	(−0.51, 0.27)
Discuss politics with <i>anyone</i>	2.6 (1.4)	2.6 (1.4)	0.01 (0.98)	(−0.34, 0.35)
Discuss politics with people who generally <i>agree</i> with you	2.7 (1.4)	2.6 (1.5)	0.12 (0.60)	(−0.26, 0.50)
Discuss politics with people who generally <i>disagree</i> with you	2.4 (1.3)	2.6 (1.4)	−0.01 (0.96)	(−0.43, 0.40)
Vote in the 2016 Presidential Election	3.3 (1.7)	3.1 (1.8)	0.14 (0.67)	(−0.39, 0.66)
Particularistic resistance				
Contact someone about a problem with insurance	3.5 (1.3)	3.8 (1.2)	−0.20 (0.43)	(−0.60, 0.21)
File an official complaint or a lawsuit	2.9 (1.3)	2.9 (1.4)	0.09 (0.68)	(−0.26, 0.44)

Those who did not participate in the survey were excluded from the denominator

^aBetween-arm difference (as deliberation minus control) at round 4 based on mixed-effects regression models with post-deliberation willingness to participate as the dependent variable, adjusting for participants nested within CHAT group, and predictors included deliberation arm indicator (vs. control) and pre-deliberation self-reported participation

for negligible differences, thus providing more conclusive evidence that deliberation had a negligible effect on willingness to participate. Lastly, since all 13 measures are measures of political participation, we conducted a test for a global hypothesis by combining 13 p-values to generate a global p value (Fisher 1932; Caughey et al. 2017). Fisher's approach of combining the p-values give a global p-value of 0.998 indicating for no consistent pattern on participation providing additional evidence of no group deliberation effect.¹⁶

Following Gastil et al. (2010)'s report that jury deliberation increases subsequent political participation among infrequent voters, but not among frequent voters, *H2* claims that group deliberation will have a positive effect among voters who are not already highly engaged in politics. While we do not have a measure of frequency of voting, we can test whether group deliberation has a different effect based on whether participants report having voted in the 2012 presidential election. The results are shown in Table 3. As expected, those who participated in the past generally report a greater willingness to participate in the future. However, we see no difference in willingness to participate between treatment and control groups in any of these subsamples. While the power of these tests is necessarily smaller, the point estimates of difference between arms are substantively unimportant, and in 24 of 39 comparisons willingness to participate in the control group exceeds that in the treatment group. To check whether this null result can be interpreted as evidence for a negligible effect, we again check whether the 90% confidence interval lies entirely between ± 0.5 standard deviation. Since we have split the sample into three parts, effects are less precisely estimated.¹⁷ Still we find no evidence of increased participation in the "did vote" group on all form of participation, and can conclude a negligible effect of deliberation for all forms of participation among those less engaged with the political process on all but one form of participation, "posting to a social network site."

Following the logic of Gastil et al. (2010)'s finding regarding infrequent voters, we might expect group deliberation to have a different effect on willingness to resist bureaucratic authority depending on whether the participant reports having previously engaged in this form of political behavior. To test this, we split the sample into two groups: those who report in the last 6 months either contacting someone at the agency that provides their insurance or filing an official complaint or lawsuit, and those who report engaging in neither of these behaviors in the last 6 months. These results are shown in Table 4. Again, we observe no difference between treatment and control in either subgroup. Two of the four tests have a positive estimated effect, while two have a negative estimated effect. Once again, comparing the 90% confidence interval to a negligible difference of 0.5 standard deviations, we can conclude for a negligible impact of deliberation on willingness to resist bureaucratic authority

¹⁶ We also conducted a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) using all 13 items as outcomes and did not find significant difference between the two groups ($p=0.33$).

¹⁷ In particular, we cannot rule out a substantively meaningful effect for any of the 13 dependent variables among the "no response" group, as there were only 40 people in this group. For 10 of the 13 variables we cannot rule out a meaningful negative effect of deliberation, while for 7 of 13 we cannot rule out a meaningfully positive effect of deliberation.

Table 3 Between-arm difference in mean willingness to various political participation related statements by self-reported voting status in 2012

	Did not vote (N = 126)				No response (N = 40)				Voted in 2012 (N = 201)			
	D	C	Diff ^a (p)	90% CI ^b	D	C	Diff ^a (p)	90% CI ^b	D	C	Diff ^a (p)	90% CI ^b
Activity												
Contact a public official	2.3 (1.1)	2.2 (1.3)	0.04 (0.86)	(-0.33, 0.42)	2.7 (1.5)	2.8 (1.4)	0.21 (0.72)	(-0.76, 1.18)	2.8 (1.3)	3.0 (1.4)	-0.25 (0.41)	(-0.75, 0.25)
Attend a public meeting	2.6 (1.3)	2.3 (1.2)	0.29 (0.18)	(-0.06, 0.65)	2.4 (1.1)	2.9 (1.5)	-0.19 (0.66)	(-0.92, 0.53)	2.9 (1.3)	3.0 (1.3)	-0.10 (0.74)	(-0.58, 0.38)
Attend a protest...	2.2 (1.2)	2.0 (1.1)	0.13 (0.56)	(-0.24, 0.50)	2.1 (1.2)	2.6 (1.4)	-0.38 (0.37)	(-1.1, 0.31)	2.3 (1.3)	2.5 (1.4)	-0.07 (0.73)	(-0.43, 0.28)
Be an active member of a group	2.3 (1.3)	2.1 (1.2)	0.10 (0.70)	(-0.32, 0.52)	2.4 (1.1)	2.5 (1.5)	-0.08 (0.87)	(-0.92, 0.76)	2.6 (1.3)	2.7 (1.4)	-0.08 (0.79)	(-0.53, 0.38)
Work or volunteer...	2.2 (1.3)	2.0 (1.2)	0.19 (0.38)	(-0.17, 0.55)	2.1 (1.1)	2.8 (1.6)	-0.90 (0.12)	(-1.8, 0.05)	2.5 (1.4)	2.4 (1.4)	0.20 (0.39)	(-0.18, 0.57)
Post to a social networking site	2.5 (1.4)	2.1 (1.3)	0.29 (0.32)	(-0.19, 0.77)	2.2 (1.3)	2.9 (1.5)	-0.98 (0.08)	(-1.9, -0.07)	2.7 (1.4)	2.8 (1.5)	0.06 (0.81)	(-0.33, 0.45)
Sign an online petition	2.2 (1.3)	2.2 (1.3)	-0.05 (0.87)	(-0.53, 0.44)	2.4 (1.2)	3.0 (1.5)	-0.42 (0.41)	(-1.3, 0.42)	2.7 (1.5)	2.9 (1.6)	-0.31 (0.30)	(-0.80, 0.19)
Discuss politics with anyone	2.4 (1.4)	2.2 (1.2)	-0.06 (0.85)	(-0.54, 0.42)	2.2 (1.2)	2.6 (1.6)	0.19 (0.75)	(-0.76, 1.14)	2.8 (1.5)	2.9 (1.4)	-0.06 (0.82)	(-0.50, 0.38)
Discuss politics with people who agree	2.5 (1.3)	2.2 (1.3)	0.16 (0.52)	(-0.24, 0.55)	2.4 (1.3)	2.3 (1.3)	0.48 (0.37)	(-0.40, 1.36)	2.9 (1.4)	3.0 (1.6)	-0.01 (0.96)	(-0.50, 0.47)

Table 3 (continued)

	Did not vote (N = 126)				No response (N = 40)				Voted in 2012 (N = 201)			
	D	C	Diff ^a (p)	90% CI ^b	D	C	Diff ^a (p)	90% CI ^b	D	C	Diff ^a (p)	90% CI ^b
Discuss politics with people who disagree	2.3 (1.2)	2.2 (1.2)	0.02 (0.95)	(-0.40, 0.43)	1.9 (1.0)	2.4 (1.4)	0.17 (0.64)	(-0.43, 0.78)	2.6 (1.3)	2.9 (1.5)	-0.30 (0.31)	(-0.78, 0.19)
Vote in 2016 Election?	2.5 (1.5)	2.4 (1.6)	0.09 (0.77)	(-0.42, 0.62)	2.3 (1.5)	2.8 (1.6)	-0.15 (0.78)	(-1.05, 0.75)	3.9 (1.6)	3.7 (1.7)	0.05 (0.91)	(-0.62, 0.72)
Particularistic resistance												
Contact about insurance problem	2.8 (1.4)	3.2 (1.4)	-0.52 (0.09)	(-1.0, -0.01)	3.5 (1.3)	3.8 (1.3)	-0.11 (0.83)	(-0.97, 0.74)	3.9 (1.2)	4.1 (1.0)	-0.30 (0.20)	(-0.69, 0.09)
File an official complaint or a lawsuit	2.3 (1.2)	2.4 (1.2)	-0.02 (0.94)	(-0.49, 0.45)	2.9 (1.3)	3.3 (1.5)	0.20 (0.77)	(-0.92, 1.31)	3.2 (1.3)	3.1 (1.4)	-0.01 (0.97)	(-0.41, 0.39)

Those who did not participate in the survey were excluded from the denominator

^aBetween-arm difference (as deliberation minus control) at round 4 based on mixed-effects regression models with post-deliberation willingness to participate as the dependent variable, adjusting for participants nested within CHAT group, and predictors included deliberation arm indicator (vs. control) and pre-deliberation self-reported participation

^b90% confidence interval bolded if upper bound of confidence interval is not entirely contained within ± 0.5 standard deviation

Table 4 Between-arm difference in particularistic resistance by self-reported particularistic resistance in prior 6 months

	Did not contact or file complaint (N = 203)				Contacted or filed complaint (N = 171)			
	D	C	Diff ^a (p)	90% CI ^b	D	C	Diff ^a (p)	90% CI ^b
Contact someone about a problem with insurance	3.5 (1.2)	3.8 (1.2)	− 0.31 (0.21)	(− 0.72, 0.10)	3.6 (1.5)	3.6 (1.3)	− 0.01 (0.97)	(− 0.52, 0.51)
File an official complaint or a lawsuit	2.9 (1.3)	2.9 (1.4)	0.06 (0.81)	(− 0.38, 0.51)	2.9 (1.4)	2.9 (1.4)	0.05 (0.84)	(− 0.36, 0.46)

Those who did not participate in the survey were excluded from the denominator

^aBetween-arm difference (as deliberation minus control) at round 4 based on mixed-effects regression models with post-deliberation willingness to participate as the dependent variable, adjusting for participants nested within CHAT group, and predictors included deliberation arm indicator (vs. control) and pre-deliberation self-reported participation

^b90% confidence interval bolded if upper bound of confidence interval is not entirely contained within ± 0.5 standard deviation

whether the participant reports having previously engaged in this form of political behavior or not.

Conclusion

This paper offers an experimental test of the deliberative participation hypothesis, the claim that participation in public deliberation increases political participation in other spheres. Across thirteen different types of political participation, we find no evidence that group deliberation, as compared to an individual-reflection control group, increases willingness to engage in other forms of political participation. The null finding holds for traditional electoral-representative forms of participation, but also for discursive forms of participation that we might expect to be particularly affected by taking part in a deliberative mini-public. Despite the fact that this deliberative exercise might have been expected to be particularly empowering with respect to the Medicaid program, we also find no effect on willingness to engage in what Michener (2018) calls particularistic resistance, as deliberators showed no greater willingness than those in the control group to take formal and informal action to resist negative decisions by insurance providers.

This result suggests that not all deliberative experiences produce the mobilizing effect that Gastil and co-authors find with criminal juries (2002, 2008, 2010), and that others find with observational data (Fishkin and Luskin 2002; Jacobs et al. 2009). While more research examining diverse kinds of deliberative engagement

are necessary, our finding can help set bounds on when we might expect deliberative mini-publics to contribute to a broader “civic awakening” (Gastil et al. 2002). Gastil et al. (2008) suggest four features of jury deliberation that might make it particularly mobilizing and that might not be replicated in all deliberative experiences: jury deliberation is generally perceived as high-quality; juries have decision-making authority that is generally perceived to be legitimate; jury deliberation is conducted in a setting with “an air of gravity and cultural ritual;” and finally jury deliberations include underrepresented populations. To these we might add the length of the deliberative experience. On these dimensions, CHAT deliberation is similar to jury deliberation in that participants perceived it to be high-quality and that it includes underrepresented populations. It differs to varying degrees on the other three. CHAT’s 3-h deliberative session was shorter than the average jury trial.¹⁸ Our deliberative groups had no direct decision-making power, in contrast to criminal juries. Participants were told that their decisions would be reported to policy-makers, but not that they would have a direct effect on policy. Finally, our M-CHAT sessions also lacked what Gastil et al. (2008) describe as the “air of gravity and cultural ritual” that accompanies jury service; M-CHAT deliberators were not sworn in with a solemn oath, sessions took place in community centers, not court rooms, and deliberations were presided over by facilitators in street clothes, not judges in robes.

Thus, whether deliberative mini-publics increase participants’ willingness to engage in politics in other ways may depend on whether they match the length, decision-making power, or cultural gravity that accompanies criminal juries. Certainly, the most prominent examples of deliberative mini-publics approach or exceed criminal juries on these dimensions. The much-heralded British Columbia Citizens’ Assembly lasted for months and enjoyed agenda-setting power, if not direct decision-making power (Warren and Pearse 2008); Oregon Citizens’ Initiative Review panels last for several days, enjoy official sanction, and, while they do not decide issues, the state distributes the results of their deliberations as part of the official voter guide (Knobloch et al. 2013). However, such projects are expensive, place extensive demands on the time of organizers and deliberators, and tend to involve a small number of participants. Hope that deliberative mini-publics can “scale-up” to have meaningful system-level effects through their direct effects on participants¹⁹ must rest on a broader class of shorter, less directly-empowered deliberative events like National Issues Forums (Melville et al. 2005), tele-town halls (Neblo et al. 2018), study circles (Scully and McCoy 2005), or deliberative focus groups (Carman et al. 2013). Our results generalize most directly to these deliberative exercises.²⁰

¹⁸ Gastil et al. (2008) do not report the average length of the jury deliberations in their study, though they do report that the average hung jury deliberated for 9.03 hours and the average jury that reached a verdict deliberated for 3.57 hours.

¹⁹ Niemeyer 2014. Mini-publics can, of course, have systemic effects through mechanisms other than direct effects on participants (e.g. MacKenzie and Warren 2012; Warren and Gastil 2015).

²⁰ Appendix D reports an attempt to show the frequency with which deliberative exercises comparable to Medicaid CHAT occur in the published literature. We re-examined the 105 studies described in the 2014 AHRQ literature review of deliberative methods to determine how many lacked decision-making authority and were 1 day or shorter or, if they reported the length of discussion, featured two or fewer hours of discussion. We excluded 14 studies because we were unable to determine the structure of delibera-

Unfortunately, they suggest that such exercises, though easier to scale up to include a large number of participants, may not have a mobilizing effect.

While the experimental design of this study represents an advance over much of the existing literature testing the deliberative participation hypothesis, some aspects of the study's design may raise doubts about the generalizability of this finding. First, we measure differences in self-reported willingness to engage in political participation, as opposed to self-reports of actual participation or turnout as measured by administrative records. While self-reported measures like this have downsides, they are generally thought to overstate the impact of explanatory factors on participation (Pattie and Johnston 2009; Achen and Blais 2015). We would thus expect, if anything, that it would produce an upwardly biased estimation of the effect of deliberation on participation—the fact that we find no effect on self-reported willingness to participate makes it highly unlikely that an effect would be found for actual participation. Second, this study utilizes an individual-reflection control, but no true control group whose members do not receive information or make decisions about Medicaid. Participants in the individual-reflection treatment by itself may have engaged in some form of “deliberation within” (Goodin 2003), which might have had a positive effect on participation. Our results would still suggest that no added effect of deliberating in a group, above the effect whatever internal deliberation goes along with learning about and offering an opinion on Medicaid spending priorities.

This study's focus on residents of low-income and medically-underserved communities sets it apart from many studies of deliberation. It is possible that deliberation would have a mobilizing effect on participants higher in SES, though if the experience of deliberation does not increase participation among those who are generally excluded from decision-making we are skeptical that it would mobilize groups who are generally included in decision-making. Still, caution should be taken in generalizing these results to other populations and future work should examine the effects of deliberation across more diverse populations. Possibly, discussing public issues with other members of a disadvantaged group simply reminds members of their collective disempowerment,²¹ suggesting that care be taken in the design of enclave deliberation among traditionally underrepresented groups (e.g. Karpowitz et al. 2009). Regardless of whether these results generalize to other population groups, they should temper expectations that deliberation will be *particularly* mobilizing for traditionally disempowered groups, such as Gastil et al. (2008)'s suggestion that, when it comes to deliberation's participation effect, such groups “might benefit the most from the deliberative experience.” More generally, this examination of the effects of deliberating about Medicaid among low-income and medically-underserved communities may have implications for the broader literature on the

Footnote 20 (continued)

tion used or were unable to find the source cited in the AHRQ review, and 9 studies because the source described something other than deliberation among the lay public. Of the remaining exercises, 49 were either longer than 1 day or included more than 2 hours of face-to-face conversation, while 1 of those remaining appeared to have a more direct connection to policy-making than our CHAT exercise. The remaining 32 studies (out of 82 not excluded) appear comparable on these dimensions to CHAT.

²¹ We thank an anonymous reviewer for suggesting this possibility.

policy-feedback effects of Medicaid on political participation (Haselswerdt 2017; Michener 2017).

Importantly, these results do not rule out more subtle, longer-term educative effects of participating in deliberative mini-publics. Indeed, Mansbridge (1999) warns that the educative effects of participating in politics are likely to be “subtle changes in character” that “cannot easily be measured with the blunt instruments of social science” (p. 291).²² Our study can only speak to the effect of one-shot deliberation that participants have no reason to believe will be repeated; more regular participation, such as regular “Deliberation Days” suggested by Ackerman and Fishkin (2004) might inculcate habits of participation that are not created by an isolated deliberative experience. Moreover, theorists like Mill, Tocqueville, and Paterman, as well as proponents of deliberation like Fishkin and Gastil, argue that participation affects a wide range of civic attitudes beyond those directly tied to political engagement, such as orientation towards the common good and a sense of responsibility for the public sphere. Indeed, other research using the CHAT tool has shown that deliberation with others leads to more community-minded allocation of scarce resources (Goold et al. 2005). For example, a 2004 study found that participation in CHAT made insured participants more willing to reduce their own health benefits in order to extend coverage to the uninsured (Goold et al. 2004). Such educative effects are certainly valuable, though increased public-spiritedness will have less practical effect if it is not paired with an increased willingness to engage in political action.

Acknowledgements This research was funded by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (1-R21-HS-023566-01). Dr. Goold is supported, in part, by a CTSA grant from the Michigan Institute for Clinical and Health Research (Contract #UL1TR000433). The authors thank Cengiz Salmon, Lisa Szymeczek, Edith Kieffer, A. Mark Fendrick, Karen Calhoun, Lynnette LaHahn, Caro Ledon, Marion Danis, and Eric Campbell for assistance with the Medicaid-CHAT project. We also thank the participants in the Medicaid-CHAT sessions for their time and insights, and the steering committee for the Medicaid-CHAT project. Michael Neblo, William Minozzi, and three anonymous reviewers provided helpful feedback on drafts of this paper. All errors are, of course, our own. Dr. Goold and her institutions could benefit from future paid licenses (royalties) for the CHAT tool used in this study. Replication data and code can be found at <https://doi.org/10.7910/DVN/YXGVBT>

Compliance with Ethical Standards

Ethical Approval This research was approved by the Institutional Review Board at the University of Michigan. All procedures performed in studies involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional and/or national research committee and with the 1964 Helsinki declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards.

Informed Consent Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

²² See, for example Morrell (2005)’s study of deliberation and political efficacy; he finds that deliberation increases efficacy to engage in discursive participation but has no effect on general political efficacy. For more general reviews of the effects of mini-public participation see Myers and Mendelberg (2013) and Gastil (2018).

References

- Achen, C. H., & Blais, A. (2015). Intention to vote, reported vote, and validated vote. In J. A. Elkind & D. M. Farrell (Eds.), *The act of voting: Identities, institutions and locale*. London: Routledge.
- Ackerman, B. A., & Fishkin, J. S. (2004). *Deliberation day*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Burkhalter, S., Gastil, J., & Kelshaw, T. (2002). A conceptual definition and theoretical model of public deliberation in small face-to-face groups. *Communication Theory*, 12(4), 398–422.
- Carman, K. L., Heeringa, J. W., Heil, S. K. R., et al. (2013). *Public deliberation to elicit input on health topics: Findings from a literature review*. AHRQ Publication No. 13-EHC070-EF. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, Rockville, MD.
- Caughey, D., Dafoe, A., & Seawright, J. (2017). Nonparametric combination (NPC): A framework for testing elaborate theories. *The Journal of Politics*, 79(2), 688–701.
- Christensen, H. S., Himmelroos, S., & Grönlund, K. (2016). Does deliberation breed an appetite for discursive participation? Assessing the impact of first-hand experience. *Political Studies*, 61(1 suppl), 64–83.
- de Tocqueville, A. (2000/1840). *Democracy in America: The complete and unabridged volumes I and II*. New York: Bantam Classics.
- Fisher, R. (1932). *Statistical methods for research workers* (4th ed.). London: Oliver & Boyd.
- Fishkin, J. (2009). *When the people speak: Deliberative democracy and public consultation*. Oxford: OUP.
- Gastil, J. (2000). *By popular demand: Revitalizing representative democracy through deliberative elections* (Illustrated ed.). Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Gastil, J. (2018). The lessons and limitations of experiments in democratic deliberation. *Annual Review of Law and Social Science*. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-lawsocsci-110316-113639>.
- Gastil, J., Burkhalter, S., & Black, L. W. (2007). Do juries deliberate? A study of deliberation, individual difference, and group member satisfaction at a municipal courthouse. *Small Group Research*, 38(3), 337–359.
- Gastil, J., Deess, E. P., & Weiser, P. (2002). Civic awakening in the jury room: A test of the connection between jury deliberation and political participation. *Journal of Politics*, 64(2), 585–595.
- Gastil, J., Deess, E. P., Weiser, P., & Meade, J. (2008). Jury service and electoral participation: A test of the participation hypothesis. *The Journal of Politics*, 70(2), 351–367.
- Gastil, J., Deess, E. P., Weiser, P. J., & Simmons, C. (2010). *The jury and democracy: How jury deliberation promotes civic engagement and political participation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Goodin, R. E. (2000). Democratic Deliberation Within. *Philosophy & Public Affairs*, 29(1), 81–109.
- Goodin, R. E. (2003). Democratic deliberation within. *Philosophy & Public Affairs*, 29(1), 81–109.
- Goodin, R. E., & Niemeyer, S. J. (2003). When does deliberation begin? Internal reflection versus public discussion in deliberative democracy. *Political Studies*, 51(4), 627–649.
- Goold, S. D., et al. (2004). Will insured citizens give up benefit coverage to include the uninsured? *Journal of General Internal Medicine*, 19(8), 868–874.
- Goold, S. D., et al. (2005). Choosing healthplans all together: A deliberative exercise for allocating limited health care resources. *Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law*, 30(4), 563–602.
- Grönlund, K., Bachtiger, A., & Setälä, M. (Eds.). (2015). *Deliberative mini-publics: Involving citizens in the democratic process*. Colchester: ECPR Press.
- Grönlund, K., Setälä, M., & Herne, K. (2010). Deliberation and civic virtue: Lessons from a citizen deliberation experiment. *European Political Science Review*, 2(1), 95–117. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1755773909990245>.
- Haselswerdt, J. (2017). Expanding medicaid, expanding the electorate: The affordable care act's short-term impact on political participation. *Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law*, 42(4), 667–695.
- Huddy, L., Mason, L., & Aarøe, L. (2015). Expressive partisanship: campaign involvement, political emotion, and partisan identity. *American Political Science Review*, 109(01), 1–17.
- Jacobs, L. R., Cook, F. L., & Carpini, M. X. D. (2009). *Talking together: Public deliberation and political participation in America*. Chicago: University Of Chicago Press.
- Jacquet, V. (2017). Explaining non-participation in deliberative mini-publics. *European Journal of Political Research*, 56(3), 640–659.
- Jones, B., Jarvis, P., Lewis, J. A., & Ebbutt, A. F. (1996). Trials to assess equivalence: The importance of rigorous methods. *BMJ*, 313(7048), 36–39.

- Karpowitz, C. F., Raphael, C., & Hammond, A. S. (2009). Deliberative democracy and inequality: Two cheers for enclave deliberation among the disempowered. *Politics & Society*, 37(4), 576–615.
- Klofstad, C. A., Sokhey, A. E., & McClurg, S. D. (2013). Disagreeing about disagreement: How conflict in social networks affects political behavior. *American Journal of Political Science*, 57(1), 120–134.
- Knobloch, K. R., & Gastil, J. (2015). Civic (Re)socialisation: The educative effects of deliberative participation. *Politics*, 35(2), 183–200.
- Knobloch, K. R., Gastil, J., Reedy, J., & Walsh, K. C. (2013). Did they deliberate? Applying an evaluative model of democratic deliberation to the Oregon citizens initiative review. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 41(2), 105–125.
- Lazer, D. M., et al. (2015). Expanding the conversation: Multiplier effects from a deliberative field experiment. *Political Communication*, 32(4), 552–573.
- Loyacano, M. E. (Ed.). (1992). *National Issues Forums Literacy Program: Linking literacy and citizenship, 1988–1991*. Dayton: Kettering Foundation.
- Luskin, R. C., & Fishkin, J. (2002). *Deliberation and better citizens*. Unpublished paper. Center for Deliberative Democracy
- MacKenzie, M. K., & Warren, M. E. (2012). Two trust-based uses of minipublics in democratic systems. In J. Parkinson & J. Mansbridge (Eds.), *Deliberative systems: deliberative democracy at the large scale, theories of institutional design* (pp. 95–124). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Mansbridge, J. (1999). On the idea that participation makes better citizens. In S. L. Elkin & K. E. Soltan (Eds.), *Citizen competence and democratic institutions* (pp. 291–325). University Park: Penn State University Press.
- Mason, L. (2018). *Uncivil agreement: how politics became our identity*. Chicago, Illinois, London: University of Chicago Press.
- Melville, K., Willingham, T. L., & Dedrick, J. R. (2005). National issues forums: A network of communities promoting public deliberation. In J. Gastil & P. Levine (Eds.), *The deliberative democracy handbook: Strategies for effective civic engagement in the twenty-first century* (pp. 37–58). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Michener, J. (2018). *Fragmented democracy: Medicaid, federalism, and unequal politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Michener, J. D. (2017). People, places, power: Medicaid concentration and local political participation. *Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law*, 42(5), 865–900.
- Mill, J. S. (1991/1861). *“On Liberty” and other writings*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Minozzi, W. et al. (2017). *Athletic democracy: Robust deliberation and participation*. Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, IL
- Morrell, M. E. (2005). Deliberation, democratic decision-making and internal political efficacy. *Political Behavior*, 27(1), 49–69.
- Myers, C. D., Kieffer, E. C., Fendrick, A. M., Kim, H. M., Salman, C., Szymeczko, L., et al. (2018). *How would low-income communities prioritize Medicaid spending?* Paper presented at the 2018 Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, IL.
- Myers, C. D., & Mendelberg, T. (2013). Political deliberation. In L. Huddy, D. O. Sears, & J. S. Levy (Eds.), *Oxford handbook of political psychology*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Neblo, M. A., Esterling, K. M., & Lazer, D. M. J. (2018). *Politics with the people by Michael A. Neblo*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Pateman, C. (1970). *Participation and democratic theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Pattie, C. J., & Johnston, R. J. (2009). Conversation, disagreement and political participation. *Political Behavior*, 31(2), 261–285.
- Rainey, C. (2014). Arguing for a negligible effect. *American Journal of Political Science*, 58(4), 1083–1091.
- Rosenstone, S. J., & Hansen, J. M. (1993). *Mobilization, participation, and democracy in America*. Basingtoke: Macmillan Publishing Company.
- Scully, P. L., & McCoy, M. L. (2005). Study circles: Local deliberation as the cornerstone of deliberative democracy. In J. Gastil & P. Levine (Eds.), *The deliberative democracy handbook: Strategies for effective civic engagement in the twenty-first century* (pp. 199–212). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Smith, G. (2009). *Democratic innovations: Designing institutions for citizen participation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Soss, J., & Weaver, V. (2017). Police are our government: Politics, political science, and the policing of race-class subjugated communities. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 20(1), 565–591.

- Verba, S., Schlozman, K. L., & Brady, H. E. (1995). *Voice and equality: Civic voluntarism in American politics*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Warren, M., & Pearce, H. (Eds.). (2008). *Designing deliberative democracy: The British Columbia citizens' assembly*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Warren, M. E., & Gastil, J. (2015). Can deliberative minipublics address the cognitive challenges of democratic citizenship? *The Journal of Politics*, 77(2), 562–574.
- Wojcieszak, M. (2011). Pulling toward or pulling away: Deliberation, disagreement, and opinion extremity in political participation. *Social Science Quarterly*, 92(1), 206–225.