Facts, Values, and Democracy Worth Wanting: Strategic Public Deliberation in the Era of Trump

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Abstract

In this paper, I characterize the troubling emergence of "post-truth" politics, represented by the election of Donald Trump in the U.S. and similar developments in other national contexts, in terms of dual crises of epistemic and political legitimacy. I argue that the dichotomy between facts and values plays a key role in these crises, and that democratic deliberation represents a particularly promising opportunity to overcome this dichotomy and legitimate political discourse at a national scale. In order to make this case, I draw upon developments in the field of educational program evaluation and apply the insights gleaned to suggest possibilities for leveraging strategic public deliberation to ground and legitimate political discourse and discussion in the Trump era.

The 2016 election of Donald Trump as President of the United States marks, according to the prevailing academic and mainstream media narratives, entrance into a new era of public discourse. What marks the current epoch as different from what preceded is captured concisely in the term "post-truth." Within this new milieu, disagreement over politically significant facts is first interpreted not as an impetus to individual and collective inquiry for the purpose of coming to a shared, or at least authoritative, understanding. Rather, public disagreement is viewed as a perpetual cycle

of willful assertion (often in a media echo-chamber) of one's preferred set of "alternative facts," and of dismissing and demeaning contrary evidence as "fake news." Certainly the behaviors of some public figures better fit this characterization than others. The claim of a post-truth ethos, however, takes the most extreme cases as representative—as exemplifying rather than deviating from the general rule.

Those promoting, in the name of democracy, the disinterested yet passionate pursuit of truth, principles of equity, justice, and the like, need a strategy for realizing these values that is responsive to our rapidly changing political milieu, and that addresses effectively the twin legitimacy crises we now face: one epistemological, the other political. My argument in this article is that political and epistemic legitimacy are fundamentally connected, and that local practices that explicitly connect these two dimensions of social reality represent an important site for improving larger-scale democratic procedures in the Trumpian "post-truth" moment.

To make this case, I draw upon Ernest House and Kenneth Howe's (1999) and Howe's (2003) *deliberative democratic* account of how robust public deliberation can productively wed reasonable contestation of facts with judgments of value, even (and especially) in the face of divergent goals and interests. I provide a brief account of how this approach emerged within the field of educational program evaluation. This grounds my argument in what is admittedly the provincial history of a single academic discipline, but one that is, in my view, particularly instructive. This is because, for historical reasons, the issues addressed in the development of educational program evaluation as a discipline anticipated and closely mirror those we now confront at a broad societal level.

I then argue that strategically scaled public deliberation represents an especially promising response to the delegitimization of public discourse at state and national levels. Such an approach represents our best chance to restore a modicum of faith in representative institutions, and thereby to increase the likelihood of constructive citizen participation in politics at all levels. By *strategically scaled deliberation*, I mean high quality, in-depth and purposeful inquiry carried out by a small but representative group (or groups) of nonspecialist citizens, the results of which are then leveraged to *ground* and *legitimate* processes of information exchange and argumentation at the level of the mass media and representative governance.

In extending the framework of deliberative democratic evaluation beyond technical program reviews and social research to the problem of legitimating mainstream political discourse at scale, I briefly rehearse

one well-known model for scaling small group deliberation to influence political discourse and decision-making at the state level: the *Citizens' Initiative Review* (CIR). CIR has been formally institutionalized in Oregon, and piloted in Colorado, Arizona, and Massachusetts. I conclude with a brief examination of relevant findings in research on CIR, which indicates that such approaches provide a promising alternative to the dominant elitist, technocratic and majoritarian, emotive options that dominate much thinking about our present political scene, not only in principle but also in practice.

Getting Over "Post-Truth": Reconciling Facts and Values

The "post-truth" narrative of the moment will serve as a valuable starting point for inquiry, but the generality of such language obscures an important distinction. While the crisis of truth is increasingly general, there remains an important distinction related to scale. The everyman's "hermeneutics of suspicion" infects *national* politics more dramatically than at the state and especially the local level. This is because the mechanisms of large-scale political discourse—bureaucratic governing institutions, the media, intellectuals, and universities, and s on—have lost the confidence of large swathes of the general population. This is certainly the case within the U.S. and, to varying degrees, throughout the western world.[1]

This loss of confidence is a *political* crisis. From a certain point of view, it represents a more fundamental *epistemic* crisis deeply engrained in Western, postenlightenment thought and culture. This is the famous philosophical distinction between matters of fact and values. Understood as a difference of kind rather than degree, this distinction relegates empirical and descriptive claims to a different sphere than conceptual and normative ones.

Key to the deliberative democratic theory of program evaluation is the insight that, upon careful examination, evaluative claims are not *fundamentally* different from claims of fact. Indeed, in House and Howe's (1999) words, these two types of claims "blend together" along a continuum, their difference being a matter of degree rather than kind (5–9). This does not mean, as a skeptic might conclude, that neither can be justified—a view known among philosophers and methodologists as the "radical undecidability thesis." Rejecting both *radical constructivism* (value-relativism) and

postmodernism (value-pluralism), House and Howe propose that public inquiry based on principles of inclusion, dialogue, and deliberation is most likely to reach determinations of value acceptable to diverse stakeholders. The argument that a given claim, whether concerning facts or values, is justified on the basis of reliable and ethical processes of inquiry provides a powerful participatory alternative to appeals to technocratic authority, scientific or otherwise. In this sense, it resonates with as well as rationalizes the skepticism toward professionals and elites that permeates our "post-truth" moment. At least as importantly, it also presents a critique of and an alternative to the *emotivist* conception of democracy, which often attends and certainly contributes to populist and ethnic nationalist movements (11–14). In short, the underlying framework of deliberative democratic evaluation and social science (Howe, 2003) was made for our moment, presciently responding to epistemic and political considerations that have moved from specialized scholarly discourses into mainstream political culture.

Recognizing the interpenetrating nature of facts and values has helpful implications for development of political strategy in support of democratic institutions and culture. It strongly suggests a path forward that avoids, on the one hand, fruitless attempts to revert to and bolster the authority of technical (scientific or philosophical) expertise. But it also provides an alternative to the emotivist, willful politics that rejects the possibility of reasoning together about facts *and* values, and that results in winner-take-all struggle.

Deliberative Democratic Evaluation[2]

What is program evaluation? What is it about this particular corner of social scientific and professional worlds that might offer, if I'm right, such salient and timely guidance for navigating our present conundrum? The term *democratic evaluation* refers to theoretical frameworks that conceptualize the assessment of public programs or initiatives (in education, healthcare, etc.) in terms of its role in and contribution to democratic politics and culture. It is one of many theoretical traditions within the academic and professional field of program evaluation that emerged in the second half of the twentieth century. While many, perhaps most, theories of program evaluation include democratic elements—for example, emphasis on stakeholders' participation and evaluators' responsiveness, a commitment to the empowerment of disadvantaged individuals or communities—democratic evaluation goes

further, explicitly linking the narrower and more immediate goals specified for any particular evaluation to an overarching goal of creating a more just and democratic society. The main task of evaluators working within such a framework involves identifying (or developing) methods of engagement, analysis, and dissemination adequate to this aspiration.

There are two major democratic theories of evaluation: Barry MacDonald's *democratic evaluation (DE)* and Ernest House and Kenneth Howe's *deliberative democratic evaluation (DDE)*. The key to understanding both these theories, as well as their relevance for our contemporary situation, is to grasp the conception of evaluation that these theories seek to correct, or supplant. In what follows I describe the basic outlines of DE and DDE with an eye toward their respective rationales and implications.

Technocratic-Managerial Evaluation

Both MacDonald and House and Howe developed their theories in response to what can be termed the *technocratic-managerial* theory of program evaluation, which shaped the field from its earliest days. This conception is *technocratic* in that it seeks to position evaluation as a value-neutral and apolitical activity, formally eschewing judgments about programs' values and goals. It is *managerial* in that it aligns itself with the interests and perspectives of program managers, fiscal patrons, and other parties with a vested interest.

As House argues in an influential history of professional evaluation, traditional institutions have declined in importance in modern capitalist societies. This is not to say that such institutions are necessarily less important in the lives of particular individuals and communities; rather, they have ceased to provide the generally accepted justification for social practice. This presents a challenge for modern states whose governments must appear responsive to the demands of diverse constituencies whose goals and interests often conflict. A "solution" that emerged in the mid-1960s, most notably in the U.S. and the U.K., seeks to ground social action in appeals to the authority of "reason"—that is, scientific rationality—as applied to social programs.

Prior to 1965, formal program evaluation had been a marginal activity. However, with the passage of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) that year, it became a federal mandate. This expanded role for evaluation occurred at a time of social upheaval, during which marginalized groups and their allies vigorously pressed claims for the redress

of longstanding injustice, and many members of historically privileged groups mobilized to preserve the status quo. Absent a shared cultural basis for determining political priorities, policymakers promoted evaluation as a value-neutral method for determining the merit of contentious social programs, many of which involved significant public expenditures and controversial expansions of government bureaucracy.

The notion of scientific reason underlying the technocratic-managerial conception depends upon a sharp distinction between judgments of fact and judgments of value. This is apparent in the work of Donald Campbell, a towering figure in the development of evaluation theory. Campbell accepted the axiom, inherited from the logical positivists, that value claims are epistemologically different than claims about facts. The latter are subject to rational determination, the former are not. On this view, evaluation of whether a particular program has worked, or worked better than others, involves only judgments of fact. Judgments of value, however—concerning, for example, the justice of goals set by managers, funders or policymakers—cannot be determined rationally, and so necessarily lie beyond the scientific evaluator's purview.

In keeping with this basically positivist orientation, the prevalence of the technocratic-managerial conception was reflected in the privileging of quantitative/statistical research methods. Through the application of such methods, it was thought, evaluation could identify causal mechanisms that would enable effective technocratic control of social phenomena. Such aspirations align closely with the interests and perspectives of program managers and it is unsurprising, therefore, that in this early phase there was little emphasis on stakeholder participation, nor much attention to the diversity of legitimate (and competing) aims present within the context of social programs.

The Political Turn: MacDonald's Democratic Evaluation

The view of program evaluation as value-neutral and apolitical almost immediately gave rise to critiques within the emerging community of evaluation scholars. By the mid-1970s, a transatlantic group of "next generation" evaluators (including Robert Stake, Michael Scriven, and Lee Cronbach, to name a few) challenged the general character of evaluation studies, rejecting the premise that legitimate evaluative findings must be generalizable in order to be valid. This more skeptical attitude toward generalization turned evaluators' attention toward the specificity and complexity of a

given program's context, and authorized a methodological shift toward the use of case studies and qualitative rather than quantitative methods (for a relatively recent and influential example, see Flyvbjerg, 2001; 2006).

MacDonald was a key participant in these developments. He went farther than many of his contemporaries in arguing that evaluators inevitably engage, wittingly or not, in adjudicating political conflict. This is because evaluation inevitably confronts the distribution and exercise of power, and evaluators must make decisions that amount to inveighing on behalf of some constituency or another. In light of this principle, MacDonald contrasted three types of evaluation, each defined in terms of constituents whose interests it privileges.

The first, *bureaucratic*, provides unconditional service to government agencies and seeks to maximize efficiency as aide to management. The second, *autocratic*, is a modification of the first in which the evaluator remains independent of the government agencies and maintains a degree of professional autonomy. This autonomy as an "outside expert," however, remains in the service of government agencies and program managers. Professional autonomy enables evaluators to more effectively legitimate existing policy directions. The third type, *democratic* evaluation, serves *not only* government agencies but *also* the broader public and its interests.

In MacDonald's view, a democratic commitment to the public good includes but also constrains evaluators' bureaucratic/autocratic responsibilities. It foregrounds the issue of who determines the focus and scope of evaluation research, who participates in the process, and who "owns" evaluative findings. In modern democratic societies, decision-making about social policy often involves the public as a whole. Therefore the public's right to know requires dissemination of evaluative knowledge beyond program managers and official decision makers. MacDonald recommended that such considerations be formally addressed in evaluation contracts agreed upon by all major stakeholders.

As MacDonald and his followers conducted DE in the U.K. and beyond, the approach was soon subject to critique. Robin McTaggart argued that MacDonald's democratic approach in one case actually served to advance the interests of already powerful stakeholders at the expense of others. In the Australian educational program she studied, teachers, administrators, and program evaluators agreed to a set of *Principles and Procedures* at the start of the study. One key informant withdrew her consent, however, when it became clear to her that having her criticisms of the program published as part of the findings could have negative consequences, perhaps even

costing her job. The evaluators thus faced a dilemma between their valuing of the "public's right to know" and the individual's right to "own facts about their own lives."

While DE represented a major democratic advance for evaluation theory, MacDonald left relatively open the question of what, if any, particular values should be advanced by evaluators within a given situation or program. A stated commitment to democratic values of transparency and publicity provides little guidance for how conflict over substantive values is to be resolved, or how power-differentials among participants are to be mitigated. Most problematic in this case, as McTaggart argues, was the fact that the trappings of democratic processes and language served to mask rather than correct the power disparities at play. MacDonald's focus on processes that "give voice" to diverse interests provides guidance on how to identify, much less correct, power imbalances in the process.

House and Howe's Deliberative Democratic Evaluation

Parallel to MacDonald's work in England and around the same time, House argued against the technocratic conception in the United States context. Like MacDonald, House argued convincingly against pretensions to value-neutrality on the part of evaluators. House went further than recognizing value-pluralism, suggesting that evaluators have a special responsibility to advance a particular set of values—namely, those associated with "social justice." Too often, according to House, evaluation has not paid meaningful attention to the interests of the least advantaged, those whose needs social programs are nominally designed to meet. A more ethical and democratic conception of evaluation, on this view, is centrally concerned with addressing power imbalances and redressing issues of inequality.

Initially, House drew upon the work of political philosopher John Rawls in conceptualizing the requirements of justice within the context of evaluation. Rawls' (1971) seminal *Theory of Justice* put forward an egalitarian conception of justice focused especially on the consequences of institutional arrangements for the "least advantaged." In the Rawlsian perspective, justice is essentially concerned with the fair distribution of social benefits and burdens, within a context defined by equal liberties for all persons and "fair equality of opportunity." Defining evaluation as an institution that ought to be committed to justice, House provided a theoretical basis for including substantive values in evaluation—in particular, advocacy for the interests of the poorest and most vulnerable. A Rawlsian focus on distributive social

justice does not, however, address all the practical and theoretical issues discussed above vis-á-vis evaluation as practiced in democratic societies—in particular, the question of whether (and to what extent, and how) the "least advantaged" should have a say in defining their own interests and needs. Like MacDonald, House's earlier work suggests a representative rather than participatory conception of democracy.

In the late-1990s and early-2000s, House shifted toward a more participatory conception and, in collaboration with Howe, a philosopher of education, developed a distinct theory "deliberative" democratic evaluation (DDE). DDE combines a procedural concern of giving voice to the values and interests of diverse stakeholders through democratic procedures and process (*a la* MacDonald) with House's longstanding advocacy for evaluation as an institution that advances an egalitarian conception of justice.

MacDonald challenged bureaucratic/autocratic/technocratic evaluation on political and ethical grounds. House and Howe add to this a critique of the epistemological basis of the technocratic-managerial conception, which they identify as the "received view" of values in evaluation. Drawing upon philosophical epistemology and philosophy of science, they argue that a hard-and-fast fact/value distinction is untenable. They provide numerous examples of statements in which facts and values intertwine and "shade into one another."

If statements of fact and statements of value are not necessarily distinct kinds, then two related pillars of the received view collapse. The first is what House and Howe term the "radical undecidability thesis," which stipulates that values are not amenable to rational determination—in Campbell's phrase, values are "chosen," but not "justified." The second is an emotive/preferential conception of democracy, in which stakeholders put forward value statements that must be accepted at face value, as there is no rational basis for critique. Politics, on this view, becomes a competition over values that are not subject to reasoned critique, and so cannot be rationally adjudicated.

DDE rests upon the premise that values are, like facts, subject to reasoned critique and stand in need of justification based upon evidence and argumentation. The question becomes what sorts of evaluative procedures can provide a reliable warrant for value claims. Drawing upon the deliberative conception of democracy, influential in political theory in the late-twentieth century, House and Howe position DDE as a "mid-range" theory that: (1) addresses the question of how judgments of value within program contexts can best be *justified*, and (2) connects the practice of evaluation to

its broader political and institutional contexts in ways that not only repro-
duce but improve upon the *status quo*. To the question of how value claims
are best justified in evaluative contexts, House and Howe propose three
related procedural requirements: inclusion, dialogue, and deliberation.

Inclusion refers to the involvement of diverse (relevant) stakeholders in
the evaluation process. House and Howe distinguish between two types of
inclusion, *formal* and *substantive*. Formal inclusion is "thin," in that stake-
holder representatives may be present, but still lack the opportunities or
resources necessary to influence the process. Substantive inclusion, by con-
trast, means that all participants are enabled to contribute on equal terms.

Dialogue requires that once included, participants have the opportunity
to represent their own interests in conversation with others. This conversa-
tion can be *elucidating*, in which case the goal is to generate understanding
of stakeholder views in their own terms, or it can be *critical*, which requires
that views not only be understood but also thoughtfully questioned. It
is through critical dialogue that stakeholders come to a more thorough
understanding of their interests, and possibly modify this understanding in
light of the interests expressed by others.

Deliberation refers to the purposeful discussion about how to resolve the
value conflicts that emerge in dialogue. In contrast to the emotive concep-
tion of political discourse, democratic deliberation is a cognitive process,
grounded in reasoning, consideration of evidence, and principles of valid
argument. House and Howe assert that substantive inclusion shades into
critical dialogue, which in turn shades into deliberation. Taken together,
these principles provide a regulative ideal for justifying judgments of value
as essential evaluative findings.

DDE conceives program evaluation as a fundamentally participatory
process of collective inquiry. This does not mean that the role of the evalua-
tor is diminished. On the contrary, effective democratic evaluators provide
skillful guidance on how to make reasoned judgments about values. The
quality of information fed into deliberations and the skills and knowledge
used to design and facilitate meaningful dialogue are crucial factors that
increase the likelihood of DDE's success in any given case. If anything,
DDE seems to require more, not less, of evaluators in their professional
role than does the received view. Because the interdependence of facts and
values within a given context of inquiry does not collapse into an emotivist,
anything-goes power politics of knowledge, the need to structure and even
discipline inquiry remains.

Reception and Prospects

I am sorry to report that with the advent of DD and DDE the field of program evaluation has not become a bastion of rigorous civic engagement that McDonald and House and Howe advocated. While their ideas were received sympathetically by theorists from a variety of traditions (e.g., Helen Simons, Jennifer Greene, and Cheryl MacNeil), these models have not, had a thoroughgoing transformative effect on the field. Before turning to the question of whether and how the legitimating processes of democratic deliberation can be leveraged to scale, I briefly summarize some critical responses offered within the academic evaluation community, one that again highlights the basic contradiction presented at the outset of this paper and which was the impetus to the inquiry at hand.

To reiterate, the basic criticism leveled at MacDonald's DE is that it fails to deal adequately with power imbalances inherent in institutional contexts, and so provides little guidance for crucial decisions about which values and voices ought to be included. DDE explicitly addressed these issues, and in turn gave rise to distinctive criticisms in its own right. One of these asserts that DDE's embrace of a set of *substantive* democratic values (inclusion, dialogue, and deliberation) goes too far.

A response of this type is offered by Robert Stake. Renowned for his role in the turn to the case study method and contributions to "responsiveness" in evaluation, Stake rejects the overarching value commitment of DDE to advancing democracy in general. He faults House and Howe for advocacy (albeit a "literary" one), even "zealous rallying," on behalf of a particular and debatable conception of democracy. In order to maintain the faith of clients and the public in the profession, Stake suggests, evaluators do well to restrict their concerns to the immediate goals defined by the program and the *particular* interests of stakeholders in a given context. This argument is, to an extent, reminiscent of the original impetus to the expansion of formal program evaluation in the U.S. during the 1960s. In a context of value-pluralism, on this view, the perception of evaluation as a narrowly technical, value-neutral activity is essential if it is to help legitimate potentially controversial social programs.

A "modest" commitment to the promotion of democracy is all that Stake is willing to countenance. DDE, in his view, goes much too far. Others have argued, on the contrary, that DDE does not go far enough. Stafford Hood offers criticism along this line, pointing out that the experience of democracy in the U.S. context (and undoubtedly in others)

has been extremely varied, and that substantive inclusion is more easily said than done. The continued salience of race provides a conspicuous example of a pervasive social phenomenon that undermines inclusion, dialogue, and deliberation in ways subtle and overt. DDE's focus on methodological requirements will not, on its own, neutralize such factors, absent additional remedies such as greater representation of historically disadvantaged racial groups within the program evaluation community.

In the 1990s and early 2000s there was already ample reason to doubt the long-term viability of the technocratic, value-free or value-minimalist conception of evaluation. A half-century after the emergence of program evaluation as a profession, following notable events such as Brexit, the election of Trump, etc., it is undeniable that faith in technical expertise as a neutral arbiter of social conflict has waned significantly. When pretensions to value-neutrality are generally regarded skeptically another type of justification for public practice and decision-making is necessary. The ongoing relevance of DDE lies in the fact that it provides one defensible model for developing such justification, without appeal to the discredited epistemic and political assumptions that dominated the field of program evaluation during its first five decades, and the intellectual life of the Western world for longer. Recognition that substantive inclusion, critical dialogue, and deliberation are difficult to achieve in practice does not, in the view of proponents, discredit DDE so much as set a course for its future development.

The collapse of credibility that presently infects public discourse at any but the most local scale presents an additional challenge and opportunity: namely, leveraging the processes products of such deliberative engagement to ground and legitimate political discourse in representative and mass forums.

Scaling Deliberative Legitimacy? The Citizens' Initiative Review

If we grant that deliberative evaluation stands a good chance to generate legitimate discussion of public issues, what does this have to do with national or state-level political discussion? Do not inclusion, dialogue and deliberation set limits on the deliberative engagement, making it a *necessarily* local practice of what are tellingly referred to in the literature as "*mini*-publics"? If our concern is the credibility of national political

discourse and representative democratic institutions, what could a local, context-specific model like DDE possibly offer?

Experiments in scaling deliberative democratic practices have been undertaken. Perhaps the best-known example is Fishkin's (2009) research on *deliberative polling.* At the risk of oversimplification, such experiments construe deliberation primarily as a tool for decision-makers, one that generates information representative of a more genuinely *public* opinion. The positive impact on participants in deliberative polling is also seen as valuable, but not directly relevant to political discourse at scale. More recently, Carolyn Hendriks (2016) documents an effort to bridge citizen deliberation with large-scale democratic processes by "coupling" deliberation of "ordinary" citizens with that of political elites. Citizen deliberation, in this case, is formally integrated into the project of institutional design. Direct, formal connections are established between office holders and citizen deliberative forums. As with deliberative polling, however, this conception of deliberative democracy at scale depends for its success upon the cooperation, even enthusiastic participation of elites. And as noted at the outset, our present conundrum is marked above all by a (in many cases, warranted) mistrust of elites.

The Citizens' Initiative Review (CIR) provides a more promising model. In a CIR, a small, randomly selected body of citizens deliberates for several days to write guidance for a state's electorate about a pending ballot initiative. The CIR this marries face-to-face deliberation with a tool for popular governance at scale. The results of CIR deliberations are disseminated in the form of a "citizens' statement" to as many voters as possible—in the most robust case (Oregon), they are contained in the "blue book" along with other official election materials that is mailed to all registered voters.

A growing body of literature has identified both positive effects and limitations or liabilities of CIR as a concrete, empirically validated example of formal deliberative practice that positively impacts both participants and the political community more generally (Gastil, Knobloch & Richards, 2015). One element of evaluation of CIR has been the perception of trustworthiness (more often, "usefulness") of information and recommendations provided in citizen statements (Gastil, Knobloch, & Richards, 2015). CIR processes and products serve, in effect, as an important alternative to campaign materials and messages, special interest propaganda and traditional media coverage. This dimension of CIR has garnered some scholarly attention (Gastil, Richards & Knobloch, 2014), but has so far taken a backseat to assessment of whether processes and outcomes meet criteria

of quality (of interpersonal processes, informative public statements, or whatever) independently determined by researchers (Knobloch et al, 2013). But the role of citizen statements as a trusted peer-to-peer source of political information may be one of the more important CIR outcomes from the perspective of our current crisis of epistemic legitimacy. The key for present purposes is that the CIR model keeps reliance on elites at a minimum, trading on the still-strong mutual respect that citizens regularly experience in face-to-face encounters, even across political difference.

The earlier discussion of DE and DDE demonstrated the close connection of the epistemic and political insights that undergird (at least implicitly) genuinely deliberative and democratic processes. The CIR model indicates that such processes, when strategically constructed and effectively leveraged, might give citizens a legitimating point of entry into politics. Given the drama of present challenges to democratic norms and culture, it is worth exploring whether CIR approaches can be extended beyond single-issue inquiries into broader issues that touch on basic political values and institutional design. Pro-democracy forces in civil society should organize to conduct high quality, time limited and outcomes-oriented deliberations on issues of national as well as local significance. Results of these deliberations should be publicized and used as the basis for candidates' debates, policy recommendations, etc. For citizens to have access at the scale of national media to the results of rigorous deliberative engagement by other citizens with whom they identify might provide a bridge between the lived experience of civic dialogue between equals and the contested space of partisan national politics.

Whether this proposal provides a practicable path forward remains to be seen. Much work is to be done. My contention here is only that, in light of the problems attendant to a misguided belief that facts and values can and should be divorced, leveraging the power of deliberative inquiry to reconcile them is one of the most promising strategic responses presently available.

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NOTES

1. While these two cases are in many ways dissimilar, the "Brexit" vote that the United Kingdom exit the European Union, and Donald Trump's ascendency to the

U.S. presidency both provide clear evidence of this widespread loss of faith in technical experts and professional political opinion-makers. In both cases, voters' disregard for highly publicized and widely circulated opinions of political and intellectual elites was paired with nationalistic, majoritarian conceptions of democracy that seek to restore an earlier time of relative unity and "greatness." As I will argue in this paper, there is an important connection between skepticism concerning the rational determination of facts and values and the emergence of *emotivist* politics.

2. This section re-presents material recently published as an encyclopedia entry, co-authored with Kenneth R. Howe (Meens & Howe, 2018). The portion of that text reproduced here contains a number of ideas that are Ken's, as indicated by the numerous citations of his work; the form in which these ideas are put forward here draws upon contributions to that article that were, to best of my knowledge, my own.

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