

Deliberative Democracy

March 5, 2015

Deliberative Democracy

Deliberative Democracy is a form of government in which free and equal citizens (and their representatives), justify decisions in a process in which they give one another reasons that are mutually acceptable and generally accessible, with the aim of reaching conclusions that are binding in the present on all citizens but open to challenge in the future.

[G&T, 7]

1. **Reason-Giving Requirement.** "The reasons that deliberative democracy asks citizens and their representatives to give should appeal to principles that individuals who are trying to find fair terms of cooperation cannot reasonably reject." [G&T, 3]
2. **Accessibility Requirement.** The deliberation itself must be public, and the reasons appealed to must be publicly assessable (e.g., no appeals to "revelation").
3. **Binding Decision Requirement.** The result of the deliberative process will be the making of some decision. The decision that ends up being made is binding for us, at least for some period of time.
4. **Dynamic Process Requirement.** Although the decision which results from the deliberative process is binding, "it is provisional in the sense that it must be open to challenge at some point in the future." [G&T, 6]

THE PRINCIPLE OF THE ECONOMY OF MORAL DISAGREEMENT: When engaged in the deliberative process, try to find reasons that minimize the difference between opponents.

What is the aim of deliberative democracy? (1) Promote the legitimacy of collective decisions; (2) Encourage a "public-spirit" perspective; (3) Promote mutual respect in decision-making; (4) Help correct mistakes in judgement.

Does deliberation have only *instrumental value*, or does it also have *expressive value*?

Aggregative Democracy

We take the preferences of each citizen as a given. Then we *aggregate* these preferences, in a way that is efficient and fair, to arrive at our decision about what we collectively ought to do.

1. **Majoritarian.**
2. **Utilitarian, or Welfare Economic.**

Pros: (1) determinate outcomes, in principle; (2) uncontroversial procedures. *Cons:* preferences are accepted as is; no way to challenge aggregation methods themselves; incommensurable values?

Two Puzzles: Voting Cycles and the Discursive Dilemma

1. **Voting Cycle.** Are there any acceptable methods for aggregating the preferences of the citizens?

1 st	X	Y	Z
2 nd	Y	Z	X
3 rd	Z	X	Y
# of voters:	2	2	1

If we follow Majority Rule, which alternative will the group choose? This question doesn't have a univocal answer.

2. **The Discursive Dilemma.** When we vote on complex issues, how we break the decision up can affect what we will ultimately decide to do.

	P	P → Q	Q
Person 1	Yes	Yes	Yes
Person 1	Yes	No	No
Person 3	No	Yes	No
majority:	Yes!	Yes!	No!

If we vote on the "conclusion," the group *will not* choose Q. But, if we vote on the "premises," and demand consistency from the group, the group *will* choose Q.

	¬Q	P → Q	¬P
Person 1	No	Yes	No
Person 1	Yes	No	No
Person 3	Yes	Yes	Yes
majority:	Yes!	Yes!	No!

What counts as a "premise" and what counts as a "conclusion"?