**Deliberative Democracy and its Critics**

Communication 135/235/335

American Studies 135

Political Science 234P/334P

**Winter 2024**

**Tuesdays 4:30 PM - 7:20PM**

**Location: Building** [**120, S40**](https://campus-map.stanford.edu/?srch=120-S40)

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| **Professor James S. Fishkin**  [jfishkin@stanford.edu](mailto:jfishkin@stanford.edu) | **Teaching Assistant**  Young Jee Kim  kimyj@stanford.edu  Henry Hill-Gorman  [henryhg@stanford.edu](mailto:henryhg@stanford.edu)  **Office Hours: By Appointment Only** | | **WIM Fellows**  John Raj Puri [jrpuri@stanford.edu](mailto:jrpuri@stanford.edu)  Elijah Bruce Williams [elijahbw@stanford.edu](mailto:elijahbw@stanford.edu)  Cosima Paul [cosipaul@stanford.edu](mailto:cosipaul@stanford.edu) | |
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This course examines the theory and practice of deliberative democracy and engages both in a dialogue with critics. Can a democracy which emphasizes people thinking and talking together on the basis of good information be made practical in the modern age? What kinds of distortions arise when people try to discuss politics or policy together? The course draws on ideas of deliberation from normative political theory as well as criticisms from the jury literature, from the psychology of group processes and from the most recent empirical literature on deliberative forums. Deliberative Polling, its applications, defenders and critics, both normative and empirical, will provide a key case for discussion.

Requirements of the course:

* Seminar leadership for one class meeting. 5-page (double spaced) analysis of readings for that week circulated 24 hours before the class. Take a part in directing the discussion for the first third of the class.
* Paper topic. One paragraph description. Due in week 4. Meetings with Professor or TA about proposed paper topic, weeks four and five. First full draft of paper due week 8 to permit feedback.
* Final Draft of Research paper (10-15 pages). Due at the end of the term.
* Participation in the in-class Deliberative Poll
* Movie *12 Angry Men* plus one page reaction paper due one week after viewing

Grading:

• 50% Research paper, including grading of topic phases

• 25% Analysis of readings for the seminar

• 25% Class discussion

Required texts:

*Daedalus: Journal of the American Academy of Arts & Science*

Issue Title: The Prospects & Limits of Deliberative Democracy

Editors: James Fishkin and Jane Mansbridge

Issue: Vol. 143, no. 3, Summer 2017

Publisher: MIT Press

Available for purchase at the Stanford Bookstore or MIT Press: <http://www.mitpressjournals.org/toc/daed/146/3>

Fishkin, James S. *Democracy When the People Are Thinking: Revitalizing Our Politics through Public Deliberation*. Oxford University Press, 2018

Available for purchase at Stanford Bookstore

Farrell, David M. and Jane Suiter *Reimagining Democracy: Lessons in Deliberative Democracy from the Irish Front Line*

*Ebook available at:* <https://www.cornellpress.cornell.edu/book/9781501749339/reimagining-democracy/#bookTabs=1>

Optional text:

Fishkin, James, and Peter Laslett. *Debating Deliberative Democracy.* Blackwell, 2003.

The book chapters will be available on Canvas and are also available online from the *Journal of Political Philosophy* here: <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/jopp.2002.10.issue-2/issuetoc>

Readings on Canvas as specified below.

The movie *Twelve Angry Men*

**Weekly Schedule:**

***Week 1 – January 9, 2024***

***Introduction***

Movie: *Europe in One Room* (excerpts)

*America in One Room* excerpts

Fishkin, J. & Mansbridge, J. (2017). “Introduction.” *Daedalus,* 146(3): 6-13.

James Fishkin and Larry Diamond [Opinion: This Experiment Has Some Great News for Our Democracy](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/02/opinion/america-one-room-experiment.html)

Optional Reading:

James S. Fishkin, Alice Siu, Larry Diamond, & Norman Bradburn

<https://deliberation.stanford.edu/publications/deliberation-antidote-extreme-partisan-polarization-reflections-america-one-room>, American Political Science Review.

Traub, J. (2024). [Can We Deliberate, Please?](https://democracyjournal.org/magazine/71/can-we-deliberate-please/). *Democracy*. https://democracyjournal.org/magazine/71/can-we-deliberate-please/.

***Week 2 – January 16, 2024***

***Overview***

Fishkin, James. *Democracy When the People Are Thinking*, Parts I and II.

Offe, Claus (2017). “Referendum Versus Institutionalized Deliberation: What Democratic Theorists can Learn from the 2016 Brexit Decision.” *Daedalus,* 146(3): 14-27.

Manin, Bernard (2017). “Political Deliberation and the Adversarial Principle.” *Daedalus,* 146(3): 39-50.

Habermas, J. (2008). “Political Communication in Media Society: Does Democracy still have an Epistemic Dimension? The Impact of Normative Theory on Empirical Research” in *Europe: The Faltering Project.* (Canvas)

***Week 3 – January 23, 2024***

***Social Influence and Domination***

Fraser, Nancy (1993). “Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy.” *The Phantom Public Sphere.* Ed. Robbins, Bruce. University of Minnesota Press, pp. 1-32.

Young, Iris Marion (1997). “Communication and the Other: Beyond Deliberative Democracy.” *Intersecting Voices: Dilemmas of Gender, Political Philosophy, and Policy.* Princeton University Press, pp. 60-74.

Sanders, Lynn (1997). “Against Deliberation.” *Political Theory,* 25(3): 347-376.

Available at: <http://faculty.virginia.edu/lsanders/SB617_01.pdf>

Lupia, A. & Norton, A. (2017). “Inequality is Always in the Room: Language & Power in Deliberative Democracy.” *Daedalus,* 146(3): 64-76.

Siu, Alice (2017). “Deliberation & the Challenge of Inequality.” *Daedalus,* 146(3): 119-128.

***Week 4 – January 30, 2024***

***Institutionalization?***

Gastil, John, and Erik Olin Wright (2018). "Legislature by Lot: Envisioning Sortition within a Bicameral System." *Politics & Society* 46 (3), 303-30.

Available at: <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0032329218789886>

Fishkin, James (2018). Random Assemblies for Lawmaking? Prospects and Limits. *Politics & Society,46*(3), 359-379.

Available at: <http://cdd.stanford.edu/mm/2018/08/fishkin-ps-random-assemblies.pdf>

Mongolia and the new “Law on Deliberative Polling”(excerpts from Fishkin *Democracy When the People are Thinking* on Mongolia and on Deliberative Systems pp. 189-195 and 199-210) (also available on Canvas)

Shapiro, Ian (2017). “Collusion in Restraint of Democracy: Against Political Deliberation.” *Daedalus,* 146(3): 77-84.

*Dialogue with Professor John Gastil, Penn State University (by zoom)*

*Assignment: Take Initial Survey for Mock Deliberative Poll*

***Week 5 – February 6, 2024***

Part 1: Deliberations with automated moderator

Part 2: View Movie: *12 Angry Men* (shown in class)

And then write a one page reaction paper due within one week (in preparation for discussions the following week)

*Assignment: Review Short Briefing Materials on Democratic Reform for Mock Deliberative Poll*

***Week 6 – February 13, 2024***

***Bringing Deliberation and Participation to Scale?***

Ackerman, Bruce, and James Fishkin. “Deliberation Day” in *Debating Deliberative Democracy.* (Canvas)

Available at: <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1467-9760.00146/full>

Schkade, D., Sunstein, C., Hastie, R. “What Happened on Deliberation Day?”

Available at: <http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=911646>

Hardin, Russell. “Street-Level Epistemology and Democratic Participation” in *Debating Deliberative Democracy.* (Canvas)

Available at: <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1467-9760.00150/full>

Fishkin, J., Luskin, R., Siu, A. (2014). Part III section 5 of Democracy When the People Are Thinking. Also available as: “Europolis and the European Wide Public Sphere.” *European Union Politics,* 15(3): 328-351.

Available at: <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/1465116514531507>

Lafont, C. (2014). “Deliberation, Participation, and Democratic Legitimacy: Should Deliberative Mini-publics Shape Public Policy?” *The Journal of Political Philosophy*, 23(1): 40-63.

*Dialogue with Professor Cristina Lafont, Northwestern University (by zoom)*

***Week 7 – February 20, 2024***

***Juries and Group Polarization 2. Citizens Assemblies***

Sunstein, Cass. “The Law of Group Polarization” in *Debating Deliberative Democracy.* (Canvas)

Available at: <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1467-9760.00148/full>

Ellsworth, P. C. (1989). “Are Twelve Heads Better Than One?” *Law and Contemporary Problems*, 52(4): 205-224.

Available at: <http://scholarship.law.duke.edu/lcp/vol52/iss4/7>

Farrell, David M. and Jane Suiter *Reimagining Democracy: Lessons in Deliberative Democracy from the Irish Front Line,*

*Ebook available at:* <https://www.cornellpress.cornell.edu/book/9781501749339/reimagining-democracy/#bookTabs=1>

Supplemental reading for Farrell, David M. and Jane Suiter *Reimagining Democracy: Lessons in Deliberative Democracy from the Irish Front Line:*David M. Farrell, Jane Suiter, Kevin Cunningham & Clodagh Harris (2020) When Mini-Publics and Maxi-Publics Coincide: Ireland’s National Debate on Abortion, *Representation,* DOI: 10.1080/00344893.2020.1804441

*Presentation and discussion with Professor Jane Suiter, Dublin City University*

***Week 8 – February 27, 2024***

***Applications in Developing Countries***

Fishkin, J., Mayega, R.W., Atuyambe, L., Tumuhamye, N., Ssentongo, J., Siu, A., Bazeyo, W. (2017). Part III, section 4 of Democracy When the People Are Thinking. Also available as: “Applying Deliberative Democracy in Africa: Uganda’s First Deliberative Polls.” *Daedalus,* 146(3): 140-154.

Humphreys, M, Masters, W., Sandbu, M. (2006). “The Role of Leadership in democratic deliberations: Results from a field experiment in San Tome and Principe” *World Politics,* 58(4): 583-622. (Canvas)

Chirawurah, D., Fishkin, J. S., Santuah, N., Siu, A., Bawah, A., Kranjac-Berisavljevic, G., Giles, K. (2019) “Deliberation for Development: Ghana’s First Deliberative Poll.” Journal of Public Deliberation: Vol. 15: Iss. 1, Article 3. (Canvas)

Available at <https://deliberation.stanford.edu/publications/journal-articles/deliberation-development-ghanas-first-deliberative-poll>

***Week 9 – March 5, 2024***

Young, Iris Marion. “Activist Challenges to Deliberative Democracy” in *Debating Deliberative Democracy.* (Canvas)

Available at: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3072534>

Pateman, C. (2012). “Participatory Democracy Revisited.” *Perspectives on Politics,* 10(1): 7-19.

**Plenary Session for mock Deliberative Poll**

**Details to be determined**

***Assignment after class: complete final survey in mock Deliberative Poll***

***Week 10 – March 12, 2024***

***Deliberation and Social Choice (First Half of Class)***

Johnson, J. (1998). “Arguing for Deliberation: Some Skeptical Considerations.” *Deliberative Democracy.* Ed. Jon Elster. Cambridge University Press. pp.161-184.

Miller, David. “Deliberative Democracy and Social Choice” in *Debating Deliberative Democracy.* (Canvas)

Available at: <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1467-9248.1992.tb01812.x/abstract>

List, Christian, et al. “Deliberation, Single-Peakedness, and the Possibility of Meaningful Democracy: Evidence from Deliberative Polls” (Canvas)

*Presentation and Discussion of Results from Mock Deliberative Poll (second half of class).*

Students with Documented Disabilities: Students who may need an academic accommodation based on the impact of a disability must initiate the request with the Office of Accessible Education (OAE). Professional staff will evaluate the request with required documentation, recommend reasonable accommodations, and prepare an Accommodation Letter for faculty dated in the current quarter in which the request is being made. Students should contact the OAE as soon as possible since timely notice is needed to coordinate accommodations. The OAE is located at 563 Salvatierra Walk (phone: 723-1066, URL: <http://studentaffairs.stanford.edu/oae>).

**WIM Instruction**

We are fortunate to have three experienced WIM Fellows. The underlying philosophy behind the Writing Fellows model is that all writers, no matter how accomplished, can improve their writing by sharing works in progress and making revisions based on constructive criticism.

Writing Fellows are:

* undergraduate or graduate students who read your writing and make constructive suggestions for revision or who meet with you to discuss and provide verbal suggestions for revision on your draft
* trained to evaluate critically and respond helpfully
* supervised closely by your professor

Writing Fellows will not:

* grade your essays
* teach you course specific content (they are not expected to attend classes or do course readings).