Journal of Public Deliberation

Volume 9 | Issue 2 Article 2

10-25-2013

Stakeholder and Citizen Roles in Public Deliberation

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Recommended Citation

Kahane, David; Loptson, Kristjana; Herriman, Jade; and Hardy, Max (2013) "Stakeholder and Citizen Roles in Public Deliberation," *Journal of Public Deliberation*: Vol. 9 : Iss. 2 , Article 2.
Available at: http://www.publicdeliberation.net/jpd/vol9/iss2/art2

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Stakeholder and Citizen Roles in Public Deliberation

Abstract
This paper explores theoretical and practical distinctions between individual citizens ('citizens') and organized groups ('stakeholder representatives' or 'stakeholders' for short) in public participation processes convened by government as part of policy development. Distinctions between 'citizen' and 'stakeholder' involvement are commonplace in government discourse and practice; public involvement practitioners also sometimes rely on this distinction in designing processes and recruiting for them. Recognizing the complexity of the distinction, we examine both normative and practical reasons why practitioners may lean toward—or away from—recruiting citizens, stakeholders, or both to take part in deliberations, and how citizen and stakeholder roles can be separated or combined within a process. The article draws on a 2012 Canadian-Australian workshop of deliberation researchers and practitioners to identify key challenges and understandings associated with the categories of stakeholder and citizen and their application, and hopes to continue this conversation with the researcher-practitioner community.

Keywords
public deliberation, citizen engagement, stakeholder engagement, government convened public processes, public process design

Acknowledgements
We thank Pip Collins for participation in initial stages of this research, Sarah Gauvreau for help with early literature reviews, and Laurie Adkin for helpful comments. We are grateful for funding that enabled us to undertake this project: a Deliberative Democracy Workshop Research Grant (Centre for Citizenship and Public Policy and newdemocracy Foundation, Australia); an International Collaboration Grant (Kule Institute for Advanced Research, University of Alberta, Canada); and a Community-University Research Grant (Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada). We also especially grateful to participants in a virtual Australia-Canada workshop on stakeholder and citizen roles in democratic deliberation (see Table 1 for details).

Introduction

Deliberative democracy aims to expand meaningful public participation in political decision-making. This article takes up a key distinction that is intermittently and inconsistently treated in deliberative democratic theory and practice: that between individual participants ('citizens') and representatives of organized groups ('stakeholder representatives', for which we use the shorthand 'stakeholders').[1] We will explore the complexity of this distinction as well as the sometimes ambiguous uses of these terms in literatures on deliberative democracy and in the social sciences. We then will reflect on practical implications of these categories for the design of legitimate and effective deliberative exercises.

This article had its origins in an international deliberative democracy workshop held in Sydney in 2011:[2] a group of researchers and practitioners realized that the complex possibilities for citizen and stakeholder roles in deliberative processes are not well mapped and set out to understand how this distinction is reflected in theory and practice. We began with diverse ways that practitioners configure these roles and built a rough typology based on cases that we found ready to hand in our Australian and Canadian contexts. We also looked at reasons that seem to underlie choices by practitioners about who to involve in public participation processes and when or how to engage them. This article is a first expression of this collaborative investigation, and we hope that it will provoke conversations and further research, including in a NCDD web space set up for this purpose.[3]

We begin by specifying the focus of our attention: *deliberative public involvement exercises convened by governments as part of policy development.* We discuss terminologies used in research and practice literatures to distinguish between 'stakeholder representatives' and 'citizens', and reasons why one might opt for or against giving stakeholders or citizens pride of place in deliberative processes. We include uses that look to other characteristics to distinguish between different individuals/groups to involve in processes.[4] We then turn to how roles for individual citizens and stakeholder

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[1] Part of our learning has been about how to name these roles. As will be explored, the terms 'stakeholder' and 'citizen' have strong currency when practitioners in many contexts distinguish between organized groups and those individual participants who come to a deliberative forum without a formal affiliation. Some interlocutors have pushed back that citizens are also stakeholders, thus our shift in terminology to 'stakeholder representatives' (stipulate that 'stakeholder' serves in this article as a shorthand for 'stakeholder representative'). Other interlocutors were concerned that 'citizen' often connotes an exclusionary legal status, and that individuals who deserve a place at the deliberative table often are not citizens in the legal sense; below, we explain our decision to stick with the language of 'citizen'.

[2] "Deliberative Democracy: Connecting Research and Practice", University of Sydney, February 3-5, 2011. More information available at http://www.deliberative-democracy.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=70&Itemid=281/ or http://tinyurl.com/6pocw3w

[3] The National Coalition for Dialogue and Deliberation has set up a web space for discussion of this article and its themes at http://ncdd.org/10913. We welcome your participation.

[4] Of particular note is Carolyn Hendriks' excellent analysis of how 'interest advocates' regard 'citizens' forums' (Hendriks 2011): we are indebted to her analysis, though we consider the issues

representatives are separated, sequenced, and blended in different deliberative models, and explore strengths and challenges of different configurations.

Methods

Our researcher-practitioner team has struggled with the distinction between categories of ‘stakeholder representative’ and ‘citizen’, given the diverse and tangled real-world uses of these terms. As part of this inquiry we used academic databases to search interdisciplinary social science and business literatures, as well as using standard web searches.[5] A further search was carried out to understand how the term ‘stakeholders’ has been understood as a distinct category outside the literature on deliberative democracy.

A second key method in developing this article has been researcher-practitioner dialogue. In the first instance, our author team includes a practitioner (Max Hardy), a researcher-practitioner (Jade Herriman), and two university-based researchers (David Kahane and Kristjana Loptson). As authors we were able to draw on a range of deliberative exercises that we have convened, run, and researched. We also organized an Australia/Canada researcher-practitioner workshop to reflect on an earlier draft of this paper (for participants, see Table 1). The objectives of the workshop were to learn from how citizens and stakeholder representatives are currently engaged in public deliberation on public policy; identify the challenges, pros and cons of processes that intentionally include either or both; shed light on perceived reasons and assumptions behind these choices; and explore how citizens and stakeholders might be engaged to strengthen deliberative exercises on public policy.

The four-hour workshop included:

- Pre-circulation of the draft paper and an executive summary.
- A joint Australia/Canada videoconference with introductions and presentation of the research briefing, and critical discussion of key findings around citizen and stakeholder roles in public deliberation. The orienting questions were: *To what extent do we agree? What is missing?*
- Appreciative inquiry at each site considering the most satisfying and influential configurations of citizen and stakeholder roles that participants had experienced or studied in particular public deliberation processes. We drew out key learning from these cases and studies and asked: *How do we improve practice? What further research is needed?*
- Reconnecting by videoconference with reporting back and consolidation of learning.

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through a different set of political experiences, with more of an emphasis on the motivations of process designers and conveners, and with a focus on opportunities and challenges of particular design configurations.

[5] Search terms were used to locate scholarly peer-reviewed papers that discuss deliberative democratic theory or its practice; search terms included ‘minipublic’ or ‘deliberation’ or ‘democracy’ or ‘participatory’ or ‘public forum’ or ‘public sphere’ AND ‘public’ or ‘layperson’ or ‘citizen’, or ‘interest’ or ‘lobby’ or ‘organization’ or ‘group’ or ‘representative’ or ‘stakeholder’ or ‘NGO’ or ‘partisan’ or ‘bias’ or ‘activist’ or ‘advocacy’ or ‘coalition’. We focused, in selecting from search results, on *deliberative* exercises—see below for our definition.

We see this publication in a key researcher–practitioner venue as a step to further dialogue and development, and encourage readers to communicate with their own perspectives (including in the NCDD online forum mentioned above).

Table 1—Participants in the virtual Australia–Canada workshop on stakeholder and citizen roles in democratic deliberation (names and affiliations as of date of workshop):

Edmonton, Canada	*Sydney, Australia*
1. Susan Abells, The Abells Group	1. Lindy Amos, Collective Possibilities
2. Laurie Adkin, Political Science, University of Alberta and Alberta Climate Dialogue (ABCD)	2. Annie Bolitho, Melbourne Sustainable Society Institute, University of Melbourne
3. Jim Andrais, Office of Environment, City of Edmonton	3. Lyn Carson, Centre for Citizenship and Public Policy, University of Western Sydney
4. Fiona Cavanagh, Centre for Public Involvement	4. Lucy Cole-Edelstein, International Association for Public Participation, Straight Talk Consulting
5. Sue Cole, ABCD	5. Kath Fisher, Southern Cross University
6. Pieter de Vos, Alberta Culture and Community Services and ABCD	6. Chad Foulkes, Victorian Prevention Community Model
7. David Kahane, Political Science, University of Alberta and ABCD	7. Max Hardy, Twyfords
8. Kristjana Loptson, Political Science, University of Alberta and ABCD	8. Jade Herriman, Institute for Sustainable Futures, University of Technology Sydney
9. Jonathan Mackay, Stantec	9. Dare Kavanagh, International Association for Public Participation
10. Bill McMillan, public consultation consultant	10. Lucy Sharman, Coordinator, Communications and Engagement at Marrickville Council, NSW
11. Steve Patten, Political Science, University of Alberta and ABCD	
12. Lorelei Hanson, Environmental Studies, Athabasca University and ABCD	
13. Jane Quinn, Alberta Environment	
14. Deb Schrader, Educational Policy Studies, University of Alberta and ABCD	

Our focus: government-convened deliberative involvement

The term ‘deliberative democracy’ describes a broad theoretical and practical movement that aims to foster engaged citizenship, collaborative problem-solving, and the direct involvement of diverse publics in decision-making. The last 10–15 years have seen a burgeoning of practical experimentation and mid-level theorizing, encompassing diverse forms of deliberative public engagement.[6] Deliberative democratic exercises range from tightly to loosely structured; from invited spaces—whether open door or with selected

[6] See, for example, www.ncdd.org; www.participedia.net; Dryzek 2010; Fung and Wright 2003; Gastil and Levine 2005; Nabatchi et al. 2012.

participants—to spaces that are claimed by mobilized citizens and groups.[7] The institutional designs of deliberations reflect both the capacity and the aims of the convening organizations (be they governments, civil society organizations, businesses or others). The particular goals of deliberative democratic processes can include generative exercises aimed at surfacing perspectives and ideas; citizen or cross-sectoral collaboration on community-based action; popular education or mobilization; inter-communal understanding; and/or policy development (Fung 2003a). These processes "actively involve various kinds of social actors as assessors and discussants" (Joss and Bellucci 2002, p. 5).

Deliberative democracy as just described is a big tent. It encompasses, for example, exercises from the grassroots up and the treetops down. It also encompasses democratic processes meant to supplement existing decision-making institutions without fundamentally challenging them, and processes that seek deeper institutional transformation.[8] Our research is located firmly within this practical movement.

We have, however, chosen to focus this article on *government-convened deliberative exercises*. As the analysis below reveals, this is already a vast terrain. We cannot do justice to the whole array of dialogue and deliberation exercises, and we leave open the question of how well our analysis applies to the voluminous contents of this bigger tent.

- By *'government-convened'* we mean exercises that are sponsored and/or initiated by civil servants or elected officials, and that aim to produce information, advice, or recommendations from relevant publics, interests, and perspectives that contribute to policy development.
- By *'deliberative'* we mean exercises that emphasize:
  - Learning through the exchange of perspectives among diverse parties (not one-by-one engagement, not focus groups or polling)[9]
  - A problem-solving orientation that wrestles with costs and tradeoffs (not just visioning or wish lists, but giving participants a sense of the real choices faced by policymakers)[10]
  - The opportunity for participants to explore diverse emotional perspectives and personal experiences in a nonadversarial environment, and, linked to this,

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[7] On invited and claimed spaces, see Gaventa 2005.

[8] For this distinction see Pateman 2012. The line between 'participatory' and 'deliberative' exercises as she characterizes them can be difficult to draw, for reasons including the accumulation of individual 'deliberative' exercises within a given political system can be part of deeper transformation, and the fact that some 'deliberative' exercises themselves take up questions of institutional transformation (as with the British Columbia and Ontario Citizens' Assemblies on Electoral Reform in Canada).

[9] This commitment to learning through critical dialogue is found in most key texts in the deliberative democracy literature, including Bohman 1996, Cohen 1997, Dryzek 2010, Fishkin 1991, Fung 2003a, Habermas 1996, Leighninger 2006, Lukensmeyer 2012, Young 2002.

[10] Deliberative democrats routinely call for informed deliberation and for grappling with real-world constraints. Some approaches focus more on normative consensus, however (e.g. Habermas 1998), and others are satisfied to identify divergence without seeking to force choices (for a critique of Fishkin in these terms, see Richardson 2010).

willingness to shift position based on new information and arguments (not just horse trading or negotiation).[11]

Government-convened deliberative exercises are themselves varied: some are one-off, others are sustained; some are on big questions, others focus on quite specific political choices; and some involve quite modest involvement while others are time-intensive. Our focus will be on how different government-convened deliberative exercises configure roles for stakeholder representatives and citizens. We believe that this focus may, among other things, help to sharpen thinking (and uses of language) when researchers and practitioners imagine the publics brought into deliberation, and expose underlying normative questions that are important for both researchers and practitioners.

How are the terms ‘stakeholders’ and ‘citizens’ variously defined, contested and used?

In writing this article and showing it to others, we have had many conversations about the merits of the distinction between ‘stakeholders’ and ‘citizens’. Aren’t representatives of organized groups (we have tended to use ‘stakeholders’ as a shorthand for this, though it is more precise to say ‘stakeholder representatives’) always citizens as well? Don't ordinary citizens have a ‘stake’ in issues and belong to all kinds of groups? Aren’t individuals with particular characteristics sometimes identified as stakeholders and sought out for participation in a process to elicit input and judgments from their group’s perspective? Doesn’t the term ‘stakeholder’ ride roughshod over the many complex shadings of formally and informally constituted social groups? We answer yes to all these questions.

We still, however, see analytical value in the stakeholder/citizen distinction. First, while definitions are slippery, this contrast between stakeholders and citizens—between representatives of organized groups and unaffiliated individuals—is used again and again in mainstream public engagement practice. In Alberta, Canada, for example, distinctions between ‘stakeholder’ and ‘citizen’ engagement are a persistent organizing principle for government programs of engagement (which tend to have both stakeholder and citizen streams, sequenced in quite consistent ways). Second, there are important differences between participating as representatives of organized groups or as individual citizens, and also differences in how these roles tend to play out in deliberative processes, and how each can be appropriately accommodated in deliberative designs. Generalizations are risky but also analytically useful.

How we use the term ‘stakeholder’

While recognizing that ‘stakeholder’ is sometimes used to describe an individual with an interest in an issue or decision, we use the term in this article to designate the representative of a formally constituted group or organization that has or is thought to have a collective interest.

[11] This is a widely shared commitment among deliberative democracy researchers and practitioners. There is, however, ferment around the distinction between negotiation and deliberation (Mansbridge et al. 2010), and longstanding debate over the legitimacy of emotional appeals in deliberative settings (Young 2002, Williams 1998).

Origins of the term

The term 'stakeholder' has its origins in business management scholarship and especially stakeholder theory, which defines it as "any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organization's objectives" (Freeman 1984, 46). Since the mid-1980s, both instrumental aspects of stakeholder theory (which focus on empirical/quantifiable variants and the relationship between process and outcomes) and normative ones (which emphasize business ethics and corporate social responsibility) have been influential in business management literatures and taken up in wider social science disciplines (Jones and Wicks 1999).

The term stakeholder, in the literatures we surveyed:

- *Tends to describe organized interest and advocacy groups.* In some contexts, 'stakeholder' tends to be defined very broadly: for example, "Persons, groups, neighborhoods, organizations, institutions, societies, and even the natural environment are generally thought to qualify as actual or potential stakeholders" (Mitchell et al. 1997, 855). In some analyses of participatory and deliberative processes, too, 'stakeholder' is taken to denote an active attempt to bring about particular political objectives, whether on the part of an individual or group, including private, governmental or semi-governmental associations (Hendriks 2011). But as the term 'stakeholder' has moved out of management literatures into broader use by policymakers, NGOs and media, it has tended to refer (as with our own usage in this article) to organized interest and advocacy groups in policy processes (Opfer et al. 2008). In some literatures, there is an explicit differentiation between stakeholder representation and the presence of the perspectives of 'unaffiliated' citizens (MacLean and Burgess 2008). In this latter usage, an individual passionate about a particular issue or political goal is categorized as a 'citizen'; an individual who acts on behalf of an organized group focused on an issue or objective is a 'stakeholder'. This mirrors our distinction between these terms in this paper.
- *Can tend to focus on interests.* In this scholarship, 'stake' tends to be used interchangeably with 'interest' (Wolfe and Putler 2002), and some participants in our researcher-practitioner workshop criticized the term for reducing a politics of the common good to arbitration between private or sectoral interests. For reasons already outlined, however (including the dominance of the stakeholder/citizen distinction in many practice contexts), we treat 'stakeholder' as a general label for social groups that are made the focus of representation in deliberative exercises.
- *Encompasses diverse kinds of organizations.* In the deliberative democracy literature, 'stakeholder' competes with terms like 'civic association', 'interest group', 'advocacy group', 'advocacy coalition' and 'interest advocate'. All of these categories contain (and at times obscure) a great deal of heterogeneity. For example:
  - Groups exhibit varying degrees of structure, ranging from highly formal (organized around charters, decision procedures, membership rules, enduring and well-defined interests or identities) to informal (organized around loosely-defined or dynamic identities or interests and transient membership).
  - Groups can be non-profit, volunteer and grassroots, all the way through to professional with paid staff and private funding.

- Groups can be more or less oriented toward political action, lobbying, campaigning, public education, or member services provision and can be more or less woven into power structures and governance networks.
- Groups can be local, regional, national or international.
- Groups can claim to represent their members alone, or to represent others sharing interests/identities with their members, or to represent the interests of populations not well represented in the group itself (as with 'astroturf' organizations, which profess to represent a grassroots movement while in fact being centrally orchestrated).
- Groups can be the sole or authorized representative for a category of stakeholders, or can exist on a contested or crowded field of potential representatives.
- Groups can claim different kinds of epistemic authority—for example, to speak from the perspective of a particular social group, or to speak from expert experience and training that the rest of the public typically lacks (MacLean and Burgess 2008).

These and other axes of organizational difference could be explored and unraveled in much more detail than we attempt in this article; doing so might enable a finer-grained set of reasons for public deliberations including (or excluding) such groups than we attempt to provide in what follows.

Complexities exist within each stakeholder organization

Few stakeholder groups are internally homogeneous in terms of values, interests or priorities (Wolfe and Putler 2002). Members within a single stakeholder group united on the basis of a common advocacy objective might agree on a particular issue or outcome but disagree on many other issues, including means to achieve the goal and what should follow once the objective is met. Understanding stakeholders as a category is complicated by these divergent viewpoints or even rivalries within advocacy groups (Opfer et al. 2008). This may be especially true when an advocacy coalition is formed by mobilizing various stakeholder groups around a shared interest: despite the shared 'stake', groups might differ in how they understand the issue and its solutions and therefore might approach problem-solving in contrasting ways.

Risks in using 'stakeholder' terminology

We argued above that the term 'stakeholder'—understood to mean a group advocating for shared interests—is analytically useful, and also reflects conventional usage in many contexts. In the virtual Australia–Canada workshop based on a draft of this article, practitioners in Australia conceded that they sometimes use the term in this way in their practice, especially in conversations with governments. But there was still discomfort. Several of these practitioners observed that the term 'stakeholder' as applied to interest groups is problematic, because their own philosophy of practice is that every citizen has a 'stake' in decision-making whether they belong to an organized group or not, or whether they identify personally as having an interest or not. In that sense they feared that using the term stakeholder to describe a narrow range of 'important groups' to be invited into engagement processes unnecessarily excluded a broader approach. Some also noted that 'hyper-interested' individuals (who are well versed in local planning laws, for example, or educated, or practiced at participating) can play a role within deliberations close to that

of organized group representatives. They suggested, in other words, that we consider a spectrum ranging from currently uninterested/unengaged to hyper-interested and highly engaged, and place both individuals and groups on this spectrum for analytical purposes. We do not reject this spectrum, and indeed see its usefulness. For purposes of this article, however, we will play out the distinction between individual citizens and organized groups.

How we use the term 'citizen'

As already noted, distinctions between 'citizen' and 'stakeholder' engagement or involvement are commonplace in government discourse and practice in both Canada and Australia; public involvement practitioners in both places also sometimes rely on this distinction in designing processes and recruiting for them. Citizen deliberation exercises such as citizen assemblies, citizen panels, and citizen juries seek to recruit 'ordinary' or 'lay' or 'unaffiliated' citizens as distinct from citizens to participate in their capacity as representatives of organized stakeholder groups (Brown 2006).

We note that in common usage the term 'citizen' is often used to describe an individual's legal status, specifically to indicate that they are a legally recognized native or subject of a state or commonwealth. We wish to clarify that the term 'citizen' as used in this paper does not intend this meaning, and refers instead to individuals who are members of the public irrespective of their immigration status. We mirror the widespread use of the term in democratic theory, where citizens are functional members of a democratic society by virtue of living within it and being affected by it—rather than only those having formal legal membership. This use of the word citizen is linked to concepts of civic identity, civic engagement and civic education, rather than concepts of naturalization or the formal process of granting legal status of citizenship.[12]

'Citizens' in this sense are members of the broad public within a jurisdiction or affected by a particular decision. There are many ways of recruiting them to a deliberation depending on resources, capacity, and practice models: they can be randomly recruited using tools of social scientific sampling; or drawn in by public invitations and through networks; or found through deliberate outreach to groups otherwise difficult to draw in; or included by using a hybrid of methods. The goal, though, is to represent the diversity of the relevant public in a deliberative process—a 'mini-public'. The rhetoric used around such recruitment methods often emphasizes getting beyond 'the usual suspects'; bringing [jurisdiction x] into the room; hearing from the diversity of [jurisdiction x]; or hearing from 'ordinary' or 'lay' citizens.

In general, it is important not to romanticize or over-generalize about the characteristics of citizens. Depending on recruitment methods and criteria as well as other features of a deliberation (including supports and accessibility), groups of 'ordinary citizens' can still skew toward particular (often privileged and educated) social groups, and can include those with professional investments in an outcome (Hogg and Williamson 2001). Stratified sampling methods may select participants based on ascribed

[12] On complexities of citizenship and participation see McKerrow's work on the 'rhetorical citizen' (Miller and McKerrow 2010, McKerrow 2012) and Gaventa's discussion of conceptualizations of citizenship (Edwards and Gaventa 2001, Jones and Gaventa 2002).

characteristics (e.g. race or ethnicity) while missing patterns of self-identification or interest (Brown 2006).

Involving stakeholder representatives in public deliberation

Reasons to involve stakeholders in deliberative processes

Practitioners offer a number of reasons for involving stakeholder representatives in public involvement processes. As will become clear as we canvass these reasons, they may also point to the particular stakeholder groups that conveners of a deliberation may choose to involve.[13]

Stakeholder groups can provide an *efficient* route to engaging social and political diversity relevant to an issue

Decision-makers often turn to deliberation to canvass dominant public views on an issue at hand, and this often is parsed in terms of sectoral views. For example, in developing policy on urban sustainability, a government may wish to hear from businesses that will be affected by a decision; from a range of environmental perspectives; from social justice groups; from governments of neighboring jurisdictions; and from community organizations that represent the geographical diversity of a city.

Analyzing interested publics in terms of organized groups enables conveners of deliberative exercises to identify key stakeholders, connect with their leadership, and bring them into a process. Moreover, conveners often have established relationships with these groups as part of governance networks, and so easy access to them. Stakeholder groups often have participation in political decision processes as a part of their mandate, so are relatively easy to recruit to deliberative events. Moreover, they often have the capacity to participate effectively, in terms of literacy and communication skills, familiarity with process norms, knowledge of other participants and of issues, and so on.

Stakeholder groups provide a *publicly legible* route to engaging social and political diversity relevant to an issue

Governments often map the interests and perspectives relevant to an issue or policy in terms of organized stakeholder groups in the way we've just described. This mapping of salient interests and perspectives in terms of stakeholder groups also carries weight, in many cases, with the public at large, and with organizations (including media) that interpret politics for the public at large. From all of these perspectives, the inclusiveness and fairness of a process may be read in terms of which particular stakeholder groups are at the table. In considering whether environmental perspectives are being taken seriously in a policy decision, for example, the public may look at whether key environmental groups are engaged (and whether these groups go along with or dissent from outcomes of

[13] See Reed et al. (2009) for a useful typology of how stakeholders might be classified based on the extent to which they are affected by a problem, the nexus between their level of interest and influence regarding a particular issue, and the initial rationale for stakeholder involvement (normative versus instrumental).

the process). Similarly, in considering whether business interests are taken seriously, the public may look at whether the Chamber of Commerce and other key business groups are represented and how these groups regard the process.

In other words, organized stakeholder groups can represent (or be seen to represent) important public interests around a policy issue or decision. Involving such groups can support claims to have considered the views of key constituencies and affected groups. Members of the public who may not be interested in participating directly in political processes can feel more comfortable about a particular policy if they know that groups that they trust were involved in developing it and have assented to it.

Stakeholder groups may represent particular perspectives and interests *more effectively* than lay citizens

Bringing diverse citizens into a deliberation will de facto bring in many of the perspectives and interests represented by organized stakeholder groups. At the same time, organized groups may have advantages in effectively representing these interests.

- While citizens may know a lot about issues they're passionate about, stakeholder groups often have organized capacity to research and understand policy questions.
- Stakeholder groups have knowledge and experience with policy processes and networks, and so can strategize effectively in developing and articulating their positions.
- Stakeholder groups often understand the history of policy and political work around a particular issue, including in a specific jurisdiction, which can contribute to effective representation.
- The above assets also may give stakeholders the capacity to critically understand public involvement processes—for example, to distinguish between window dressing and real opportunities for influence; to recognize skewed framing and informational materials; and to understand the balance of voices involved in a particular deliberation.

These stakeholder capacities may be particularly important for marginalized perspectives and interests. In the literature on participatory democracy, stakeholders are understood to add to the democratic process by representing diverse perspectives and contributing specific forms of knowledge, which is particularly important when these perspectives are typically marginalized in public discourse (Hendriks 2011). For marginalized groups, stakeholder representation can help to role-model political skills and civic participation, widen the scope of representation, and provide channels through which citizens can participate in governance (Fung 2003b). In the same vein, advocacy groups can help to create the preconditions for just and equal deliberative environments and for exposing and challenging structures of power (Baber and Bartlett 2003).

Stakeholders may have influence and power with decision-makers, administrators, and in the broader political sphere

Those designing and convening public involvement exercises need to look not only at the quality of deliberation but also at the likelihood of impact on policy decisions. Where particular stakeholders can effectively advocate for or block the uptake of deliberative recommendations (Elstub 2010), this may be a strong argument for including them as participants. Including these groups can increase the likelihood that outcomes are responsive to their interests and thus help to secure their support at both the point of

political decision and as policy is implemented. If outcomes don't secure their support, their inclusion can at least enable advocates for the outcome to show that a powerful group's interests and arguments were taken seriously in the process.[14]

Where involvement processes aim for mobilization or action on the part of citizens not directly involved in a deliberative process (e.g., through collaboratively planned community action projects emerging from a deliberation), organized groups have strong advantages in their capacity to communicate out and organize collective action. The links and alliances formed within deliberative processes may also have much stronger influence where they are between stakeholder groups, not just individual citizens: such links can be part of advocacy coalitions that can move an issue forward (Kemmis and McKinney 2010).

Shifts in position can resonate through an organization and constituency

As will be explored below, stakeholder representatives may be less likely than citizens to shift their position based on what they hear and learn within deliberative processes. But where such shifts do take place on the part of a stakeholder representative, it can have broad influence: there is at least the possibility that this deliberative shift will reshape the stakeholder organization's understanding and positioning, and/or that of members of the constituency it represents.

Cautions about involving stakeholders in deliberative processes

Stakeholder selection may not capture the relevant diversity of views

Normatively speaking, the democratic justice and legitimacy of a deliberative process depends on those affected having a say (see, for example, Habermas 1996; Tully 1995), and when a deliberation is made up of groups this requires contentious judgments about which ones should be there. It may be difficult to identify the stakeholder groups most affected by a particular decision, or that possess the most relevant information. There is a persistent risk of missing stakeholder groups that ought to have been included.

- The organizations convening a deliberation—and we are focusing here on governments—often have a ready-to-hand list of the groups they ordinarily consult. But this list will likely embody a particular construal of relevant diversity and reflect contingencies of personal relationships, networks, and histories. Even where process designers try to 'snowball' a list of stakeholders to include—asking those they first contact who else needs to be at the table—path dependencies may still limit the inclusiveness or representativeness of the process.
- Judgments about who is most affected by a decision themselves reflect socially and politically situated perspectives, involving implicit judgments about justice, fairness, and power.
- Choices about which stakeholder groups to include often lean toward those considered reasonable, open to collaboration, and legitimate in broad public terms;

[14] Our focus is on government-convened deliberation exercises, but there may be an even greater impetus to involve powerful stakeholders when public involvement processes originate outside of government, since engaging key stakeholders may increase access to government influence as well as the perceived balance and legitimacy of these processes.

they often exclude groups that are seen as radical or outside the mainstream. These too are value-laden and politically situated judgments.

- Choices about which stakeholder groups to involve may lean towards well-organized groups that have consolidated themselves as a public presence. They may fail to include less publicly legible groups, or group interests that have not yet been well consolidated into organizations.

All of these are reasons why normative requirements of including those affected by a decision are difficult to meet using stakeholder representation.

Stakeholder selection is vulnerable to charges of bias, and can compromise the public legitimacy of an involvement process

In addition to normative challenges, the perceived public legitimacy of a deliberative process will depend on whether the participating groups are widely viewed as being the right ones. The judgments of different publics regarding which groups should participate tend to conflict. In stakeholder involvement exercises on environmental issues in Alberta, for example, all sides see the importance of including environmental advocacy organizations; but different publics see different environmental organizations as legitimate. Ducks Unlimited[15] and the Pembina Institute[16] are regularly included in such exercises, and are generally regarded by government and industry as open to reasonable collaboration; for this very reason, though, other environmental advocacy organizations (and their publics) can see these groups as compromised or co-opted. The same contest over representation can typify indigenous involvement, where the engagement of formal community leaders is seen by some as sidelining traditional values and leadership structures (see, for instance, Nuttall 2008). So the deliberate selection of stakeholders can often embroil conveners in a difficult politics of representation.

Furthermore, in some contexts, key organized groups may be seen as ‘the usual suspects’ or as those who already have the ear of the powerful (indeed, insofar as they are chosen because they have the capacity to derail a decision or its implementation, this may be true). Democratic expectations may be poorly met by processes that center on participation by a predictable set of organized groups. Even when deliberative exercises are inclusive of diverse stakeholders, the ‘professionalization’ of participatory processes may hinder wider public engagement by moving the location of stakeholders’ activism from a public arena (in which stakeholders communicate with the public in order to forge broad-based sympathies) to a private arena (in which stakeholders communicate directly with government and other stakeholders and the public is not exposed to the debate) (Parkins 2006). Moreover, suspicion of a subset of these groups may undermine the legitimacy of the process: in Alberta, for example, consultation processes about resource extraction are often assumed by environmentalists to incline toward the interests of extractive industries in particular, and away from the perspectives of citizens. In the words of one environmental advocate, “governments have succeeded in forcing and compartmentalizing citizens into the category of a special interest. The public increasingly finds itself relegated to stakeholder status, in most cases more impotent than

[15] http://www.ducks.ca
[16] http://www.pembina.org

many commercial and corporate special interests" (Horejsi 2011, 12; see also Masuda et al. 2008).

Representatives of stakeholder groups may be unlikely to change their positions on the basis of persuasion

Readiness to change position on the basis of good arguments and collective reasoning is generally treated as a deliberative virtue. Yet this willingness to change position may be less likely in stakeholder representatives. For one thing, stakeholder groups often are defined by particular positions, beliefs, and cognitive frames. For another, participants from stakeholder groups tend to be seen, and to see themselves, as representatives of a broader constituency, with explicit or implicit accountability to that constituency. That is, stakeholders may feel themselves to be (or may in fact be) in a 'delegate' position relative to their constituency. They may not be at liberty to shift position based on the force of the better argument, or to be swayed by the perspectives and claims of differently situated others (Hendriks 2011; Gaynor 2011). The commitments of group representatives relate not only to their formal or informal delegate function, but also to beliefs, ideologies, and norms at large in the group or community represented. These too may lead stakeholder participants in deliberation to cleave to an existing position, and decrease their openness to new information, interpretations, and perspectives.

Two qualifications are important in this context. First, depending on the issue, members of the general public may also hold entrenched views and strong beliefs that are unlikely to change; a citizen focus does not guarantee against intransigence. Second, a readiness to change position is generally treated as a deliberative virtue; yet for groups that are marginalized and less powerful, intransigence may itself be an important and legitimate political position.

Stakeholders may tend toward strategic rather than deliberative interaction

Deliberative reasoning is often contrasted with strategic interaction. In deliberation, you share your perspective and interests openly and search for common ground. In strategic interaction, you calibrate your contributions to increase the likelihood of getting your way. When participants in deliberation see themselves as representatives of an interest-based or advocacy organization this increases the likelihood of strategic interaction. Moreover, if part of the capacity of such organizations is a history of engagement on an issue and with relevant players, this includes a greater ability to anticipate others' positions and actions and relate to them strategically. Where this kind of strategic positioning is successful, it can lead to the phenomenon of 'capture', where one stakeholder group manages to frame or reframe a deliberation to support its own interests, and disempowers rival interests (Hendriks 2011). At the limit, stakeholders can use methods that are at odds with deliberative goals or principles, including coercion and deception, thus undermining free public deliberation (Medearis 2004; Baber 2004; Levine and Nierras 2007).

Powerful stakeholders may dominate

Every deliberative exercise requires that participants and facilitators negotiate relations of power. Where these exercises involve stakeholder representatives, though, these power dynamics can be especially acute. Groups may have disproportionate influence because of economic power. This can translate into direct sway over governments convening a

deliberative exercise: for example, those stakeholder groups that command investment capital and whose decisions may have significant impacts on employment and state revenue have substantial leverage vis-à-vis governing parties. Or this influence can be filtered through the ability to control or purchase access to mass media and thus to mobilize or influence public opinion (Elstub 2007).

Groups may also have disproportionate influence if there is a high level of internal cohesion in their memberships. A representative of a large, heterogeneous organization will have to expend more resources, including time and energy, to consult, mobilize, and unify members behind various stances than will a representative of an organization with interests that are clear and narrow and whose members constitute a unified group. So, for example, stakeholders representing citizens' groups often require more resources just to participate in deliberations than do stakeholders representing businesses and corporate interests (Offe and Wiesenthal 1985).

Stakeholder involvement may challenge the capacity of less powerful and less resourced groups

A final concern over deliberative processes that center on organized groups is that repeated invitations to engage may strain the capacity of less powerful groups and may distort their activities. Indigenous communities in Canada exemplify the first point: because there is a legally mandated duty to consult Aboriginal communities about resource extraction decisions that impact their lands,[17] communities living on resource-rich land require an extensive infrastructure to handle requests for engagement. This dynamic is familiar to many organizations representing under-resourced or marginalized groups. On the second point, invitations to take part in public involvement processes can draw civil society organizations away from other kinds of political activity, or strain their ability to sustain these. This worry is familiar from the literature on 'activist challenges' to deliberative democracy (Young 2001; Levine and Nierras 2007).

Complexities of stakeholder involvement

As acknowledged earlier in this paper, there also is tremendous diversity in the objectives of particular public involvement processes, the issues they address, and the contexts in which they take place. Some processes are oriented more toward learning, others toward developing recommendations, others toward collective action. Some processes are short term, others are sustained. Some contexts are highly polarized on the issue in question, others have well-established norms and agreements, including around who should be at the table. Below, we will discuss different configurations of citizens and stakeholders in relation to different objectives and contexts; for now, let us simply repeat that our generalizations are intended as prompts to reflection and as provocations to further research. We recognize their limitations.

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[17] In Canada this 'duty to consult' arises from three Supreme Court cases: Haida Nation v. British Columbia (Minister of Forests), [2004] 3 S.C.R. 511, 2004 SCC 73; Taku River Tlingit First Nation v. British Columbia (Project Assessment Director), [2004] 3 S.C.R. 550, 2004 SCC 74; and Mikisew Cree First Nation v. Canada (Minister of Canadian Heritage), 2005 SCC 69, [2005] 3 S.C.R. 388. For detail see Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (2011).

Involving citizens in public deliberation

Reasons to involve citizens in deliberative processes

Citizen involvement can increase public legitimacy

Political reasoning and argument in democratic societies typically justifies claims in terms of the desires, values, interests, and will of the public. Deliberative democratic exercises often are framed as a way to gauge the will of the public—or to align policy with the interests and needs of the public—on contentious issues. Where deliberative exercises are populated by representatives of stakeholder groups, however, this often provokes concerns that these are 'the usual suspects' who represent only a subset of relevant public interests. Thus the attraction of deliberative democratic exercises that focus on bringing together a cross-section of ordinary citizens.

Advocates of 'mini-publics' argue that citizen deliberation can assemble a group that represents the whole community, with a willingness to learn, to be persuaded, and to think from diverse perspectives about the public good. So long as these ordinary citizens are given balanced information and taken through a process that enables them to come to their own deliberative conclusions, the outcome will speak more adequately to the informed public will than is possible in stakeholder processes.[18] Particular normative weight may attach to the views of a genuinely representative group of citizens that has engaged in a balanced process of civic learning—the voice of the public becomes, in Fishkin's words, "a voice worth listening to" (Fishkin 1991, 104).

Citizen involvement can increase diversity

Many citizen-based deliberation processes aim to recruit highly diverse citizens, including through random selection. This sort of cross-section of the general public may contribute to a number of kinds of diversity.

- Randomly selected or otherwise highly diverse members of the public can bring in identities and interests not represented or not well represented by organized stakeholder groups. A citizen panel or assembly, for example, typically has more educational, class, age, ethnic, and gender diversity than a most stakeholder processes. It also will bring in connections to a range of civic associations (e.g., churches, businesses, neighborhood groups) that might not otherwise be represented.
- Citizen processes that recruit for diversity can achieve this not only at the level of demographics but of 'cognitive diversity', such that participants bring a plurality of ways of interpreting problems and their solutions (Landemore 2012).

Furthermore, citizens may feel more at liberty to speak from different parts of their individual memberships and identities than is the case for representatives of stakeholder groups. Every individual is internally complex and in many cases divided. Individual citizens can, at their discretion, represent different parts of their complex selves within a deliberation. Stakeholder representatives may, as noted above, feel bound (and in some

[18] For more on 'mini-publics'—a term popularized by Archon Fung's work—see Fung (2003a).

cases ought to feel bound) by the positions, beliefs, and cognitive frames of their constituencies.

Citizens tend to link policy to underlying values

We noted earlier that stakeholder groups often have histories of engagement with the issues at stake in a deliberation, as well as technical expertise; they thus are well equipped to deliberate on the fine grain of policy. Conversely, citizens often don't possess expertise on the issue at hand, and will vary in how expert they are by the end of a particular deliberation. Citizen attention often focuses—and often is deliberately focused by process designers and facilitators—on shared and divergent values underlying a given policy choice. This focus on value choices implicit in policy debates, and deliberation on this normative dimension, can be a benefit of citizen involvement, and one that may otherwise be underplayed in policy development.[19]

Citizens may be open to changing position based on learning

Stakeholder representatives will, in many cases, feel constrained in the shifts of position they can make in the course of deliberation, given formal or informal accountability to the interest or advocacy group they have been chosen to represent. Some citizen participants, on the other hand, will enter a deliberative process with little knowledge of or even interest in the issue being considered: they are uncommitted. Other citizen participants may enter deliberative processes highly committed to a particular position or view, but they too have the freedom to change this given what they experience and learn, without necessarily encountering expectations of representative accountability from a determinate constituency. Given prevalent normative descriptions of deliberative democracy as involving the willingness to be persuaded by good reasons, this willingness to shift position is a deliberative asset.

Citizen deliberation can provide insight into the learning and change that is possible for a broader public

A genuinely diverse group of citizens gathered in a deliberative process can provide a useful lens on public opinion. At the point of entering the deliberation, a rigorously diverse and sufficiently large group of citizens provides a microcosm of existing public opinion. As deliberation proceeds, these citizens may reveal where the public at large could move given exposure to communication, learning, and collective reasoning. This is not only normatively significant to political representatives (as captured by the Fishkin quote above), but may be helpful to those developing broader programs of public outreach, education, and engagement.

[19] This was a major focus, for example, of the Citizens' Panel on Edmonton's Energy and Climate Challenges, as evidenced by discussions of principles and values in the Final Report (City of Edmonton 2013).

Cautions about involving citizens in deliberative processes

Many governments currently lack the capacity to convene citizen deliberations

As noted earlier, governments can engage stakeholders in deliberation using existing connections and networks, and often can rely upon the ability of stakeholder organizations to engage in a practiced and efficient way. While these same governments likely have capacity for public outreach, they typically have much less experience with deliberative citizen involvement of the kind we are discussing. So deliberative involvement of citizens often requires substantial investment and learning, and more often than not results in a one-off experiment rather than lasting institutional readiness to do this kind of work.

Citizens may have limited capacities to recognize limitations and biases in framing and materials

Stakeholder organizations often bring a history of engagement with an issue, as well as research capability and critical capacity. These assets are less reliably present in groups of citizens brought together for a deliberation, most of whom may be new to an issue, or come to it with little organized knowledge. There is ample evidence that ordinary citizens can become well informed on complex issues in the course of deliberation; but they often are heavily reliant on materials, experts, and processes provided to them by conveners (see Brown 2006). Citizens may thereby be vulnerable to biases or limitations built into deliberative processes, and less prone to challenge the framing of issues up for deliberation. Citizens also may lack resources that allow them to situate a particular deliberation on a broader political, historical, and strategic terrain. To put the point baldly, groups of citizens may be more vulnerable to bias and manipulation through process and learning materials than a genuinely diverse group of stakeholder representatives.

Deliberation between citizens tends to reiterate structural inequalities between social groups

The reproduction of power inequalities in deliberative settings is well documented in research and familiar to practitioners. Men speak more than women and are granted more authority; members of marginalized groups may speak less and be heard less well; class and educational attainment can condition individuals' propensity to participate and ability to be heard (Batalha et al. 2012; Fraser 1990; Hickerson and Gastil 2008; Kapoor 2002; Young 2001). While these dynamics are present in stakeholder-based deliberation as well, organizations that represent marginalized interests are a key mechanism for building participatory capacity and impact, and so may challenge or mitigate these patterns.

Citizens may lack the commitment and ability to sustain activity beyond the formal space of deliberation

Many deliberative processes encourage citizen participants to reflect on their own engagement with the issue at hand, and in some cases to envision and plan individual and collective actions that they would like to take after deliberation. Where citizens have been recruited for diversity, however—randomly recruited, for example—few of them may have an interest in sustaining collaboration beyond the formal space of deliberation.

Moreover, even those who are interested in acting together likely lack the formal organizational capacity to do so in a sustained way, or with significant impact.

An overview of the analysis presented in this section (why practitioners may lean toward stakeholder-only processes or citizen-only processes) is found in Appendix 1.

Configurations of stakeholders and citizens in deliberative exercises

In the article so far we have unpacked the categories of 'stakeholder' and 'citizen' and generalized about the advantages and disadvantages that might attach to involving them in deliberation. In this section we start to bring in the specificity of particular process objectives, contexts, and designs, and we survey some of the ways in which processes can combine or phase citizen and stakeholder involvement to suit different objectives and ends. We begin by discussing those deliberative processes that involve only stakeholders or only citizens, considering contexts where involving only one category may make sense. We go on to discuss a range of ways that stakeholder and citizen roles can be combined within a single process.

It is worth repeating that our focus is on government-convened deliberation exercises that claim to legitimately draw recommendations from relevant publics, interests, and perspectives; that are focused on gathering information or recommendations as part of policy development; and that contain a meaningful deliberative element (an openness to learning and shifting positions and an orientation towards problem-solving).

Table 2—A summary of different design approaches to involving stakeholders and citizens

Citizens	*Stakeholders*	*Examples and contexts*
Stakeholders as the only deliberators		
• No formal role	• Stakeholders as deliberators	• Consultative groups (short- and long-duration)
Citizens as the only deliberators		
• Citizens as deliberators	• No formal role	• Citizen advisory groups, panels, reference groups
• Citizens as deliberators	• Stakeholders as experts and witnesses	• Citizen assemblies, juries, and panels • Consensus conferences • Planning cells • 21st Century Town Halls
• Citizens as deliberators	• Stakeholders as sponsors and/or advisors on design and briefing materials	• A wide range of long-duration/high-profile citizen exercises
Citizens and stakeholders each have deliberative roles		
• Citizens as	• Stakeholders as	• Conventional public

deliberators (testing or vetting outcomes of stakeholder work)	deliberators (upstream from citizen involvement)	involvement trajectory in municipal and provincial policy development in Canada.
• Citizens as deliberators (with stakeholders in a parallel stream)	• Stakeholders as deliberators (in a stream parallel to citizen process)	• Contexts where a distinctive or marginalized group has a particular interest seen as key to policy and is thus engaged alongside a citizen process (e.g., Aboriginal stakeholders engaged as part of the national Romanow Commission on Health Care in Canada)
• Citizens as co-deliberators	• Stakeholders as co-deliberators	• Design charrettes • Citizen task forces • Multi-actor policy workshops • Scenario workshops

Stakeholders deliberate

In what contexts and for what reasons might governments choose to convene stakeholder representatives to deliberate and advise on policy, without an accompanying role for citizens?

Short duration advisory roles

In some contexts, policy development happens on short timelines, or the desired space for 'public involvement' is limited. Where this is the case, the efficiency of engaging organized stakeholders may loom large: administrators have relevant organizations in their rolodexes, and can contact and convene a diverse group quickly and easily. They can likely do so with in-house resources or with modest help from a consulting designer/facilitator. And they needn't invest in a major capacity-building or educational effort, since representatives of stakeholder groups are generally competent and informed on the issue in question, or can become so on the basis of documentation that needn't be tailored to lay readers.

In short-duration exercises like this, some of the cautions about stakeholder involvement noted above may be less significant. While the stakeholders brought together may represent a constrained range of views, these may be the views that are of most direct political salience, and sufficiently diverse to expand the thinking and framing being used by government. Moreover, the policy focus of short-duration engagements with stakeholders is often quite specific. As such, the issue in question may not have a high public profile: the most concerned parties may be precisely those brought together as stakeholders, and there may not be a pressing need to legitimate the process with the general public. Furthermore, the specificity (and in some cases novelty) of the issue being taken out to stakeholders may enable them to form policy positions in genuine exchange with one another.

So in this context, stakeholder engagement may be an efficient and low-investment way of bringing external voices into a policy process as a check on government-driven policy development. Convening citizens in such a context would involve investments of time and expense that could seem disproportionate. Of course, citizen deliberation need

not be expensive or time-consuming if one has standing committees of citizens ready to advise on policy issues, for example, or strong internal capacity for citizen convening. But for many governments, deliberative citizen involvement is for special occasions, not run-of-the-mill policy work.

Long duration advisory and decision-making roles

Stakeholder deliberation can also seem like an appropriate solution where involvement has to be sustained over a long period. It may be hard to assemble a group of genuinely diverse citizens that can be available for deliberative input into decision-making over a period of years; concerned stakeholders, on the other hand, are often more able to sustain participation for the long haul. It may also be that government officials feel more comfortable engaging over the long term with a small group when that small group consists of representatives of organizations with large memberships: in this way they can claim that the group represents a larger number of citizens. This, in the authors' experience, is sometimes the case with local government community advisory committees in the Australian context, as a group formed with stakeholder representatives may be seen to demonstrate better value for money, more legitimacy, and more extensive engagement than a non-aligned citizen group.

Another example of long-term stakeholder involvement is that of regional advisory boards for extractive resource industries in Canada. These boards often address a statutory requirement for public input on environmental impacts, and meet regularly to consider resource development proposals. Questions may arise, however, about diversity of representation, about how deliberative these boards are, about cultures of decision-making, and about power relations (Richardson et al. 2011).

Citizens deliberate

In what contexts and for what reasons might governments choose to convene citizens to deliberate and advise on policy, without an accompanying deliberative role for stakeholders?

Citizens deliberate, with no meaningful stakeholder involvement in the process

In the experiences of the authors of this article, exercises in this category are relatively rare. There are many kinds of consultative and generative processes where governments engage directly with citizens, including focus groups, town hall meetings, world cafés, and 'open space' exercises. These tend not to be 'deliberative', however, in the sense of participants engaging carefully and systematically with new information and with one another's perspectives in a problem-solving process that also is an input to decision-making. Because more explicitly deliberative citizen involvement tends to require high investment and a high profile, conveners typically do engage stakeholders in either or both of the following ways.

Citizens deliberate, with stakeholders contributing as experts and witnesses

Most citizen deliberation exercises have a concerted learning element whereby participants are exposed to divergent views on the issue in focus, considering how each view interprets facts and argues for its position. Stakeholder representatives are often brought in to speak and answer questions as part of this learning process (either as

experts, or alongside more 'neutral' sources of expertise).[20] This approach is used by a wide array of deliberative methods, including 21st Century Town Halls (Lukensmeyer 2012), Deliberative Opinion Polls, and Consensus Conferences. Involving stakeholders in this way can make citizen deliberation more informed, and can show that participants are being exposed to a range of perspectives (Hendriks 2011).

On the down side, citizens may be put off by listening to views from groups whose 'brands' have negative associations, and listen less open-mindedly than if the same views were put forward by academic 'experts' or others considered to be more objective. Organizers may also have to decide whether only views that are backed by 'evidence' are presented on issues of fact, or whether a wider range of views on technical issues is put forward, including views that are out of step with mainstream science (for example, views that reject dominant scientific understandings of climate change, public health, or evolution). Presenting a broad array of views may shift the direction of the discussion from problem-solving around technical issues to values and normative goals.

One reason for involving stakeholder representatives in citizen deliberation is to build their confidence in and allegiance to a process (for example, as balanced and based on good information); such involvement provides no guarantee, though, that they will not use their power with decision-makers, administrators, and publics to oppose outcomes of the citizen process.

Citizens deliberate, with stakeholders helping to convene the exercise, or helping to validate the balance of briefing materials and process design

A greater degree of buy-in and public legitimacy for citizen deliberations can be secured by involving stakeholders in prominent supporting roles. One version of this—used quite commonly with high-profile government-convened citizen deliberations—involves assembling an advisory committee of stakeholders. Members of such an advisory committee allow their organizations to be associated with the exercise, and are consulted on briefing materials as well as process design. This can increase the comfort level of stakeholders with the exercise, and thus perhaps with citizen recommendations; it also enables conveners to point to stakeholder approval of briefing materials and process, making it more difficult for the legitimacy of the citizen deliberation process to be undermined by stakeholders displeased with recommendations. Many deliberative methods use stakeholders in this kind of advisory role, including 21st Century Town Halls and Deliberative Opinion Polls.

A more ambitious role for stakeholders—somewhat more rare in the experience of the authors of this article—is for key stakeholders to co-convene a citizen deliberation with government. Here, key stakeholders 'own' the process, attach their organizational credibility to it, have a much greater role in co-designing it, and in some cases co-fund it (Hendriks 2011). The Australian component of the World Wide Views on Global

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[20] It is beyond the scope of this article to delve into the role of experts in deliberative processes, or into the complex connections between the roles of 'expert', 'stakeholder', and 'citizen'—though these are crucial issues, especially in contexts where scientific and other expertise are being marginalized, sometimes in the name of giving stronger expression to the popular will or the interests of certain stakeholders. See, for example, Fischer 2009; Leach et al. 2007; MacLean and Burgess 2008.

Warming project[21] provides an example of this—organizers sought and received sponsorship from a large environmental NGO and a key corporate finance company, and these organizations became part of the public face of the event.

Creating an 'observer' role for stakeholders—where invited representatives witness the event itself but do not participate in deliberations—can also increase their comfort with the deliberation process and outcomes. Stakeholder groups can be offered and can claim roles in citizen deliberation processes in more ad hoc ways as well; for example, organized groups can intervene in citizen processes (as enablers, as allies, as critics, as space-claimers) in ways not planned or invited by conveners.

Formally involving stakeholder groups in the design of a citizen deliberation process has a number of potential advantages for governments (Twyfords 2012). It can increase the legitimacy of citizen deliberation with key stakeholders and their publics, as well as reassuring government sponsors that the perspectives and interests of powerful stakeholders are being addressed. It can ensure that the decision space outlined for citizen deliberators actually corresponds to what is politically viable given the positions of powerful stakeholders. It can ensure that briefing materials and process design are informed by perspectives that a design team might not otherwise have seen. It links the deliberation to networks that can help to communicate outcomes. And it can increase the resilience of citizen recommendations in the face of critiques from organized interests. Finally, where a citizen deliberation process is meant to lead to community action, involving stakeholder groups as advisors, co-conveners and/or observers can leverage the capacity of business, civil society, and other groups to support such engagement and mobilization.

There are, however, a number of challenges when stakeholders are involved in vetting or co-creating briefing materials and/or process for citizen deliberations, or in co-convening deliberations. Giving stakeholders this role can introduce conflict (as well as organizational and time burdens) into deliberative design work. There may be disagreement (including between government and consultants, or within stakeholder advisory groups) about which stakeholders or representatives of stakeholder groups to include. Stakeholders may not be fully on board with giving citizen deliberation weight in decision-making, or in having citizen recommendations directly inform political decisions (rather than being an input alongside the operation of established governance networks). And stakeholders will often have divergent views and interests vis-à-vis the information to be put before citizens, how a deliberation is framed, and the process it should follow: this can work against the legitimacy of a citizen process, lead to narrow framing where there is stakeholder unease, or result in 'lowest common denominator' design.

Citizens and stakeholders each have deliberative roles within a complex process

Governments needn't choose between engaging stakeholders and citizens as deliberators—there are many models for involving both in the course of policy

[21] For more information on the Australian event see http://wwviews.org.au/. For more information on the global project see http://www.wwviews.org/node/259

development and decision-making.[22] Yet we don't find well-developed rationales for when each kind of involvement happens, or how stakeholder and citizen aspects of involvement are linked. In mapping and analyzing blended processes in this section, we will offer more developed practice examples where we have them as a resource for those who want to reflectively organize and connect these parts of their practice.

Separate, phased deliberative activities for citizens and stakeholders

In the experience of the authors of this article, the most common blend of deliberation by stakeholders and citizens convened by governments is one that involves stakeholders earlier in the policy process to define the space of political possibility; set agendas and frame issues; develop the broad gauge of policy; and provide a sounding board for civil servants or consultants crafting plans and legislation. Citizens are then brought in at a later stage to test the fit of draft policy or legislation with informed public opinion, and/or to offer recommendations on details of implementation.

A useful example is provided by the development and implementation of climate and energy policy in the City of Edmonton, Canada. The City of Edmonton Office of Environment was charged in 2009 with developing *The Way We Green*, an environmental strategic plan that lays out principles, goals, and targets for the City as one part of an overall strategic planning process.[23] The Office implemented a host of internal and external engagement opportunities, including an Expert Panel, work with the City's Environmental Advisory Committee and Natural Areas Advisory Committee, and canvassing public views through focus groups and outreach interviews, online communication and questionnaires, opinion polling, and more. Nested within this broad engagement campaign were deliberative processes. In June and November 2010, for example, the Office convened three stakeholder workshops: "The approximately 250 individuals who participated in workshops included representatives from business, industry, environment, education, government, social, community, youth, and Aboriginal organizations." (City of Edmonton 2011, 13) These stakeholders were asked to assess the gravity of Edmonton's various sustainability and resiliency challenges; outline changes required in infrastructure and lifestyles, and barriers to achieving these; and describe policy options requiring exploration. This stakeholder work fed into the creation of *The Way We Green,* including feedback on a draft. From there the Plan went to City Council and was passed in June 2011.

Citizen deliberation came into the picture once *The Way We Green* was approved by City Council. Implementation plans were to be created for specific components of the strategy, with citizens involved in shaping implementation of elements that were especially controversial or relied on extensive community action. Most ambitiously, the climate change and energy transition chapter of *The Way We Green* (which among other things commits the City to 'carbon neutrality') were explored by an expert and stakeholder process, then put before a Citizens' Panel of 56 diverse citizens who met for six full days in October-December 2012 to learn about the issues, articulate their values

[22] For an excellent discussion of strategic considerations that may influence different kinds of stakeholders' propensity to participate in citizen processes, see Hendriks 2011, 178-198.

[23] City of Edmonton 2011.

and priorities, and make recommendations to Council.[24] Council received these citizen recommendations and as this article goes to press, City Administration is crafting policy for Council approval based on citizen recommendations, and is consulting informally with key stakeholders as it does so.

In the majority of cases where governments host deliberation by stakeholders and citizens at different stages of the process, there tends to be limited connection across these groups, sometimes none at all. The products of earlier deliberations feed into later ones, and participants are informed of the process of policy development to date, including the involvement of other groups. It is rare for participants in stakeholder or citizen groups to meet or interact across these lines, or for stakeholders involved at earlier stages to be involved in designing or supporting the later citizen process.

It also is common, in complex policy processes with multiple sites of stakeholder and citizen deliberation and engagement, for these to feed into policy development without there being explicit communication or commitment about how each input relates to others, or has influence relative to others. The translation of input into policy happens in many hands, often starting with a public engagement consultant developing a report on what has been heard from different sources, and then moving to civil servants who consider this report in crafting policy. In some cases, explicit stakeholder and/or citizen recommendations feed into the process of crafting policies, or are input into decision-making by elected officials (both of these happened, for example, in the Edmonton case just described).

There are some clear advantages to phasing stakeholder and citizen deliberation. The broadly gauged agenda-setting, framing, and articulation of policy options developed with stakeholders earlier in the policy process can require specialized knowledge of subject matter and an ability to draw on diverse sources of expertise: organized stakeholder groups often possess both. Moreover, it can be valuable to calibrate the agenda and decision space to the tolerance of influential stakeholders. Citizens can then be involved to check the fit of draft policy with their diverse values, to advise on more detailed issues of implementation (which often are much closer to citizens' day-to-day experiences and preferences), and to confer public legitimacy.

There are also potential challenges to the 'stakeholder first, citizens later' pattern of public deliberation. By the time citizens are involved as deliberators, much of importance may already have been decided: this poses challenges for process design (citizens work with a constrained agenda and framing that may not seem right to them), which may compromise participant satisfaction and public legitimacy. The stakeholders involved at earlier stages also may have expectations that their voices will carry weight: if citizens are allowed to substantially reframe issues or shift policy, the legitimacy of outcomes with stakeholders may be compromised.

When citizens and stakeholder representatives deliberate separately, this also forgoes potentially powerful forms of learning and transformation. Stakeholder engagement often involves representatives arguing their cases whereas citizen deliberative processes are interesting because participants are not so locked into positions, and often arrive at a different point of view. There is something about people openly changing their minds that

[24] Two authors of this paper, Kahane and Loptson, were involved in convening and researching this process. See http://www.edmonton.ca/environmental/programs/citizens-panel-energy-climate.aspx and http://www.albertaclimatedialogue.ca

gives permission for all participants to look at processes as a potentially transformative journey. For stakeholders, even witnessing this citizen journey may help them to appreciate other perspectives, and to become a bit less stuck with their own viewpoint. This benefit might be even more pronounced if citizens and stakeholders could be brought together in deliberative spaces—as we consider below.

Separate, concurrent deliberative activities with citizens and stakeholders

A different approach to engaging stakeholders and citizens in deliberation is to keep the processes separate but undertake them at the same time. This approach may be particularly appropriate where the views of certain social groups or interest groups are at risk of being left aside or underplayed in a citizen process.

An example of this approach can be found in the work of the Royal Commission on the Future of Health Care in Canada or the 'Romanow Commission'. This commission, which did its work in 2001–2002, was mandated to review the country's healthcare system by engaging Canadians in a national dialogue on the system's future and making recommendations to secure the system's quality and sustainability. The Commission's work included forty expert reports, and engagement with advocacy groups and the health policy community (See von Lieres and Kahane 2007; and Commission on the Future of Health Care in Canada 2002). At the heart of this massive undertaking (the Commission had a staff of 47 and cost nearly $20 million CAD) was a set of twelve one-day regional deliberations by groups of diverse 'unaffiliated' citizens, who were taken through facilitated 'choicework' sessions based on workbooks that outlined key policy and value choices (Jackson et al. 2002). The Commission realized at an early stage, however, that indigenous voices and communities had distinctive needs as well as constitutional rights around health, and that these were unlikely to be dealt with adequately in broadly based citizen deliberations. So they convened an Aboriginal Forum that brought together leaders of key Aboriginal organizations, as well as informal community representatives and stakeholders from the Aboriginal health system.

The measures taken to include Aboriginal stakeholders alongside citizen deliberations had their strengths: this and other special provisions for Aboriginal voice and representation in the Romanow Commission process yielded a report that devoted an insightful chapter to Aboriginal issues, drawing particular attention to a crisis in Aboriginal health. The Assembly of First Nations applauded this focus, though it also criticized the Report of the Royal Commission—notably the absence of recommendations to immediately increase funding for Aboriginal Health (Miller, Chenier and Furi 2002).

As described above, concurrent deliberation by marginalized stakeholder groups can offer the advantage of raising the profile of their perspectives and needs with those who draw on deliberative outcomes to craft recommendations and policy. It also can increase the legitimacy of the process with groups so consulted, and with a broader public insofar as it is concerned about input by these groups.

At the same time, the Romanow example shows some of the limitations of separating out input by particular stakeholder groups rather than integrating them into citizen deliberations. Issues of Aboriginal health were largely absent from the 'citizen' stream of Romanow, and while some Aboriginal people took part in these 'choicework' sessions, conveners recognized that their voices were marginal in the process (von Lieres and Kahane 2007). We noted above that separating stakeholder from citizen deliberation can deprive stakeholders of opportunities to experience and learn from transformations

undergone by citizens; this separation can also deprive citizen deliberation of sustained engagement with the perspectives of key stakeholder groups. This provides a further argument in favor of explicitly connecting stakeholder and citizen elements of deliberative processes, if not weaving these together in a common process.

Stakeholders and citizens participating in a single deliberative space

To what extent can stakeholders and citizens—that is, representatives of organized groups and 'unaffiliated' citizens—be brought together effectively in common deliberative spaces? We struggled, as authors, to identify examples of this kind of process. On the one hand, there are many *generative* processes (processes that canvass perspectives through dialogue, rather than weighing tradeoffs in order to make recommendations) that bring individual citizens together with stakeholder representatives: this often happens, for example, in World Cafés and design charrettes. On the other hand, stakeholder processes often combine participants who formally represent a stakeholder organization with those who come from a 'stakeholder group' (e.g., an ethnic, religious, or indigenous community) but not a particular organization, and in this sense weave together stakeholders and citizens (given the definitions that we have stipulated for these categories). We discovered few explicitly deliberative processes, however, that self-consciously blended participation by stakeholder groups and individual citizens.

We can hypothesize some advantages for this kind of joint deliberation, drawing on the two previous sections: it could expose stakeholders to the insights of citizens and to citizens' willingness to shift position; and it could expose citizens to the distinctive perspectives of groups that might not otherwise be compellingly represented by participants in a citizens' process. As noted earlier in the article, stakeholders also bring knowledge, expertise, and institutional capacities to deliberations that can support learning and action; they also can "pressure decision-makers to act on the citizens' recommendations" (Hendriks 2011, 12). Furthermore, recommendations of a joint citizen/stakeholder deliberation might have a more direct and transparent route to influence than when decision-makers must somehow parse and integrate the outcomes of separate processes.

Blended processes may be relatively rare, however, because they present manifest challenges. Precisely because of the knowledge and experience of stakeholder representatives, there may be differences in confidence and capacity between stakeholders and citizens—and accompanying dynamics of deference and authority—that are difficult to manage in a shared space of deliberation.

Conclusion: Mapping and evaluating roles for stakeholders and citizens in deliberative exercises

This article has attempted to map how deliberative democracy practitioners and researchers understand the categories of 'stakeholder' and 'citizen'; advantages and challenges of involving these players in deliberative exercises; and ways of configuring their roles. It is important to acknowledge, though, the complexity of the relationship between the design of deliberations and their outcomes. Replicating a process that was successful in one context will not necessarily be effective in another. Significant differences exist from one community to another, which will impact the effectiveness of a

deliberative process (e.g., personalities, leadership, temperaments, community history, cultural norms). Moreover, evaluating the effectiveness of various configurations of public deliberation is a major gap in deliberative theory and practice (see Abelson et al. 2003; Barrett et al, 2012; Gastil et al. 2012; and Mansbridge et al. 2006). Part of the problem with determining the effectiveness of particular deliberative models is that practitioners are divided on the ultimate goals of deliberative forums and on the best tools of measurement.

It is important to recognize the preliminary quality of our analysis in this article. We nonetheless believe that our analysis shows room for clarification about why practitioners choose to involve who they do in deliberative engagement practice. We hope that these maps of possible roles for citizens and stakeholders can serve as useful prompts, supporting:

- Reflection by practitioners ("Why do I do it this way? Could I achieve better outcomes by doing it another way?")
- Reflection by researchers ("How could we better understand the relationship between these process choices and particular outcomes? Am I clear on why I'm using terminologies the way that I do?")
- Researcher–practitioner collaboration ("What were the goals and outcomes of this particular deliberative design?')

We also acknowledge that practitioners are often working with process designs that are shaped by the culture, history and expectations of commissioning organizations—that is, the task is not always to design a process 'from scratch'. Where this is the case we instead encourage practitioners to draw on this research to reflect on how they can best operate within constraints to integrate stakeholder and citizen elements in order to meet the needs of their context. This speaks to details of process design such as preparation, briefings, various types and formats of 'inputs' to the deliberation (whether written, multimedia, or in person; and whether expert or stakeholder or citizen speakers), facilitation, and which aspects of group dynamics to bring to the fore explicitly in process.

At the level of particular deliberative exercises we encourage reflection on practice that includes the following questions about how citizen and stakeholder roles might be related:

When citizens deliberate

- If citizens are to deliberate, with no significant stakeholder involvement in the process:
    - How could stakeholders be engaged either as a check on process or content, or to build public perception that the process is inclusive and balanced?
- If citizens are to deliberate, with stakeholders contributing as experts and witnesses:
    - How could stakeholders also be engaged in 'endorsing' the balance of the overall process or even just of its informational elements?
    - How can stakeholders align themselves publicly with the process so that they are more likely to support its outcomes?
- If citizens are to deliberate, with stakeholders helping to convene the exercise, or helping to validate the balance of briefing materials and process design:

- How will disagreement be resolved about which stakeholders or representatives of stakeholder groups to include (e.g., disagreement between government and consultants, or within stakeholder advisory groups)?
- Where conveners and stakeholders differ on giving weight to citizen deliberation in decision-making, or in having citizen recommendations directly inform political decisions, how will this be recognized and resolved?
- How will divergent views and interests amongst stakeholders be resolved in relation to the information to be put before citizens, how a deliberation is framed, or the process of deliberation?

When stakeholders are to deliberate

- If stakeholders are to engage in short duration advisory roles:
  - Is there is a standing committee of citizens ready to advise on policy issues that could also participate?
  - If there is strong internal capacity for citizen convening, could citizens also be engaged?
- If stakeholders are to engage in extended duration advisory and decision-making roles:
  - How are issues around diversity of representation being addressed?
  - How might these groups be supported to be more deliberative?
  - How will different cultures of decision-making and how will power relations be addressed within the group?

When citizens and stakeholders are both going to deliberate

- If there are to be separate, phased deliberative activities for citizens and stakeholders:
  - How are the results of multiple sites of stakeholder and citizen deliberation and engagement communicated?
  - Will commitment be given by conveners about how each input relates to others or has influence relative to others?
- If stakeholder and citizen deliberation is to take place in parallel:
  - How can stakeholders still be given opportunities to experience and learn from transformations undergone by citizens?
  - How can citizen deliberation benefit from sustained engagement with the perspectives of key stakeholder groups?
  - If stakeholder and/or citizen action is an intended outcome, could linkages between these groups of deliberators increase the likelihood of success?
- If stakeholders and citizens are participating in a single deliberative space:
  - How can differences in confidence and capacity between stakeholders and citizens—and accompanying dynamics of deference and authority—be managed effectively?

We hope that this article's discussion of design choices in relation to citizen and stakeholder engagement will prompt a clearer articulation of why we engage who we do in deliberative processes. We hope that it contributes to ongoing reflection on engagement assumptions, goals and challenges by practitioners. And above all, we hope

that it can support work by the dialogue and deliberation community—researchers and practitioners alike—to explore different ways of blending stakeholder and citizen roles, to learn through experimentation, and to share this learning with others.[25]

[25] Please do visit the web discussion that the National Coalition for Dialogue and Deliberation is hosting for this purpose at http://ncdd.org/10913

Appendix 1- Summary: Why practitioners may lean toward stakeholder-only processes, citizen-only processes, or hybrid processes

Who is involved?	Advantages identified by practitioners	Disadvantages identified by practitioners
Stakeholders only	• Key stakeholders often known to conveners: makes for ease of recruitment and/or collaboration • Stakeholders often have knowledge and capacity around issue area • Engages those with power to challenge or derail things at the decision and/or implementation stage • Enables formation of useful advocacy coalitions	• Conveners may be too quick to think they 'know' who the relevant stakeholders are • Choice of stakeholders subject to challenge ('the usual suspects') • Speaks only indirectly to need to engage 'citizens', and so limited in building democratic legitimacy for decision processes • Representatives of stakeholder groups may be tied to fixed perspectives or positions, thus limiting deliberativeness • May not address power differentials between stakeholder groups, and may strain the capacity of some groups
Citizens only	• Representative 'mini-publics' can make strong normative claims to represent the 'public will' and may have greater public legitimacy than stakeholder processes • Participants represent an unusually broad range of positions and perspectives, and so may seed new thinking in policy processes • Participants are not formally tied to stakeholder organizations, and so may be more open to changing position • Mini-publics can foster learning, critical capacity, and new democratic energies among participants, and can provide a lens on capacities for such change by the broader public	• Less typical of existing government methods, and so may require new skills and capacity • Involving 'non-expert' citizens may challenge entrenched views by elites about who has the capacity or right to engage in resolving complex policy issues • Participants do not necessarily bring organizational knowledge and capacity, and so may be more vulnerable to manipulation • Participants have limited ability to sustain participation over time, and to translate learning into effective action • Power differentials between members of the public may reproduce structural inequalities within deliberations
Stakeholder and citizens in a	• Allows for stakeholders to consider public views and revise	• Power differentials between citizens and stakeholders

common process	their own • Creates opportunities for dialogue between citizens and experts • Sets up 'democracy schools' for citizens to learn from stakeholders about how to engage with political issues • Leads to valuable networking opportunities between citizens and stakeholders and between different stakeholder groups • Where stakeholders can mobilize support and interest, can increase awareness of the issue by broader publics	• Risk that stakeholders will hijack the agenda • Raises problem of which stakeholders to include • Issues around interpreting and managing inputs from dual processes or elements of process • Because stakeholders are more likely than citizens to hold fixed positions they may not develop the same appreciation as citizens of complexity and diverse perspectives

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