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Putting the "Public" Back in Public Values Research: Designing Participation to Identify and Respond to Values

This article seeks to put the "public" back in public values research by theorizing about the potential of direct citizen participation to assist with identifying and understanding public values. Specifically, the article explores eight participatory design elements and offers nine propositions about how those elements are likely to affect the ability of administrators to identify and understand public values with regard to a policy conflict. The article concludes with a brief discussion about potential directions for future research.

Interest in public values has grown in recent years. Given the inherent plurality of public values in public administration (e.g., Galston 2002; Pesch 2008; Spicer 2010; Van der Wal and Van Hout 2009), scholars have developed classification systems for public values (e.g., Beck Jørgensen and Bozeman 2007), notions about creating public value (e.g., Moore 1995) and preventing public values failure (e.g., Bozeman 2007), and ideas for reconciling public values conflicts (e.g., Selden, Brewer, and Brudney 1999; Spicer 2009). Most of this research, however, is within the context of organizations and networks; few have paid explicit attention to the public in public values research (for exceptions, see Benington 2009; Meynhardt 2009; for discussions about the meaning of public in public administration see Frederickson 1997).

This article seeks to put the public back in public values research in two specific ways. First, the article explains why ignoring the public is problematic, especially when it comes to resolving policy conflicts, which almost always are related to public values controversies. It argues that resolving such policy conflicts requires administrators to identify, understand, and select among competing public values, a task that may be done more effectively with public participation. However, not all public participation processes are created equal. As Dewey recognized long ago, the challenge of public participation lies in "the improvement of the methods and conditions of debate, discussion, and persuasion" (1927, 365). While much progress has been made

since Dewey's times, there still exists tremendous multiplicity in the design and goals of participatory processes because of the wealth of tools, techniques, and procedures available. This raises the issue of how to design participation processes to best address values-based policy conflicts. Thus, the second goal of the article is to theorize about how various participation design choices may (or may not) maximize the likelihood of administrators eliciting and responding to public values in policy conflicts.

To these ends, the article begins with an examination of value, values, and values pluralism in public administration. It then examines eight participatory design choices and offers theory-driven, testable propositions about how these design choices are likely to affect administrators' ability to identify and understand the relevant public values in play for a given policy controversy. The article concludes with a discussion about directions for future research.

Value, Values, and Values Pluralism in Public Administration

In general, the term *value* refers to the worth of something; in government, *public value* refers to an appraisal of what is created by government on behalf of the public. Moore (1995) asserts that *public value creation* occurs when managers focus attention on three key questions about purpose: "whether the purpose is publicly valuable, whether it will be politically and legally supported, and whether it is administratively and operationally feasible" (1995, 22). Public value is destroyed by making the wrong decisions about the needs to be satisfied, the strategies to satisfy those needs, and the processes to produce and deliver services (Spano 2009).

In contrast, "*values* are complex, relatively stable emotio-cognitive assessments that guide individual behavior.[1] In government, *public values* are those that provide "normative consensus about (a) the rights, benefits, and prerogatives to which citizens should (and should not) be entitled; (b) the obligations of

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citizens to society, the state, and one another; and (c) the principles on which governments and policies should be based" (Bozeman 2007, 13). "*Public values failure* occurs when neither the market nor public sector provides goods and services required to achieve public values" (Bozeman 2007, 144; emphasis added). The likelihood of public values failure increases when "there are insufficient means of ensuring articulation and effective communication of core values, or if processes for aggregating values lead to distortions" (Bozeman 2007, 145).

Although public values shape the structure of society, there are occasions (perhaps more frequent than not) when there are fundamental disagreements about public values and no particular public value or values set (i.e., a grouping of related public values) serves as a trump card and generates normative consensus. This is attributable, in part, to *public values pluralism*—the notion that several values and values orientations can simultaneously exist in society, all of which may be equally valid, correct, and fundamental (e.g., Galston 2002; Molina and Spicer 2004). Public values pluralism is pervasive in public administration and particularly in public policy, where nearly all controversies boil down to choices among competing values. At an abstract level, consider how "the pursuit of liberty can become incompatible with the pursuit of equality, the pursuit of justice with that of mercy, and the pursuit of spontaneity with that of security" (Molina and Spicer 2004, 293). For more concrete examples, consider how:

> Public values pluralism is pervasive in public administration and particularly in public policy, where nearly all controversies boil down to choices among competing values.

- Economic development policies might trigger conflicts among values related to economic growth, historic preservation, environmental protection, and fair taxation
- Policies to promote equal opportunity might result in conflicts among values such as efficiency, justice, equality, merit, and individual achievement
- Policies related to environmental issues might generate conflicts among values related to preservation and conservation, social justice, economic growth, and job creation
- Crime policies might set off competition among values such as liberty, safety, due process, equity, effectiveness, access, and justice
- Security policies might produce conflict among values such as knowledge generation, information sharing, confidentiality, privacy, civil liberties, individual rights, and safety

To address public values pluralism for a given policy issue, administrators must be able to *identify* the relevant public values (i.e., recognize and name the values), *understand* those values (i.e., describe or explain the values and interpret their relationship to other values), and *reconcile* values conflicts (i.e., rank, aggregate, or select among competing public values) in a way that helps create overall public value and prevents public values failure. Bozeman suggests that public values can be identified with (1) intuition, (2) elections, polling, public opinion surveys, and similar mechanisms, and (3) scholarly literature (2007, 133–41). However, these sources tend to favor privileged values, and thus may neither be inclusive nor recognize all of the relevant values in play with regard to a given issue.

Other scholars suggest several "reconciliation methodologies" (Buchanan and Millstone 1979, 296) to help understand and decide among competing public values. For example, individuals can employ a public value(s) mapping model (e.g., Bozeman 2007), refer to ethical and other codes of conduct (e.g., Kernaghan 2000, 2003), or use legal reasoning (e.g., Spicer 2009). At the organizational and network levels, leadership (e.g., Vandenabeele 2007; Wallis and Gregory 2009); managerial roles, actions, and behaviors (e.g., Meynhardt and Metelmann 2009); bureaucratic controls (e.g., Selden, Brewer, and Brudney 1999); and various management control systems (e.g., Spano 2009) can be used to resolve values conflicts. However, all of these mechanisms operate within an organizational context and give little, if any, regard to the public.

The overarching problem with these identification and reconciliation mechanisms is that they ignore the role of the citizenry in addressing values-based public policy controversies; therefore, they are unlikely to help create public value and prevent public values failure. An arguably better reconciliation methodology, at least with respect to public policy controversies, would be one in which citizens are directly and actively involved in identifying what constitutes public value, articulating what needs to happen to create public value and prevent public values failure, and making decisions about trade-offs to achieve these ends. Such movement from disparate individual public values to society's broader public values requires a continuing process of social inquiry, discussion, and dialogue within the public sphere (Benington 2009; Bozeman 2007; Dewey 1927)—it requires public participation.

Designing Participation to Address Values Conflicts in Public Policy

Public participation is an almost universally accepted foundation of democracy.[2] In the context of modern democracies, citizen participation in government has traditionally centered on indirect participation through voting.[3] However, over the last few decades, demands for direct citizen participation have grown tremendously at the local, state, and national levels around the world. Direct citizen participation can be defined as "the process[es] by which members of a society (those not holding office or administrative positions in government) share power with public officials in making substantive decisions related to the community" (Roberts 2008a, 5). The focus here is the role of direct citizen participation in public administration, as opposed to participation in electoral institutions or civil society organizations.

Scholars have long theorized that public participation can help administrators better identify and understand public values and, consequently, improve policy decision making processes and outcomes (e.g., Carpenter and Kennedy 2001; Matthews 1984, 1994; Roberts 2008a).[4] Likewise, a significant volume of work has been generated on other potential impacts (good and bad) of direct citizen participation (see generally, Fung 2003, 2006; Nabatchi 2010; Roberts 2008a, 2008b). While current empirical research does little to resolve the debate about the potential benefits and

pitfalls of citizen participation (see generally Delli Carpini, Cook, and Jacobs 2004; Roberts 2008a; Ryfe 2005), it is likely that the outcomes (good or bad) are, in part, a function of how public participation is designed. Thus, the question becomes how to design public participation processes to maximize the likelihood of identifying and understanding public values with regard to a particular policy issue or decision.

This section examines how choices about eight participatory design elements may (or may not) assist public administrators in identifying and understanding public values in a particular policy conflict. The eight elements are (1) level of cooperation, (2) communication mode, (3) level of shared decision authority, (4) participatory mechanisms, (5) informational materials, (6) participant selection, (7) participant recruitment, and (8) recurrence and iteration (for a discussion of some of these and other design choices, see Fung 2003, 2006). Propositions are offered about the relationship between these design elements and the subsequent ability of administrators to identify and understand the public values in play for a given policy conflict.

Before proceeding, three issues are important to note. First, some theoretical work about the connection between participatory design and outcomes has been done (e.g., Fung 2003, 2006); however, there have been no attempts to link design choices to the identification and understanding of public values. Second, in addition to those discussed here, several additional decisions about both system and process design should be made by those wishing to utilize public participation (Nabatchi 2011). Finally, design choices are not made in a linear fashion. Rather, because choices are interrelated, they are made through an iterative and integrative process that considers numerous other factors, such as the goals for participation (i.e., why the agency wants or needs participation and what it hopes to accomplish); the stakes for participants (i.e., why participants would want to participate and their perceptions about the importance of the issue); timing (i.e., how quickly a decision needs to be made); mandates, laws, rules, and/or regulations; and system context and organizational conditions (e.g., budget, human and other resources, available technologies, and logistical constraints), among other issues.

Level of Cooperation
Experience suggests that public participation engenders different levels of cooperation among government and citizens, ranging from adversarial to collaborative, with the former perhaps being more common. Although many scholars and practitioners criticize (and stereotype) public participation as being adversarial and promoting conflict, it is debatable as to whether such processes are purposefully adversarial, or whether they produce adversarialism as a function of process design (Carpenter and Kennedy 2001; McComas 2001).

Conflict resolution theory suggests that the level of cooperation in a process is related to whether it focuses on positions or interests (Carpenter and Kennedy 2001; Costantino and Merchant 1996; Ury, Brett, and Goldberg 1988). Positions are what a person or

group wants; interests are the reasons underlying a position, that is, why a person or group wants something. For any given issue, people may have only one position but many interests, some more important than others, and, in many cases, interests are motivated by values.

Adversarial processes tend to be position based; they set up and support conflicting (or opposing) one-sided positions held by individuals or groups. Thus, they generally breed and foster conflict and take on a game-like appearance, where winning is defined as prevailing in the outcome. Traditional public hearings or meetings are the most common form of public participation in the United States (Fiorino 1990); however, by nature of their structure, they also tend to "encourage participants to take more extreme positions" and thus, enhance adversarialism and reduce the opportunities for cooperation and collaboration (Beierle 1998, 20–21).

In contrast, collaborative processes tend to be interest based; they focus on identifying the concerns, needs, and values held by individuals and groups. "Focusing on interests forces contending parties to back off from their stated positions … they lose their adversarial tone, and their opponents begin to understand why they have the positions they have" (Carpenter and Kennedy 2001, 61). This generally supports cooperative work by participants, where winning is defined as reaching a mutually satisfactory outcome, that is, an outcome everyone can support (though it may not be their first choice). Although interest-based processes tend to promote collaboration, the goal is not to "change the values and interests held by the participants, but rather to clarify them and to assist participants in reexamining how their values and interests might be best met" (Elliott 1999, 213). In other words, an interest-based process centers on helping participants to clarify, articulate, and stand up for the interests and values that shape their view of an issue. In short, the nature of cooperation engendered by a process, that is, whether it tends to be adversarial or collaborative, is partly a function of whether the process focuses on positions or interests. This leads to the first proposition:

> **Proposition 1:** Interest-based processes are more likely than position-based processes to generate the level of cooperation needed to help public administrators identify and understand the public values relevant to a given policy conflict.

Communication Mode
Public participation processes can employ one-way, two-way, and/or deliberative communication modes. One-way communication is the unidirectional flow of information, or the transfer of information in a preassigned direction from a sender to a receiver. Typically, the direction is from the administrator to citizens, for example, through Web sites, pamphlets, media briefings, and similar mechanisms, though sometimes it may be from a citizen to an administrator, for example, through "customer" or "client" surveys. One-way communication is often used for information-sharing purposes, which are usually necessary in public participation; however, because one-way communication

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prevents opportunities for feedback and negotiation, it provides little opportunity for discussions about public values.

Two-way communication is the bidirectional flow of information, or the transfer of information wherein individuals act as both senders and receivers. In terms of participation, one might think of a citizen inquiry and a response from a public administrator as two-way communication. Traditional public hearings are also based on two-way communication; however, such processes are often "used to defend agency decisions rather than to involve the public" in discussion (Bierle 1998, 21) and may degenerate into one-way communication.

Deliberative communication is more structured and oriented toward problem solving (Gastil 2008). While there is variation, deliberation generally requires that a diverse group of participants take part in an open and accessible process of reasoned discussion in which they "reflect carefully on a matter, [weigh] the strengths and weaknesses of alternative solutions to a problem [and] aim to arrive at a decision or judgment based on not only facts and data but also values, emotions, and other less technical considerations" (Gastil 2005, 164). Deliberation also requires that (1) all participants have an adequate opportunity to speak, (2) all participants

have an obligation to listen attentively and consider carefully the contributions of other participants, and (3) all participants treat each other with respect (Gastil 2008, 9–10).[5] There are a number of deliberative participation processes, such as the 21st Century Town Meeting, National Issues Forums, Deliberative Polling, and the Citizens Jury, among others (for a discussion of these and other deliberative processes, see Gastil and Levine 2005).

While each communication mode may be useful under different circumstances, common sense, in addition to a wealth of research, suggests that not all are equally suited to indentifying and understanding public values. This leads to a second proposition:

> **Proposition 2:** Deliberative communication is more likely than two-way communication to assist public administrators in identifying and understanding the public values relevant to a given policy conflict. One-way communication is least likely to assist public administrators in identifying and understanding the public values relevant to a given policy conflict.

Level of Shared Decision Authority
If the public is to be involved in resolving values-based policy conflicts, then it must have a certain level of influence, or shared
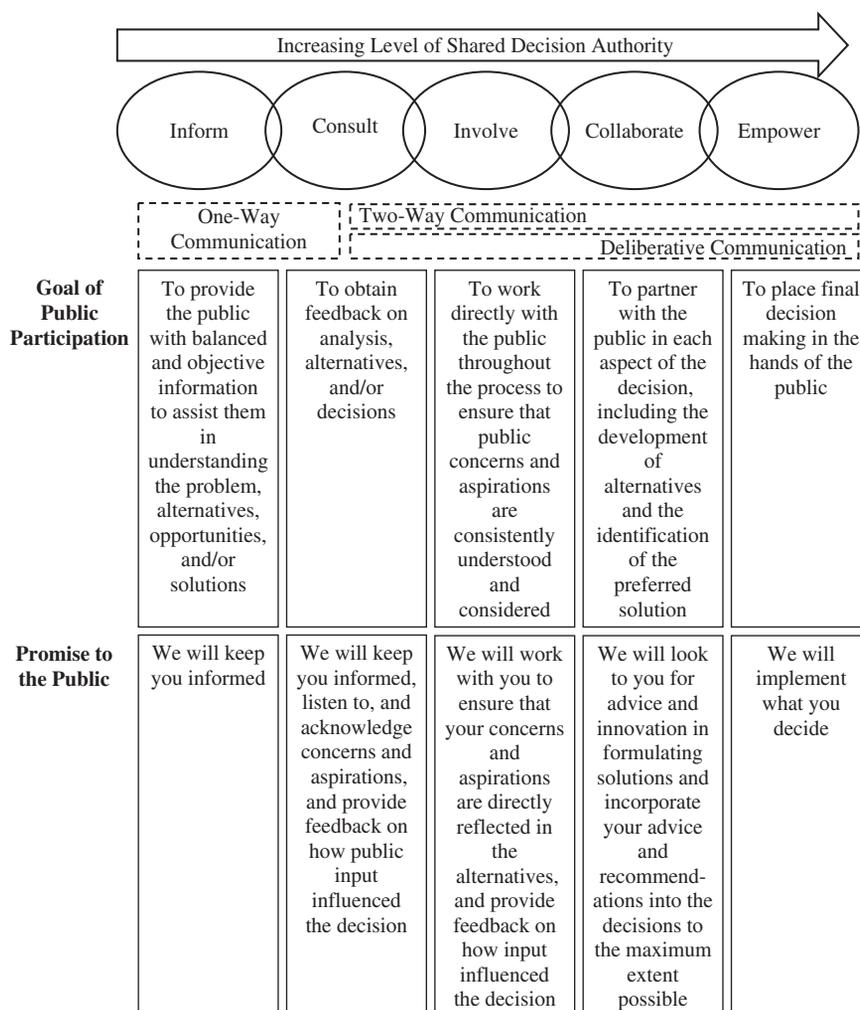
Source: Adapted from the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation (IAP2 2007).

Figure 1 Modified Spectrum of Participation with Communication Modes

authority, over the decision. The five-point continuum in the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) Spectrum of Public Participation is a frequently used typology for understanding shared decision authority. Figure 1 presents an adapted version of the spectrum, including information about the communication modes, goals, and promise made to the public at each point along the continuum.[6]

At the first level of the spectrum are processes that *inform* the public or "provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities, and/or solutions" (IAP2 2007). Informational processes employ one-way communication and engender virtually no shared decision authority. Some examples of informational processes include static Web sites, mailings, bills stuffers, and fact sheets.

At the second level are processes that *consult* with the public or "obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions" (IAP2 2007). Consultation processes promise to "listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision" (IAP2 2007). They may use either one-way or two-way communication and provide minimal, if any, shared decision authority. Some examples include traditional public hearings, public comment devices, and focus groups.

At the third level are processes that *involve* the public or "work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered" (IAP2 2007). Involvement processes typically employ two-way communication, though a few may use deliberative communication. Moreover, involvement processes promise that public "concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed" (IAP2 2007); thus, they have an inherent level of shared decision authority, though this can range from low to moderate. Deliberative Polling (e.g., Fishkin and Farrar 2005) and National Issues Forums (e.g., Melville, Willingham, and Dedrick 2005) are examples of involvement processes.

At the fourth level are processes that *collaborate* with the public or "partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution" (IAP2 2007). Collaborative processes are more likely to employ deliberative communication, though in some cases, two-way communication may be used. Collaborative processes promise that public "advice and recommendations" will be incorporated "into the decisions to the maximum extent possible" (IAP2 2007); thus, they have a moderate to high level of shared decision authority. The AmericaSpeaks 21st Century Town Meeting (Lukensmeyer, Goldman, and Brigham 2005) and the Citizens Jury (Crosby and Nethercut 2005) are often designed to be collaborative processes. Some citizen advisory committees may also be structured as collaborative processes (IAP2 2007).

At the fifth level are processes that *empower* the public or "place final decision-making in the hands of the public" (IAP2 2007). Empowerment processes are most likely to use deliberative communication and have the highest level of shared decision authority

because the promise made is that the government will implement what the public decides. An example of an empowerment process is participatory budgeting, particularly when done in the style of Porto Alegre, Brazil (for a discussion, see Wampler 2007). Other processes that guarantee delegated decision authority can also be considered empowerment processes.

Given the relationships between the level of shared decision authority, communication modes, and levels of cooperation, and in light of the goals and promises of participation at each level of the spectrum, the following proposition is offered:

> **Proposition 3:** Processes with moderate to high levels of shared decision authority are more likely than processes with low or no shared decision authority to help administrators identify and understand the public values relevant to a given policy conflict.

Participatory Mechanisms

Participatory mechanisms refer to how participation is structured. The focus here is on two decisions about face-to-face mechanisms, both of which are related to communication.[7] The first decision involves selecting between a large group or small table format. Perhaps the most common participatory mechanism is the large group format (e.g., the traditional public meeting in which officials sit at the front of the room and participants step forward to speak at a microphone). By its very nature, this format tends to foster one-way or limited two-way communication; it precludes the possibility of deliberative communication because deliberation requires adequate speaking opportunities for all participants. Because the communication structure of the large group format prohibits meaningful exchange, it also tends to promote conflict and adversarialism.

In the small table format, groups of 8 to 12 individuals discuss the issue at tables and report back to the whole room, which is not necessarily limited in size.[8] This format generally restricts the possibility of one-way communication and instead fosters two-way communication and enhances the likelihood for deliberative communication. One of the challenges in using a small table format is integration, or the transformation of the individual table discussions into synthesized recommendations that are representative of the collective work of all participants. Such integration requires scaling up the small table discussions to the whole room and scaling down the preferences of the whole room to the small tables. Usually, multiple iterations are necessary to "arrive at a collective view that represents the best integration of individual perspectives" (Lukensmeyer and Brigham 2002, 353).

Several approaches to integration exist. For example, to show which ideas have the most collective support the 21st Century Town Meeting uses a high-tech method involving networked laptop computers, projection screens, and individual polling keypads that to record participants' "votes" (Lukensmeyer and Brigham 2002; see http:// americaspeaks.org/). Low-tech approaches also exist. For example, ideas can be recorded on flip charts, reported to the whole room with various methods, and gauged for collective support with simple voting or polling processes, such as "dotmocracy" (see http://www. dotmocracy.org/). In both high- and low-tech approaches, the

small tables can resume discussions about one or more of the ideas presented, and the process can be repeated.

Given that a large group format uses one-way or limited two-way communication and is more likely to promote adversarialism, whereas a small group format with integration processes is more likely to use deliberation and promote collaboration, a fourth proposition is offered:

> **Proposition 4:** Participatory mechanisms that use a small table format with integration processes are more likely than those that use a large group format to help administrators identify and understand the public values relevant to a given policy conflict.

The second decision about participatory mechanisms is whether to use facilitators. Facilitation is a process in which a person who is substantively neutral and has no decision-making authority helps a group more effectively communicate, examine and solve problems, and make decisions (Schwartz 1994). Facilitators also help ensure that everyone has a voice, that "the weak, and not necessarily [just] those with the best ideas or arguments, have ample time to speak and express themselves" (Fung 2003, 344). Given that face-to-face participation is likely to be enhanced by the presence of one or more professional facilitators, a fifth proposition is offered:

> **Proposition 5:** Participatory mechanisms that use one or more professional facilitators are more likely than those that use no facilitators to help administrators identify and understand the public values relevant to a given policy conflict.

Informational Materials

Another design choice involves deciding what, if any, informational materials are needed so that the public can engage in effective and informed participation. Research shows that although citizens can make reasonably good decisions based on limited information, the quality of those decisions can be improved when they have more and better information available (e.g., Delli Carpini 2000; Riggle et al. 1992). Informational materials should be of high quality and provide "sufficient context and history on the issues, be neutral and fair to all perspectives, leave room for citizens to create new options, and have credibility with all audiences" (Lukensmeyer and Brigham 2002, 355).

The types of informational materials appropriate for an event will depend on the complexity of the issue being examined—more complex issues require more informational materials. Specific information about relatively simple policy issues can be conveyed using short presentations or expert or panel discussions. For more complex policy issues, discussion books or issues guides can be used. In addition, organizers can have subject matter experts available to answer any technical questions or concerns that arise. In addition, the higher the level of shared authority, the more important such informational materials become. This leads to a sixth proposition:

> ... a large group format uses one-way or limited two-way communication and is more likely to promote adversarialism, whereas a small group format with integration processes is more likely to use deliberation and promote collaboration,...

Proposition 6: Participatory processes that provide informational materials are more likely than participatory processes that provide no informational materials to help administrators identify and understand the public values relevant to a given policy conflict.

Participant Selection

The selection of participants may vary considerably, ranging from state-based participants (e.g., expert administrators and elected representatives), to mini-publics (e.g., professional or lay stakeholders, or randomly selected, self-selected, or recruited individuals), to diffuse members of the public (Fung 2006). For purposes of clarity, however, only two types of participant selection are examined here: "stakeholder" and "public" selection.

Stakeholder selection is narrower than public selection in at least two ways. First, in stakeholder selection, participation is limited to those who have an active and legitimate interest in a particular topic, generally by virtue of their professional role or involvement in a formal group or organization. In public selection, participation is open to all residents of a political or geographic community. There is overlap between these groups; individual stakeholders are citizens, but individual citizens are not considered to be stakeholders unless they officially represent an organized interest. Second, the vast majority of stakeholder groups represent (and compete against other) special interests (i.e., benefits for specific individuals, groups, or parts of society), rather than for the broader public interest.

A common theme in the participation literature is that success is a function of who is in the room (e.g., Carpenter and Kennedy 2001; Susskind, McKearnan, and Thomas-Larmer 1999). In addition to being normative public values, inclusion and diversity are also valued for instrumental reasons—they give voice to multiple perspectives and different interests, allowing for more thoughtful decisions that take a broader view of those who will benefit or be harmed by an action (Beierle and Cayford 2002; Sirianni 2009). It follows, then, that relevant public values are more likely to be identified and understood through processes that are open to broader sets of participants. This gives rise to another proposition:

> **Proposition 7:** Processes that use public selection are more likely than those that use stakeholder selection to help administrators identify and understand the public values relevant to a given policy conflict.

Participant Recruitment

Once an administrator selects potential participants, he or she must recruit them. There are four primary participant recruitment mechanisms that may be used alone or in combination: voluntary self-selection, random selection, targeted demographic recruitment, and incentives. The most common recruitment mechanism is voluntary self-selection, where individuals personally decide whether to attend. While this approach is the easiest and least resource intensive, it also can be problematic. Those who show up are typically the "usual suspects"—either participants who care deeply about the

issue and are likely have strong positions on the matter, or those who are "more well-off—wealthy, educated, and professional—than the population from which they come" (Fung 2003, 342). As a result, voluntary self-selection may lead to participation bias, which can limit the identification and understanding of public values and values sets to those held by privileged groups.

The other mechanisms are designed to minimize participation bias, but are also more challenging and resource intensive. As the name implies, random selection involves inviting a group of participants picked by lot from the universe of eligible participants. Targeted demographic recruitment requires organizers to examine Census Bureau, standard metropolitan statistical area, and/or other data to determine the demographic profile of the community, and recruit participants who "mirror the general population" (Fung 2003, 342). The idea behind both of these mechanisms is to improve the representativeness of the participatory process, thereby increasing the likelihood that outcomes will have broad acceptability, credibility, and legitimacy. However, whether these recruitment mechanisms produce representativeness depends on whether the selected individuals agree to participate. To enhance the likelihood of agreement, the final recruitment mechanism uses "structural" or "material" incentives to remove the immediate barriers to participation. Although such incentives are often aimed at "low-status and low-income citizens," they can also be used for other groups who have less reason, time, or motivation to participate (Fung 2003, 342). Examples of such incentives include payment (e.g., per diem, honorarium, gift cards) or items convertible into monetary value (e.g., transportation, meals, child or elder care).

While none of these mechanisms is guaranteed to fully eliminate the participation bias found in voluntary self-selection, they are likely to "make participation more attractive to those who are ordinarily less likely to participate in politics" (Fung 2006, 67). Because they increase the likelihood of getting voices beyond the usual suspects, they are also likely to assist public administrators in identifying and understanding broader sets of public values. Accordingly, an eighth proposition is offered:

> **Proposition 8:** Recruitment strategies that seek to minimize participation bias are more likely than those using only voluntary self-selection to help administrators identify and understand the public values relevant to a given policy conflict.

Recurrence and Iteration
This design choice relates to how frequently a participatory process occurs, that is, whether it is a one-time event or a longer-term, ongoing endeavor. Fung's view on this issue is on target and worth quoting at length:

> The participatory democratic impulse is that more is better. But this intuition is incorrect, for the frequency of minipublic meetings should follow from their purpose. If a minipublic is convened to … form or ascertain public opinion on a nearly static issue … then one conclusive round … may be enough. Further rounds would be justified if new information surfaced or relevant conditions changed. Minipublics devoted to participatory problem solving or democratic governance should be convened more frequently, perhaps many

times per year, because their decisions must be frequently updated and because monitoring officials is an ongoing endeavor. (2003, 345)

Although decisions about recurrence and iteration should be made in light of the goals for the participatory process, given Fung's analysis, a final proposition is offered:

> **Proposition 9:** When public participation is being used for a complex policy issue, multiple participatory events are more likely than one-time endeavors to help administrators identify and understand the public values relevant to a given policy conflict.

In sum, the foregoing discussion suggests that choices about several participatory design elements impact the ability of public administrators to identify and understand the public values pertaining to a policy conflict. Specifically, the propositions suggest that for any given values-based policy conflict, participatory processes are more likely to help administrators identify and understand all of the relevant public values and values sets when they are designed to:

- Be interest-based
- Use deliberative communication modes
- Have moderate to high levels of shared decision authority
- Use small table formats with trained facilitators
- Provide informational materials
- Select participants from members of the public
- Use recruitment strategies that minimize participation bias
- Have more than one session

The conclusion of this article explores some potential directions for future research about public participation and values-based policy conflicts.

Conclusion
Public values are at the heart of public administration—they guide the field in accounting for public preferences and promoting the common good. However, they also produce recurring conflicts and "create dilemmas—situations without clear winners or easy answers—whose resolution is the major work of individual bureaucrats, administrative agencies, public administration scholars, and, for that matter, the public sector as a whole" (Buchanan and Millstone 1979, 280). While scholars have identified numerous mechanisms for reconciling values conflicts in organizations and networks, they have given less attention to resolving values-based policy conflicts and virtually no attention to the role of the public in such efforts. This is problematic for many reasons, including the ability of administrators to create public value and prevent public values failure.

To create public value, public managers must ensure that their work is of substantive value to the citizenry (Moore 1995) and make the correct decisions about the needs to be satisfied, the strategies to satisfy those needs, and the processes to produce and deliver services (Spano 2009). To prevent public values failure, public managers must ensure that there are adequate methods for identifying, communicating, and aggregating core public values (Bozeman 2007). Challenges arise, however, because in pluralistic societies,

individuals and groups often have competing perspectives about the public values that should guide policy decisions. Moreover, different people at different times and under different circumstances may have different ideas about what constitutes public value, and all perspectives cannot be satisfied. As a consequence, creating public value and preventing public values failure often depends on making difficult decisions and complex trade-offs among disparate public values. The current research on public values gives administrators little guidance about how to do this.

This article argues that the public has (or should have) a meaningful role in addressing values-based public policy controversies. Specifically, it suggests that public participation can serve as an effective methodology to help administrators understand, from the perspectives of citizens, what constitutes public value, what needs to happen to create public value and prevent public values failure, and what decisions need to be made about trade-offs to achieve these ends. However, public participation must be intentionally designed to serve these purposes.

> This article argues that the public has (or should have) a meaningful role in addressing values-based public policy controversies.

Accordingly, the article explores how choices about eight participatory design elements may maximize administrators' ability to identify and understand the relevant public values in a given policy conflict. The propositions suggest that participatory processes are more likely to help administrators in such efforts when they are designed to be interest based, use deliberative communication in a small table format with trained facilitators, have moderate to high levels of shared decision authority, provide informational materials, select participants from among members of the broader public, use recruitment strategies that minimize participation bias, and occur in more than one session.

There are numerous directions for future research. Most obviously, all of the propositions offered in the article are testable, and such testing offers hope for advancing both public values and public participation research. Given the growing number of participatory processes being used at all levels of government, researchers should be able to generate a wealth of data. However, for such research to commence, we need to create measures that assess administrators' ability to identify and understand public values. Developing such measures and indicators will be an important next step for scholars. In addition, it is important that scholars assess how other design choices influence the identification and understanding of public values. Possibilities include the use of online participatory mechanisms, the instruments and materials given to participants, and implementation issues such as logistics, venues, timing, honoraria and expenses, and reporting. Research should also explore these issues in the various contexts, settings, and policy areas where public participation is (or can be) used.

Similarly, this article focused only on how participatory design choices might aid administrators in identifying and understanding public values. But, as noted previously, identification and understanding are only the first hurdles in addressing values-based policy conflicts. Sometimes administrators must also rank, aggregate, or select among competing public values and connect those values to specific contexts for public action (Bozeman 2007). More theoretical and empirical work is needed to explore how public participation might assist administrators with these tasks.

In sum, we need more theory and research about how public participation can contribute to the creation of public value and the prevention of public values failure. Given the importance of these issues, it stands to reason that the citizenry should be involved in identifying what constitutes public value and what needs to happen to create public value, as well as in identifying, assessing, and selecting among competing public values in a given policy matter. Such research is particularly important given the copious policy challenges of our modern era.

Notes

1. Bozeman defines a value as "a complex and broad-based assessment of an object or set of objects (where the objects may be concrete, psychological, socially constructed, or a combination of all three) characterized by both cognitive and emotive elements, arrived at after some deliberation, and, because a value is part of the individual's definition of self, it is not easily changed and it has the potential to elicit action" (2007, 117).

2. Democratic theorists assert that public participation is also a stand-alone public value. They point to the normative or intrinsic value of democracy and participation, asserting that these are ends in themselves and should be judged as such regardless of other potential benefits (see, e.g., Shapiro 2003).

3. Until relatively recently, the primary concern about citizen participation focused on gaining and guaranteeing the rights of all citizens to vote for representation in government (Keyssar 2000). Once these rights were established, the focus shifted from an emphasis on "the representative nature of government" to an examination of "direct participation by the citizenry in day-to-day activities of the state" (Stewart 1976, 1).

4. Direct citizen participation is not simply an issue of normative desire; it is often a legal requirement. A host of legislation at all levels of government in the United States, as well as in other nations, mandates the use of citizen participation in public administration and policy making activities (Bingham 2010).

5. This discussion presents what amounts to a "rational model" of deliberation. In reality, deliberation is seldom so neat and structured because of emotional, values-based, and other nontechnical reactions to the issue(s) under consideration (Gastil 2005, 2008).

6. I have revised and adapted the IAP2 spectrum to overcome two important weaknesses. First, the original spectrum is organized along a continuum of "increasing levels of public impact." The term "public impact" presumes some kind of positive outcome, which is never guaranteed in any participatory process. Thus, the original spectrum improperly fuses an empirical scale of influence with normative approval. To address this issue, the revised spectrum follows a continuum of increasing levels of shared decision making authority between the organizer(s) and participants. This reduces the spectrum's normative overtones by suggesting that one level is not necessarily preferable to any other; any level of shared decision authority can be legitimate depending on the goals, time frames, resources, attitudes of the decision makers, interests of the stakeholders, and complexity of the issue, among other factors. Second, the spectrum fails to identify the communication modes used at each level. This is problematic because communication is related to cooperation. To address this issue, the revised continuum also displays the communication modes that are or can be used at various points. Finally, though it is not a problem here, the spectrum views public participation in terms of decision making; thus, it can be challenging to apply when there are