Practical Wisdom Through Deliberative Pedagogy: A Constructive Rhetorical Analysis

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Abstract: Deliberative pedagogy holds promise for improving democratic society by cultivating practical wisdom in students as a means to tackle the problems of democracy, such as polarization. This study embraced an opportunity to consider civic education in the 21st century through deliberative pedagogy by considering practical wisdom in a synchronous, virtual deliberation among university stakeholders and local political candidates concerning our role in 21st-century politics. This civic site enabled an analysis of practical wisdom across three student roles: facilitators enrolled in a deliberation course; students from the wider university; and student alumni of the university's deliberation center, who had been exposed to deliberation in curricular and cocurricular practice. Using a constructive rhetorical analysis to understand practical wisdom within deliberative pedagogy discourse, we contend that students in these three different roles demonstrated three key aspects of practical wisdom through their discursive responses to rhetorical exigences that arose during deliberative engagement. This analysis offers insights beyond outcomes and informs deeper thinking about curricula and better pedagogical practices. Additionally, such studies, focused on the discourse itself, contribute to understandings concerning the connection between rhetoric and deliberative pedagogy.

Keywords: deliberation, deliberative pedagogy, polarization, practical wisdom, phronesis, rhetoric, reasoning, constructive rhetorical analysis, facilitator, higher education.

Currently, we are witnessing problems both *in* democracy and *of* democracy (Matthews, 2014, p. xvii). Problems *in* democracy include some of the most pressing issues, such as health care disparities, poverty, and environmental decline. Problems *of* democracy, on the other hand, consist of the challenges to democracy itself, such as polarization, disengagement, and a lack of inclusion and transparent information. Scholarship on civic pedagogy recognizes the impact that civic education in higher education can have on students' political engagement and skills (e.g., Camp & Baugh, 2016). Within this scholarship, deliberative pedagogy is a framework that focuses on developing students' communication, analysis, and teamwork skills in an effort to prepare them to better participate in collaborative decision making (Longo et al., 2017). Deliberative pedagogy centers on skills and processes that enable making decisions with others across differences to address issues that have no clear answers and involve competing needs and values (Carcasson, 2017). We envision higher education as a democratic site where students practice making wise decisions with others. Deliberative pedagogy holds promise for improving democratic society by cultivating practical wisdom in students as a means to tackle the problems both *in* and *of* democracy.

By practical wisdom—or as Aristotle termed it, *phronesis*—we mean the capacity that enables individuals or a community to investigate, engage, and apply situational and contingent knowledge to community questions or concerns. In deliberative pedagogy, practical wisdom balances different types of evidence, promotes deliberative values and norms, and navigates the situational and contingent to provide new insights on what should be done. When applied in discourse settings, practical wisdom, as a mode of collaborative reasoning, offers a constructive approach to 21st-century democracy's challenges of incivility, civic engagement, and polarization.

Previous research has shown deliberative pedagogy to have a salutary impact on students as citizens, but few studies have examined deliberative pedagogy through students' discursive moves located in various deliberative contexts. Scholars have demonstrated that deliberative pedagogy develops student engagement (Colby et al., 2007; Lawrence & Bezette-Flores, 2019), increases civic action (Beaumont, 2013), fosters a sense of student agency (Johnson et al., 2014), helps students understand diverse perspectives in overlapping contexts (Doherty, 2012), combats political alienation among students (McMillan & Harriger, 2002), improves critical thinking and problem solving (Nelson-Hurwitz & Buchthal, 2019), correlates positively with voting (Thomas et al., 2019), helps students resist political polarization (Longo & Shaffer, 2019), and encourages a greater sense of urgency to become civically engaged (Drury et al., 2016, 2018; Harriger et al., 2015). Although many of the findings are promising for its practice, deliberative pedagogy scholarship has mostly focused analyses on observing and measuring deliberative outcomes. Deliberative pedagogy, however, would benefit from more varied, methodological perspectives that allow for an analysis of deliberative discourse itself (Drury et al., 2016; Lawrence & Bates, 2014). Gimenez and Molinari (2017) contributed one of the few studies that used a critical discourse analysis perspective on classroom deliberations to "assess power relations though language use" and the means by which a forum in the classroom helps transition it "from authoritarian to egalitarian" interactions between students and professor (p. 12). Their findings shed light on practices that build students' capacities for civic participation, but they also make visible the need for more examinations of deliberative pedagogy discourses, which constitute different contexts, inside and outside of the classroom, as well as varied student roles such as facilitator, participant, and observer.

This study embraced an opportunity to consider civic education in the 21st century through deliberative pedagogy by analyzing practical wisdom as found in a synchronous, virtual deliberation among university stakeholders and local political candidates. This civic site allowed us to analyze three aspects of practical wisdom in deliberative pedagogy, expressed in three student roles: a facilitator enrolled in a deliberation course; a student from the wider university; and an alumnus of the university's deliberation center (hereafter: Center alumnus), who had been exposed to deliberation in curricular and cocurricular practice. Using a constructive rhetorical analysis to understand practical wisdom within deliberative pedagogy, we contend that students demonstrated practical wisdom as their discursive responses to rhetorical exigences arose during deliberative engagement. This analysis informs deeper thinking about curricula and better pedagogical practices. Additionally, such studies, focused on the discourse itself, contribute to understandings concerning the connection between rhetoric and deliberative pedagogy.

In our Method section, we describe our case study, our analytic approach to constructive rhetorical analysis, and our analytic construct of practical wisdom. Next, we analyze three vignettes that demonstrate three key aspects of practical wisdom from students in deliberation. In the conclusion, we offer implications for and reflections on deliberative pedagogy.

Method

Case Description: "We the People" Deliberation

This case featured a "We the People" public deliberation, a biannual event that was held at an urban, commuter university and organized by a few college professors, a university deliberation center, and the Student Government Association (SGA). The forums are usually held face-to-face on campus, but because of COVID-19, they were held on a synchronous, virtual conference platform. To choose the topic, the SGA and deliberation center worked with students to consider their concerns. The deliberative forum held four stated goals: reimagining our civic spaces; connecting university

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stakeholders with political candidates; learning from others about our civic responsibilities; and considering actions participants might take.

The SGA worked with the deliberation center director to meet these goals and to create an issue guide and deliberation design. The final issue guide outlined the challenges to democracy, including dividedness and lack of trust. The guide introduced three approaches that everyday people might take in their communities to address these challenges of democracy by focusing on more immediate areas in their lives, such as family and jobs, electing the best leaders, or working with others. The guide followed the same structure as the National Issues Forums approach, which is commonly used in deliberative pedagogy (e.g., Johnson et al., 2014). The deliberation included five rounds: (1) an opening personal stake question, (2–4) a round of deliberation for each approach, and (5) a wrap-up, where participants developed a list of actions. Event organizers made a number of design choices to foster an interactive, deliberative experience, including training student deliberation facilitators, providing an issue guide, setting a structured agenda, and inviting former student alumni who had deliberation experience.

At this particular event, over 100 participants attended, including over a dozen local candidates, who met together online through web-conferencing software to deliberate this issue. Additionally, the event was attended by students enrolled in deliberation courses, students from the wider university, faculty, staff, administrators, and Center alumni. The forum organizers broke individuals up into breakout rooms (between 6 and 10 people) and diversified each group with a mixture of candidates, students, Center alumni, and other stakeholders.

Analytic Approach: Constructive Rhetorical Analysis

To analyze the deliberations,[1] we employed "constructive rhetorical analysis," an approach to textual analysis that discursively examines "new ways to work through … society's predicaments" rather than focus on discourse's limitations and "a steady stream of admonitions to 'avoid this'" (Zarefksy, 2014, p. 46) or assume, as do some approaches to criticism, that discourse "is only a cover for impersonal forces" (Zarefsky, 2014, p. 31). Rather, constructive rhetorical analysis positions rhetoric as a site where citizens are able to develop agency (Zarefsky, 2014). In this method, the interplay between text and context is fluid (Lawrence & Bates, 2014). Rhetorical acts are understood in the contexts of the discursive norms that inform political discourse sites but are also contextualized by the exigencies that are created by previous speaking turns. Our methodology provides a means to examine texts within these deliberative pedagogical contexts.

Our data are transcripts from one breakout room that was part of the 2-hr deliberation, which occurred among nine people in a small group, including local political candidates, students, Center alumni, and other university stakeholders. This particular transcript ("the text") was selected because it is a discursive site that is a radical departure from normalized campaign discourses. It is also a rhetorical site where students negotiated discourses within a larger political, institutional context of local elections and the U.S. political system. Within this text, we selected "exemplars of practice," which are instructive for improving deliberative pedagogy (Zarefsky, 2014, p. 30). These exemplars were selected because they represent three consecutive speaking turns, each held by students who

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[1] We secured Institutional Review Board approval for all participants and candidates who took part in this deliberation and obtained signed consent forms. All identifying information has been removed, including names of all university participants or candidates and districts that candidates may represent.

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occupied different student roles in the deliberation. These consecutive turns allow the critic to capitalize on the value of rhetorical analysis, which offers a means to examine a speaking turn as "text" in one moment and as a "context" in the next.

Analytic Construct: Practical Wisdom

Recognizing practical wisdom, popular in the pedagogy literature, provides an opportunity for educators to discuss a type of knowledge and capacity that is rarely recognized in higher education (Breier, 2009; Eisner, 2002; Graaff, 2004; Gustavsson, 2007; Kristjánsson, 2005; Lawrence & Bezette-Flores, 2019; Noel, 1999; Saugstad, 2005). In *Nicomachean Ethics,* Aristotle located practical wisdom in the realm of invention and defined it as "a true and reasoned state of capacity to act with regard to the things that are good or bad for man" (2009, p. 5). Aristotle differentiated practical wisdom from universal truths and general knowledge, or *episteme* (1947, 1141a4-7), resisting the idea that good decisions should rest on such universal knowledge, general theories, or rules. Instead, he posited that these types of universals must be used in conjunction with "particular knowledge," which is situational and contingent (Nussbaum, 1990).

Across its various definitions, practical wisdom is oriented toward central aspects that include descriptions of its conditions and its key aspects as a capacity. The conditions for practical wisdom describe the means by which it is acquired and the communication setting in which it is exercised. For instance, practical wisdom is cultivated through sustained experience and multiple experiences (Aristotle, 2009; Broadhead & Gregson, 2018; Dunne, 1993; Nussbaum, 2001). Additionally, practical wisdom is fostered within a wider community (Breier, 2009; Broadhead & Gregson, 2018) and through interaction with other people (Broadhead & Gregson, 2018; Gallagher, 2007). In small group deliberation, students hone three important aspects of practical wisdom, including their capacity to (1) consider their discursive moves as a means to elevate democratic norms; (2) engage and weigh tensions and trade-offs of possible solutions, for the purposes of good decision making; and (3) account for and adapt to expert discourses that emerge as a means to discern the evidence forms that are available.

Analysis: Practical Wisdom in Deliberation

This analysis will proceed by examining three consecutive, exemplar moments, featuring different and students who played different roles and held very different levels of deliberation experience, to consider more deeply three key aspects of practical wisdom. The first moment was a speaking turn that was taken by a student facilitator at the very end of the first round. For the facilitators, it was their first experience leading in a public setting, though they had participated in and facilitated deliberations in class that semester. The second discursive moment was navigated by a student participant who had never taken a course on deliberation nor attended a deliberation. The third and final turn was taken by a Center alumnus who had many prior experiences participating and facilitating. Though each of these students occupied individual discursive positionalities, faced divergent exigencies, and made different rhetorical moves, they all demonstrate different features of practical wisdom, including considering democratic decision-making norms, weighing trade-offs and tensions, and adapting to emergent discourses. We analyze, in each moment, how the students displayed capacities for practical wisdom to meet complex situational needs of deliberation.

Practical Wisdom Considers Democratic Decision-Making Norms

The first key aspect of practical wisdom is a capacity to evaluate positionality in decision making as a means to consider the best discursive choices for elevating democratic norms (Majdik & Keith, 2011,

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p. 376). For example, when acting as facilitator, the ability to determine strategies to navigate problematic distributions of power is especially important, as the positionality of a facilitator has a tremendous influence on the discursive norms (Clifton, 2016; Sprain & Reinig, 2018). Additionally, campaign election discourses are often imbued with rules for legitimacy that invite candidates to dominate discursive space to positively establish their qualifications and leadership experience (Stuckey & Antzcak, 1994). In essence, a student with honed practical wisdom makes rhetorical interventions only after they have considered various situational norms, such as whether they are facilitator or participant, their stake in the issue, and the norms that imbue a situation, such as rules about authority, speaking time and turns, and evidence.

In the first of the three turns, the student facilitator drew on verbal and nonverbal reasoning, invoking a metaphor reinforced with her choice of clothing, as a means to establish more democratic norms within the deliberation and to elevate the legitimacy and agency of the social perspectives of *all* the participants in the group, including her own democratic leadership, regardless of status:

> Thank you so much for sharing that with us. I appreciate everybody that was able to talk about the things that they're going through right now especially, with Covid and the struggles that we're all facing. *I wear my Batman onesie because today we're all superheroes, right?* I just wanted to bring a little bit of smiles into the chat with having a little bit of humor because I know things are serious.

She reinforced the value and difficulty of each participant's contribution and then, through metaphor, constructed a discursive comparison between all the participants and leaders in her group as "superheroes."

Metaphors are forms of reasoning that operate through discursive comparisons of two things that are not the same but have some similarities. As analogical reasoning, which Aristotle described as an important function of practical wisdom, metaphors reside in the domain of "everyday speech" and are not inherently imbued with norms of status or authority as are some other forms of evidence. Metaphors therefore can have tremendous influence on how one understands one's social and political reality (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Lawrence & Bates, 2014). How one utilizes a metaphor within a public deliberation is a critical consideration because one's "choice of wording" can create situational norms that "empower some at the expense of others" and affect the norms of interpersonal and intergroup power relations (Newton et al., 2020).

In comparing *all* the participants to superheroes, the facilitator's choice of wording highlights the empowerment that each participant should hold in a deliberative discussion where both local and expert knowledges are important to the decision but where norms may privilege the expert over the local. Superheroes, popularized in the 20th century, are figures in U.S. culture that "represent a set of timeless values," such as "their motivation to do good" and their "passion for justice" (Rogmagnoli and Pagnucci, 2013, p. 8). Additionally, although each superhero in the literature is certainly unique, Rogmagnoli and Pagnucci noted that their "powerful" nature is one characteristic that "all superheroes definitely have … in common" (2013, p. 11). The facilitator's use of a superhero metaphor was a wise choice to establish the democratic norms that were necessary for this discussion, because it underscored the power and agency that all participants held (not just the candidates) that would usually be associated with a superhero. As such, this move elevated the democratic norms of active agency and equality between all participants.

Additionally, her reference to her own clothing, a "Batman onesie," not only visually reinforced her metaphor but also disrupted antidemocratic, leader clothing norms and privileged deliberative norms of inclusiveness, equal empowerment, and agency. As the leader in the group, her nonverbal choice demonstrated that she had power and agency, but her metaphor indicated that her

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power and agency were no greater than anyone else's in the discussion. This equalized the uneven power distributions that generally occur between group leaders and participants. Her choice also worked to address the problem of how deliberative leaders can build legitimacy while simultaneously not elevating themselves as the expert on the discussion. Though the student facilitator's turn was the shortest of the three examined (facilitators generally do and should occupy less discursive space than participants), her rhetorical move demonstrated practical wisdom because it became a moment of creative intervention that recognized her role, the role of participants, and democratic norms.

This first turn was illustrative of how deliberative pedagogy, which seeks to develop students' practical wisdom, has implications for addressing polarization. If public decision making is occupied only by people considered experts, or if those who seek to speak or participate are not listened to because the processes do not include them, then people will get decisions about their policies that do not account for those who are not able give voice as to how the decisions being made affect their local, everyday realities. When policies do not take into consideration a diversity of perspectives, polarization happens between leaders and citizens (and also between citizens who occupy different perspectives); trust is eroded between all civic actors. By giving students opportunities to hone their practical wisdom and learn how to intervene in their environment for more democratic decisions, our pedagogies are more likely to play a role in creating a society where decisions are made in environments imbued with norms that value local expertise, different perspectives, and diverse expression. It behooves the critic to note, however, that developing one's practical wisdom does not mean creating and privileging processes that consider only local expertise or that suggest every person's perspective is equally valid. However, practical wisdom does hone an ability to make space for local experience and to consider this type of knowledge as a critical aspect of good decision making and an important component in creating less divided communities.

Practical Wisdom Weighs Trade-Offs and Tensions

Another key aspect of practical wisdom that emerges within deliberative pedagogy is a capacity to weigh trade-offs and tensions associated with various approaches to addressing wicked problems. This ability is demonstrated when participants in a deliberation "prioritize values in tension by articulating the trade-offs and benefits of choices," and ultimately work through to determine "preferred choices for the community" (Drury et al., 2017, p. 195.) In weighing these tensions together, a group must also grapple with the diverse ways in which different community members may be impacted by the various trade-offs of a particular solution. This sort of reasoning skill harkens back to Aristotle, who positioned an individual's access to multiple experiences as an important source for argument invention because it allows for a more nuanced and systemic understanding of the issue (Broadhead & Gregson, 2018). In weighing trade-offs and tensions, participants explore a range of possible options, evaluation, and ultimately, synthesize a preferred solution. The idea that "even the 'best' solution has tradeoffs" is a somewhat "new way of thinking," one rarely expressed in political discourse (Drury et al., 2016). Weighing trade-offs and tensions moves a deliberating group past the potential paralysis of "agree to disagree," as participants acknowledge potential trade-offs as needing to be accepted, managed, or transcended if they move forward with a preferred action. This process encourages the engagement of diverse perspectives and the consideration of new, creative possibilities that account for these different standpoints, while also recognizing that there is no perfect solution to difficult issues. As students develop the capacity to engage, weigh, and work through tensions, they develop practical wisdom.

During the next part of the deliberation, a student participant demonstrated practical wisdom by sharing her own experience as a means to support her position, identifying a trade-off inherent in her own position, and encouraging a greater working through of tensions by others who occupied

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different standpoints from her own. In this section, the facilitator introduced the option for discussion, and the student participant volunteered to speak first (also demonstrating a disruption of discursive rules regarding participant status):

> For me, for option one, I do like how they say, "Work hard to earn money in order to take care of self and family, buy responsibly, and donate." I do agree with that. I have 22 nieces and nephews that are all younger than me, and [that's] one of the big things that I have to try to teach them. My nephew will work an 80-hour check and go spend it all on one pair of shoes. On a designer pair of shoes. When important things come up in life, doctor's appointments, the phone bill is due, he has to pay his portion of the rent then, he's calling around or in a group message, "Hey, can someone borrow me $100? Can someone borrow me $50?" And it's things like that that if we were to focus on making sure that we took care of the necessities, and priorities first, and we used the additional money on leisure when it was available that would definitely help. With that, one of the drawbacks is we aren't working as a community.

The student began by drawing attention to a preferred action that was contained within the first option presented for discussion, namely, "work hard to earn money in order to take care" of family and community. She highlighted the need for people to take responsibility in their own personal circles, by drawing on her own experience and described the teaching role she occupies with her 22 nieces and nephews. The student then went on to offer a concrete example of a difference between her and her nephew concerning managing money. With her example, the student established her own perspective on the issue as a means to argue the civic need for her active role in her family and the impact she has on their financial well-being. However, she did not stop at simply arguing for her own perspective but also identified the trade-off in her own position, admitting that it lacked a connection with the wider community outside of her personal sphere. By acknowledging this tension, the student contributed to a more complex discussion and opened a discursive space for the weighing of pluralistic values and experiences in the consideration of various tensions.

Her subsequent comments focused on the tension around caring for a more intimate community (family in her personal sphere) versus caring for a broader common good (in the public sphere):

> But I do feel like we can incorporate community into that because there are a lot of resources out there that do help you with budgeting and learning how to budget, and things like that. [If] it was somebody in my family that was struggling, like with my nieces and nephews, I direct them, "You know, you guys can go to our resource centers in town to learn how to budget where you can still maybe afford some of those nice things," but also, still put up a little bit of money for those hard times. Or for those situations that we don't expect.

In this turn, the student transcended the tension of personal versus public by prioritizing the agency of everyday people in her own family while also articulating how this role might be better served by a connection with a wider community.

In addition, the student's comments also introduced another tension into the deliberation. The student's discourse around personal versus public expanded the group's collaborative reasoning to include a second tension around civic agency in the public sphere. For this student, the public sphere is a place where she can "consume" resources, but it is not necessarily a place where she is empowered to create change. As such, her turn became a foundation for future weighing of tensions, including the tension around whether citizens' agency is most impactful in the personal sphere or whether the power of their agency should extend to the public sphere. For example, later in the discussion, a

candidate participant engaged this second tension by encouraging greater agency in individual community members to hold their elected officials accountable:

> While this [working with our families] is vitally important, and we have to be working with our communities and with our people, [we] cannot do that at the exclusion of being engaged in the political process. … If you don't have a seat at the table you are on the menu.

The student's capacity to weigh tensions also became an important turn in the group's consideration of more active versus passive roles for citizens in our democracy and thereby, as others continued to expand on this tension, contributed to a discursive facilitation of a wider civic community.

Weighing trade-offs and tensions during deliberation diffuses polarization because it encourages participants to acknowledge the complexity of the issue their community faces, the diverse perspectives embedded in it, and the different sacrifices that others may have to accept in the adoption of a particular direction. When issues are not reduced to "good versus evil" frames and instead offer space to grapple with trade-offs, polarizing activities, such as demonizing and either–or solutions, are much less likely. We saw this with the different considerations of the student, who demonstrated how she thought she could be most active in her community, and the candidate, who offered a very different notion of active citizenship. However, because the student could acknowledge the inherent tensions in her own views, it made for a discussion that was much more open to the incorporation of different views, instead of contributing to a framework that pitted perspectives against one another. In fact, near the end of the deliberation, this same student proposed that she believed she could be most impactful as a citizen by using her role as teacher in her own family to teach about voting and educate them about civics. Rather than default to zero-sum solutions, the capacity to weigh trade-offs and tensions to work toward preferred solutions creates a more likely space where participants will engage in connection and consideration with those who are different and occupy different orientations toward a community problem.

Practical Wisdom Adapts to Emergent Discourses in Deliberation

Practical wisdom also emerges through deliberation by interlocutors accounting for and adapting to discourses that emerge in the discussion. While some elements of these discourses may be predictable and learned through education in general communication principles, the specific variation of those discourses is contingent on how the deliberation unfolds. Being able to adapt to situational discourses is especially important as dominant discourses emerge that threaten to shut out alternative viewpoints. For example, one potentially dominant strand in deliberations is the "institutional expertise discourses" that derive both from persons having official positions in organizations, government, or fields and from the discourse used to indirectly establish expertise within a deliberation, such as answering questions or using technical language (Sprain & Reinig, 2018, pp. 361–362). Expertise is important for deliberation, but practitioners and scholars have also recognized that incorporating expert perspectives into a deliberative democratic process can threaten to close off rather than open up discussion (Sprain et al., 2014).

Immediately following the conversation turns from the previous section, the next two speaking turns were taken by two different political candidates, who both chose to draw upon institutional expertise discourses to legitimize their social perspectives. In so doing, they created a sudden, challenging rhetorical exigency. Although this analysis is focused on student speech turns in the context of practical wisdom, we felt it important to briefly describe the next two candidate leader turns, as they provide a necessary context for analysis.

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Both candidates used their conversational turns to note their elected titles and how long they have been active in politics. Their framing is notable, as up until this moment for this round, participants were not trying to establish institutional expertise. Both candidates recommended students be politically engaged by contacting their elected representatives and advocating to them directly. Their turns ultimately invited the consecutive participants into a different rhetorical moment. References to institutional expertise, intentionally or not, elevated their judgments as comparatively more informed than other discussants.

The Center alumnus, whose turn followed next, responded in a challenging, rhetorical moment and adapted the same institutional expertise discourse as the candidates in a subtle counterpoint to their preferred course of action. This subtle form of disagreement is not uncommon in deliberation, as interlocutors often disagree in covert rather than overt ways (Black, 2012). In this case, emphasizing his experienced leadership, the alumnus started:

> I'll be as brief as possible. Yeah, so, I actually read David Brooks's book *The Second Mountain*, in leadership. I actually presented on the book, and as I understand the concept very well, but his idea is you can only have micro-impact in your immediate sphere which is the idea behind it.

He moved to contextualize his reasoning by discursively constructing his social perspective as an experienced leader. He quoted an authoritative source on leadership and mentioned that he not only understands it well but has also presented on it. He developed his claim:

> I do believe that you can have the most impact in your immediate community. In your social circles in the place that you live so, you are exposed to strangers in your own neighborhood and in the places whether it be your place of worship, the school. Whatever cause you take up or groups you may belong to you have a leadership role there. You could be the most excellent civic leader in those spaces. It seems to be a very good option. I do agree with option one, and I think the micro-impact, and intentionally planting roots in your community, and showing leadership there is a critical thing for everybody to strive to do. I yield my time. Thank you.

At first glance, this might not seem to be practical wisdom, as he was drawing on institutional expert discourses that involve certain formal rules. However, this turn, in fact, displayed practical wisdom reasoning by demonstrating a flexible relationship between general and particular and making the best rhetorical choice available to him in the unforeseen moment. He navigated the implicit standards of legitimacy established by the previous two candidates' speaking turns (framing himself as an experienced leader) to present his particular social perspective (his value of "micro-impacts" and everyday people as "citizen leaders") that diverged from the candidates' emphasis on political empowerment through elected officials. He drew on an institutional expertise discourse as a means to bolster his perspective, which beyond discussing the presentation of the book, is even apparent in his word choice, "I yield my time." Wording such as this connotes formal, discursive rules, often heard by senate leaders during hearings. However, his adoption of these types of leader discourses was also an enactment of the argument he made, that people in whatever groups to which they "may belong … have a leadership role there."

The practice of adapting to the discourses of a political interlocutor is not only a good persuasive strategy but also a deliberative virtue that can work to counter polarization. As other scholars have argued (Allen, 2004; Farrell, 1993), rhetoric directed at an audience, especially one that disagrees, reaffirms the judgment and perspective of that situated audience and can build trust. This is especially important for building connections among ordinary citizens and political figures or other

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types of experts. A rhetor, adapting in a deliberation to someone who disagrees, must account for the alternative perspective of their interlocutor to make an effective rhetorical appeal. Among like-minded groups, a convergence of discourses might signal the group's trend toward more extreme positions, becoming a type of enclave process that fuels polarization (Landemore & Mercier, 2012). However, the alumnus in this case adapted discourse to a specific audience in order to disagree and open up the deliberation to divergent perspectives.

At the same time, this exercise of practical wisdom has drawbacks. Adaptation, as a rhetorical maneuver, can provide empowerment within a discussion but not emancipation; that is, it helps a deliberator adapt to a dominant discourse without necessarily challenging the premises underlying that discourse. In addition, it is a fine line between opening space for nonexperts to contribute and flattening distinctions between interlocutors to the point that expertise requires no deference.

Implications for Deliberative Pedagogy, Practical Wisdom, and Rhetoric

Deliberative democracy has responded to problems of democracy, such as polarization (see McAvoy & Hess, 2013), by fostering an egalitarian space for discourse where students and other participants can engage in civic discussion and consider diverse perspectives. This analysis demonstrates that beyond the classroom setting, deliberative pedagogy has the potential to impact more traditional, political settings and actors.

In analyzing exemplar moments through constructive rhetorical analysis, we inform deliberative pedagogy by providing understanding and needed narratives of how practical wisdom is displayed in deliberation. Our examination reveals how students in deliberations display practical wisdom through utilizing language in their weighing of tensions, elevation of democratic norms, and adoption of different discourses to construct their social perspectives as legitimate. (Newton et al., 2020). In so doing, we answer Zarefsky's (2014) call to engage in the act of constructive analysis for the purposes of contributing to the teaching of democracy in an increasingly polarized world.

Our argument echoes that of Longo (2013), that *how* and *where* teaching happens is as important as *what* is taught. These types of public deliberation spaces, after all, provide high-impact experiences that facilitate learning outside of the classroom and have a life-changing impact (Kuh, 2008; Lawrence & Bezzette-Flores, 2019). Furthermore, the analysis of the selected practical wisdom moments also demonstrates how experiences that bring students at different levels (first-time participant not in a deliberation course, first-time facilitator enrolled in the course, experienced facilitator who is an alumnus of the university's deliberation center) together in the same space can cultivate respect for the types of reasoning students at all levels offer for our public decision making. Classrooms can provide spaces for students to learn key concepts and principles of democratic deliberation, but they need to be complemented by first-hand experiences in public deliberation outside of the classroom for students to hone needed skills and attitudes.

Practical wisdom challenges us to consider our pedagogical goals not only in terms of the means by which students develop their critical thinking skills but also by which they foster public judgment. By presenting varied ways for students to deliberate, we better prepare them to examine how diverse perspectives play a role in constructing the social world. Deliberative processes can frame solutions in a way that fuels polarization, as one side "wins" the argument and the other side "loses," or they can encourage creative solutions across differences in how people address public problems. In essence, a focus on practical wisdom in deliberative pedagogy is a means to recognize a diverse range of perspectives, and the forms that legitimize them, in particular situations, for the purposes of developing public judgment in decision making.

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