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DELIBERATIVE AND PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY? IDEOLOGICAL STRENGTH AND THE PROCESSES LEADING FROM DELIBERATION TO POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT

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ABSTRACT

We draw on a nationally representative sample of American adults who reported having participated in face-to-face deliberation ($N = 756$). We use structural equation modeling to first ask whether perceived political diversity differently influences follow-up engagement in various civic or political activities among strong, weak, and moderate ideologues. We also examine the *processes*—cognitive and affective—that lead from perceived diversity to follow-up engagement, and assess whether these processes depend on ideological strength. We find that follow-up political engagement among strong ideologues is primarily affected by their prior civic and political participation. Weak ideologues, in turn, are mobilized through cognitive reactions to perceived diversity, and moderates through affective reactions. Our results add to the debate on deliberative versus participatory democracy, suggesting that research should more closely attend to individual characteristics and underlying mechanisms.

Increased political participation is claimed to be one among many contributions that political talk and citizen-to-citizen deliberation bring to society

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(*e.g.*, Fishkin, 1995). Some scholars go so far as saying that conversation is "the elementary building block of participatory democracy" (Katz, 1994, p. 30) and propose including political discussion alongside voting, volunteering, or donating money to candidates (Delli Carpini, Cook, & Jacobs, 2004). Others conversely argue that exposure to dissimilar views, which happens during interpersonal talk and which deliberation should entail, may decrease citizen participation in the democratic process. Those researchers note that deliberative and participatory democracy may be mutually exclusive (Mutz, 2006). Empirical evidence exists to support both claims and the debate is still unresolved.

Although various explanations for these inconsistencies have been proposed, extant research has not closely addressed two pertinent factors. For one, insufficiently scrutinized is the role that such individual characteristics as ideological strength play in influencing the association between exposure to dissimilar views and political participation. In addition, under-analyzed are the mechanisms—affective or cognitive—that underlie this association. This study addresses both issues. We aim to inform the debate on deliberative versus participatory democracy by focusing on citizen-to-citizen political discussions which occur in "real life" and which meet some requirements to be considered deliberative. We draw on a representative sample of American adults who report having attended a formal or informal face-to-face meeting to discuss a local, national, or international issue with other citizens.[1] We additionally ask respondents about how diverse were the views expressed in the last meeting they attended, using perceived political diversity as a proxy for encountering dissimilar perspectives.[2]

We use these data to first ask whether diversity perceived in a deliberative forum differently influences follow-up engagement in various civic or political activities among strong, weak, and moderate ideologues. We also take the next step and examine the *processes* that lead from perceived diversity to follow-up engagement and assess whether these processes depend on ideological strength. Specifically, we use structural equation modeling to test whether follow-up political engagement among strong, weak, and moderate ideologues is primarily affected by their reported cognitive reactions to

[1]The survey was conducted as part of a research project funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts and led by Professors Lawrence Jacobs, Fay Lomax Cook, & Michael X. Delli Carpini (2009). We are grateful to these researchers for giving us access to the survey data.

[2]Studies that inform the debate on deliberative versus participatory democracy conceptualize disagreement and exposure to dissimilarity in myriad ways, such as talking politics with people who hold opposing views (Mutz, 2002), are politically as well as demographically diverse (Scheufele, Nisbet, Brossard, & Nisbet, 2004), express two conflicting candidate preferences (Nir, 2005) or belong to social categories traditionally associated with the Republicans or the Democrats (*e.g.*, a white collar Catholic) (Lazarsfeld, Berelson, & Gaudet, 1948). Although our measure may not directly tap exposure to dissimilar views, it is not as conceptually distinct as some other measures, especially that hearing diverse views naturally entails hearing some views with which one disagrees.

political diversity, such as increased understanding, or rather by their reported affective reactions, such as anger, anxiety, or enthusiasm.

Assessing these issues is important for several reasons. First, accounting for the role that ideological strength and cognitive and affective reactions to diversity play in political participation may help to explain the complexities apparent in earlier research. Second, although various individual characteristic might be important in the process, understanding the role that ideological strength plays in encouraging or discouraging participation takes on particular significance in a sociopolitical climate that is increasingly polarized among political ideologues and party activists (Evans, 2003; Fiorina, Abrams, & Pope, 2005). Finally, assessing the interactions between ideological strength and political diversity, and also accounting for the underlying cognitive and affective processes may contribute an analytic framework that integrates various factors that influence citizen participation in the democratic process.

DELIBERATIVE VERSUS PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY?

The debate as to whether deliberation, political talk, and exposure to dissimilar views encourage or discourage political participation is largely inconclusive. Research that informs this debate analyzes various discursive engagements, from formal deliberation, public discussion, and casual talk to cross-cutting networks. Some studies focus on facilitated citizen-to-citizen deliberations that provide informational materials and emphasize civility, equal participation, and attention to dissimilar views. Such formal deliberation heightens participation. Jury deliberators were more likely to vote (Gastil, Deess, & Weise, 2002), citizens who joined deliberative polls (Fishkin, 1995) and the National Issues Forums (Gastil, 2000) became more politically active, and participants in structured and moderated online debates were more likely to engage in community activities than nonparticipants (Price & Cappella, 2002). Deliberation may also enhance issue-specific participation. Citizens who debated social security intended to lobby officials and express their views more than those who did not debate (Cook, Delli Carpini, & Jacobs 2003), and participants in debates about peace and social justice reported increased volunteering and donating money to organizations that advocate for these issues (Wuthnow, 1994).

Admittedly, deliberation that meets the many theoretical criteria happens rarely and mostly in settings that "are artificially or experimentally constructed for ordinary citizens (Searing, Conover, & Crewe, 2007, p. 589). Many scholars thus follow the approach taken by early theorists (Dewey, 1927) and analyze political discussions among actual citizens in real-world contexts, discussions that also entail multiple views and public-spirited reasoning. Those scholars also scrutinize casual political conversations that

"are spontaneous, unstructured and without clear goals" and that occur in private as well as in relatively public settings (Conover, Searing, & Crewe, 2002, p. 24). Such discursive engagements also promote participation. Extended political discussion at work, cafes, school boards, or town hall meetings (Conover *et al.*, 2002; Searing, Solt, Conover, & Crewe, 2007) as well as political talk at work, church, and volunteer groups enhance political and civic engagement (Scheufele, Nisbet, M., Brossard, & Nisbet, E., 2004; Scheufele, Hardy, Brossard, Waismel-Manor, & Nisbet, E., 2006). Even casual conversations about national, local, and neighborhood affairs with friends, family, and acquaintances generate participation (Scheufele, 2000), and it is such an ordinary talk, rather than willingness to argue, that matters more to promoting participatory goals (Wyatt, Kim, & Katz, 2000).

Despite these benefits, found by analyzing the aggregate effects produced by deliberation and political talk, some scholars argue that deliberative and participatory democracy may be mutually exclusive (Mutz, 2006). This is because in order to be deliberative, a discussion should focus on "political alternatives" (Berelson, 1952, p. 323) and expose people to dissimilar perspectives (Mutz, 2008; Thompson, 2008). Such exposure, in turn, could pull citizens away from the democratic process. Evidence for this demobilization mostly comes from survey reports on interpersonal discussion networks and is again largely inconclusive. Some scholars find that cross-cutting exposure—or talking politics with friends, family, or acquaintances who prefer an opposing candidate, vote for a different party, and hold dissimilar opinions—is related to late voting decisions and lower political activity (Mutz, 2002, 2006; McClurg, 2006). Yet others show that network heterogeneity, conceived more broadly as reported discussions with fellow citizens who are different by age, gender, ethnicity, and party or ideology, is associated with greater traditional and nontraditional participation (McLeod, Scheufele, Moy, Horowitz, Holbert, Zhang, Zubrick, & Zubric, 1999; Scheufele *et al.*, 2006), directly as well as through enhanced knowledge and news media use (Scheufele *et al.*, 2004). In turn, studies that focus on cross-pressures show that conflict among political and sociodemographic factors that may simultaneously pull a voter toward the Republicans and the Democrats is related to delayed voting decision (Lazarsfeld, Berelson, & Gaudet, 1948). Yet research on network ambivalence (Nir, 2005) and disagreement within a network (Huckfeldt, Mendez, & Osborn, 2004) finds that exposure to conflicting candidate preferences and talking politics with people who support different candidates do not predict voting and vote decision timing.

Role of Ideological Strength

How do we reconcile these findings? On the one hand, deliberation with diverse groups and political talk with friends, family, co-workers, or acquaintances are seen to promote citizen engagement. On the other hand,

encountering dissimilar views could pull citizens away from the democratic process. Recognizing that there may be many explanations for these inconsistencies, we propose to account for individual characteristics. Some scholars note that "variables like opinion perceptions, group membership, media use, or interpersonal discussion" may "have an influence on political participation that will only emerge if it is examined for different subgroups" (Scheufele & Eveland, 2001, p. 42), underscoring the need to test whether individual factors affect the extent to which political dissimilarity promotes participatory goals.

Although various characteristics are theoretically and practically relevant in the analyzed context, such as opinion extremity, ego-involvement, or political interest, we focus on ideological strength, defined traditionally as identifying oneself as strongly conservative or strongly liberal. We make this decision not because it is the only or the most central factor; rather ideological strength is related to the other characteristics and also plays a central role in the current sociopolitical climate. Because polarization is especially pronounced along ideological lines and among political activists (Evans, 2003; Fiorina *et al.*, 2005), ideology is a salient factor to study in general. Because polarization may further increase when strong views are disproportionately represented in the democratic process (Abramowitz & Saunders, 2005), it is particularly important to assess whether strong ideologues are mobilized or demobilized by political dissimilarity.

Public opinion scholarship suggests that such dissimilarity may be inconsequential for strongly opinionated citizens while it may turn moderates away from political engagement. Ideological extremity and attitude strength predict participation and willingness to express opinions publicly and such related factors as opinion intensity or issue involvement influence individual reactions to oppositional opinion climate (Scheufele & Eveland, 2001). That is, the influence exerted by opinion climate on political participation is lower among those with firm views and strong candidate preferences (Kaplowitz, Fink, D'Alessio, & Armstrong, 1983; Krassa, 1988; Lasorsa, 1991). People with strong views are also willing to express their preferences in unfavorable circumstances (*e.g.,* Noelle-Neumann, 1993; Horner, Conners, & Daves, 1999), perhaps because partisanship strength and political interest are negatively related to conflict avoidance (Ulbig & Funk, 1999).

In fact, unfavorable opinion climate or—by extension—exposure to dissimilar views can mobilize strongly opinionated individuals. Voters with strong candidate preferences increase financial contributions when public support for their candidate declines, whereas those with weak preferences follow majority opinion and decrease their donations (Mutz, 1995, 1998). Similarly, when perceiving themselves to be in the minority, voters with strong preferences publicly voice their views while those not strongly committed to any candidate withdraw from political activities (Scheufele & Eveland, 2001). Furthermore, nonambivalent people who face cross-pressures in their discussion networks

form their voting decisions earlier than those whose networks do not offer competing candidate preferences (Nir, 2005).

Underlying Mechanism: Cognitive And Affective Reactions

Resolving whether deliberation and political dissimilarity promote or thwart participation is crucial. Testing whether these factors mobilize some citizens and demobilize others is also important. Focusing on the processes underlying participation and analyzing whether they depend on ideological strength might further explain some inconsistencies in extant research.

There might be two interrelated routes through which exposure to dissimilar views affects participation (Mutz, 2002). First, such exposure elicits cognitive reactions. Theorists argue that political discussion that entails diverse views encourages "enlarged mentality" (Arendt, 1968, p. 241) and "enlightened understanding" (Dahl, 1989, p. 105), which are to stimulate citizen engagement. Research indeed finds that deliberation, heterogeneous discussion networks and exposure to opposing views enhance learning, interest, and attention (*e.g.,* Gastil & Dillard, 1999; McLeod *et al.*, 1999), increase elaboration and reflection (Eveland, 2004), and stimulate information seeking (*e.g.,* Scheufele *et al.*, 2006). Other cognitive benefits include knowledge gain (*e.g.,* Barabas, 2004) and familiarity with opposing opinions (Mutz, 2002; Price, Cappella, & Nir, 2002). Because these gains are precursors to participation, encountering dissimilar views during deliberation could mobilize citizens by increasing their understanding.

There is a second, affective, route whereby exposure to dissimilar views could influence participation. Research on reactions to political talk finds that whereas civil and like-minded conversation is seen as pleasant, politics *is* "controversial, and controversiality, while it may encourage interest, also has the potential interpersonal consequences which may foster political inactivity" (Rosenberg, 1954, p. 354). Argumentative discussions may thus threaten participants or leave them fearing disapproval or marginalization (Conover *et al.*, 2002; Wyatt, Katz, Levinsohn, & Al-Haj, 1996).

Studies that focus specifically on exposure to counter-attitudinal views further show that people react with negative affect to such views. Danger-laden messages featuring disliked groups induce anxiety, attack commercials against one's preferred candidate make viewers upset and distressed (Marcus, Neuman, & MacKuen, 2000), and information that challenges individual views on personally important topics elicits irritation (*e.g.,* Zuwerink & Devine, 1996). Affect evoked by dissimilar views may, in turn, influence behavior. Research on message-triggered emotions suggests that anger is an energizer (Nabi, 1999) and studies on emotions toward political issues find that both anxiety and enthusiasm mobilize citizens, in that those who are enthusiastic or

anxious about campaigns are more interested, attentive, and active (Marcus *et al.*, 2000). Social movement studies, which scrutinize emotions toward oppositional actors, further show that anger at perceived injustice stimulates action (Mansbridge & Morris, 2001).

This review indicates that whether deliberation, discussion, and political dissimilarity encourage or discourage participation depends on ideological strength and on the elicited cognitive and affective reactions. Extending this notion, scholarship on political ideology and cognitive complexity suggests that the extent to which cognitive and affective routes are activated depends on political sophistication, complexity, and involvement, factors linked to ideological strength.

Strong ideologues are likely to process dissimilar views cognitively. Survey research on partisan attitudes among the mass public suggests that highly involved citizens may have the "mass of stored information about politics" (Converse, 1962, p. 583) and the integrated and differentiated opinions that make them prepared to absorb contextual information and notice nuanced connections between their views and the incoming messages (Converse, 1964; Zaller, 1992). As further indicated by experiments on attitude change, able and motivated people process messages systematically, scrutinizing arguments or anchoring them in prior knowledge (Petty & Caccioppo, 1990). Inasmuch as involvement, ability and motivation to attend to political messages are related to ideological commitment, exposure to dissimilar views would evoke cognitive reactions among strong ideologues, enhancing their understanding and ultimately influencing participation. Research sheds some light on these notions, finding that while exposure to oppositional views may decrease participation by inducing ambivalence and making people question their own positions (Mutz, 2002), this effect does not occur among people who are nonambivalent to start with (Nir, 2005). Because strong ideologues are not likely to be internally conflicted, they may successfully integrate conflicting information gauged during deliberation into existing cognitive structures.

Moderates and weak ideologues could react affectively to dissimilar views. Research on information processing shows that relatively uninformed or unmotivated citizens process complex considerations by relying on heuristics or peripheral cues, such as message features or emotional reactions (Petty & Caccioppo, 1990). Consequently, according to the memory-based processing model, those citizens react to information based on immediate judgments, feelings or evaluations (*e.g.,* Clore, 1992). Again, inasmuch as people with weaker ideological leanings are less informed and/or motivated, political participation among moderates and weak ideologues would be influenced by their affective reactions to dissimilar views. Indirectly speaking to this notion, studies find that people embedded in diverse networks withdraw from politics because they fear social isolation and risking their relationships, reactions

that stem from conflict avoidance (Mutz, 2002). Because strong ideologues are less conflict avoidant, they would not respond with such negative affect to dissimilar views.

At the same time, some evidence suggests that strong ideologues who assign the highest priority to a single value may have less differentiated and integrated beliefs than the less committed citizens, and may thus be unable to make the nuanced connections among ideas (Tetlock, 1983). In contrast, those with weaker ideological attachments—whose attitudes may be more complex (*e.g.,* Linville, 1982)—would engage in the cognitive effort necessary to weight and incorporate competing interests. Also, inasmuch as ideological self-identification is affectively based, strong ideologues may evaluate messages based on a likability heuristic that is simply rooted in people's affect towards political groups (Brady & Sniderman, 1985). It is also plausible that strong ideologues, by recognizing dissimilar views as inconsistent with their values, would have strong affective responses to these messages.

To sum up, the effects that exposure to dissimilar perspectives has on political participation are likely affected by the strength with which citizens hold their ideological convictions. In addition, whether or not such exposure encourages or discourages participation may depend on affective and cognitive reactions it elicits. Through which route dissimilar views are processed to impact political participation may also depend on ideological strength. The overall process, however, is not clear. We thus propose the following research question: What is the mechanism—whether primarily cognitive or affective—that leads strong, weak, and moderate ideologues from perceiving diverse perspectives in a deliberative setting to engagement in follow-up charitable, civic, or political actions?

METHOD

We address the debate on deliberative versus participatory democracy by analyzing discursive engagements that fall in between formal deliberations and everyday political discussion and by also accounting for exposure to viewpoint diversity which likely entails exposure to some dissimilar opinions. We draw on cross-sectional data from a nationally representative sample of American adults age 18 and over (see Appendix A). The survey, which was conducted by the Center for Research and Analysis at the Roper Center at the University of Connecticut, was part of a larger project on public deliberation. The telephone survey consisted of a Random Digit Dial nationally representative sample of 1,001 adult respondents, and an over sample ($n = 500$) of those who reported having attended a formal or informal meeting to discuss a local, national, or international public issue. Interviewing took place between February 10 and March 23, 2003. Using AAPOR calculation RR3, the

response rate is 43 percent for the general population survey and 46 percent for the oversample.

Measures

Participating in deliberative forums. The survey first asked: "Since the beginning of last year, have you attended a formal or informal meeting organized by yourself, by someone else you know personally, or by a religious, social, civic, governmental, or political group to specifically discuss a local, national, or international issue—for example, neighborhood crime, housing, schools, social security, election reform, terrorism, global warming, or any other public issue that affects people?" Those respondents who took part in such face-to-face meetings ($N = 756$) constitute the final sample for our analyses. All the subsequent questions were asked about the last meeting that the respondents attended.

Although these meetings may not have met all the requirements to be considered deliberation in the strictest use of the term, they approximated at least some. First, deliberation has to be public. A solid majority of the analyzed meetings were held in such public spaces as educational or religious facilities and government buildings. The discussed topics were also public in nature, ranging from international issues through economy to social welfare. In a related vein, deliberation needs to be publicly motivated. In fact, the two most frequently reported motivations for attending related to the issue affecting others and to a duty as a citizen or a community member. Third, deliberation should inform participants. Respondents indeed noted that teaching people about the issue was an important goal of the forum they attended. Most meetings provided reading materials that explained the issue and many had a neutral expert who helped educate participants. Furthermore, deliberations should be moderated to assure that the various procedures are followed. In fact, the meetings were—for the most part—facilitated, and the moderators were neutral and balanced. Finally, deliberation should not be coercive and the meetings in which respondents reported participating were not (facilitators did not try to convince people to a specific view, but rather made sure that everyone's opinions were heard, differences aired and diverse views discussed; also respondents overwhelmingly agreed with the decision that was reached). All in all, the meetings that we analyze fulfilled many deliberative requirements while also being forums that may actually occur and in which citizens may naturally engage during their everyday lives (for details, see Jacobs, Cook, & Delli Carpini, 2009).

Perceived diversity. Because we cannot be confident that the last deliberation entailed a wide range of political perspectives, the survey also assessed whether other participants expressed diverse opinions. Respondents were

asked: "Using a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 is 'not diverse at all' and 10 is 'very diverse,' how diverse were the points of view expressed during the meeting?" ($M = 5.11$, $SD = 2.94$). It is important to note that this measure captures the perceived, not necessarily the actual, political diversity. We use this measure as a proxy for exposure to dissimilar opinions, and discuss the potential shortcomings later.

Cognitive reactions. To assess respondents' understanding of the dissimilar perspectives, the questionnaire first probed: "On a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 is 'not often at all' and ten is 'very often,' please tell me how often you felt the following ways during the last meeting you attended." The questionnaire then assessed how often respondents felt "more understanding of different viewpoints" ($M = 6.16$, $SD = 2.70$).

Affective reactions. Following the same prompt and on the same scale from 0 ("not often at all") to 10 ("very often") respondents were asked to indicate how often they felt angry ($M = 2.85$, $SD = 3.03$), enthusiastic ($M = 6.65$, $SD = 2.58$), and anxious ($M = 3.75$, $SD = 3.28$) at the last deliberative meeting they attended.

Engagement in follow-up actions. The central outcome measure, engagement in follow-up political actions, was assessed by probing: "People sometimes follow up their participation in public meetings with other kinds of activities intended to address the problem that was discussed. Have you engaged in any charitable, civic or political activities as a direct result of the last meeting you attended about a public issue?" Value 1 was assigned for an affirmative response. Overall, 33 percent of the respondents reported engaging in some follow-up actions.

Ideological strength. Our central moderating variable, ideological strength was measured by asking respondents whether they consider themselves liberal, moderate, or conservative, and probing whether they were "strong" or "not so strong" conservatives or liberals. The measure ranged from 1 ("strong liberal") to 5 ("strong conservative"), with 3 indicating moderates, and was folded to create the final measure, with 1 representing moderates and 3 indicating strong conservatives and liberals. Overall, there were 333 moderates, 163 weak ideologues, and 213 strong ideologues in our sample.

Prior participation. As an exogenous variable to adjust for the propensity to engage in follow-up actions, we also account for prior political and civic participation. Respondents were asked whether, in the last 12 months, they have engaged in eight activities that include: voting in the 2002 congressional election, volunteering for a candidate or party, solving a community problem, participating in community service, contacting news media and public officials, signing a petition, and boycotting. Value 1 was assigned for each act in which a respondent reported engaging and the final additive index ranged from 0 to 8 ($M = 4.85$, $SD = 1.89$).

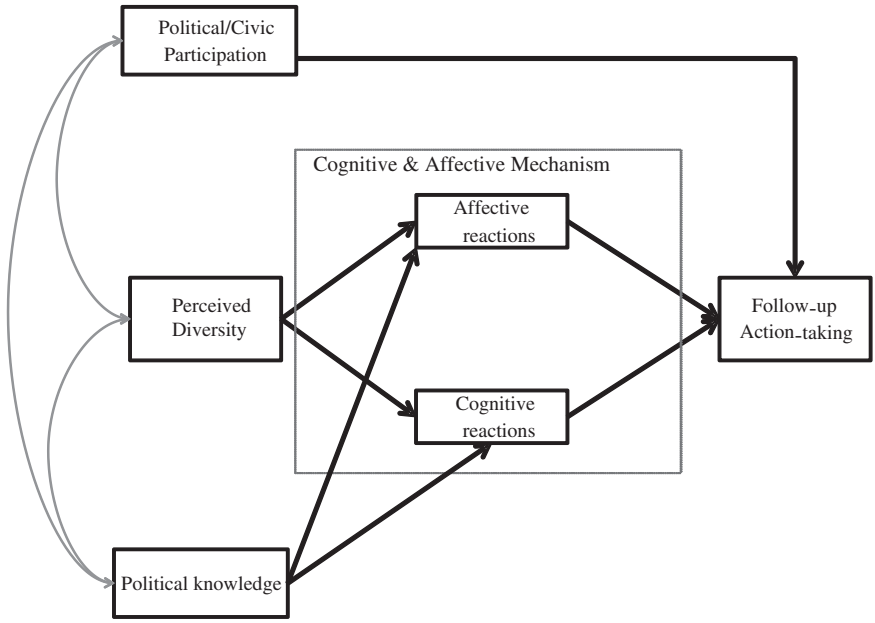
General political knowledge. Political knowledge was included as another exogenous variable because it may affect the mechanisms through which exposure to dissimilar views influences follow-up political engagement. Five questions recommended by Delli Carpini and Keeter (1996) assessed general political knowledge (identification of the Vice President, which party controls the US Senate, the majority required to override president's veto, etc.). Each item was scored 1 for a correct answer and 0 for any other answer, including "don't know". Scores were summed to form an index that ranged from 0 to 5 ($M = 3.86$, $SD = 1.27$).

Modeling

We use structural equation modeling (SEM) to answer our research question. There are two reasons why SEM is most applicable for our purposes. First, whereas testing whether associations between variables differ between groups is vulnerable to omission of confounding variables, in SEM statistically adjusted mean scores across three groups minimize this vulnerability. In other words, adjusting the mean structure (vector of mean statistics) reduces the risk that the model is misspecified. Secondly, SEM fully exploits information in a given covariance structure. That is, because we analyze whether the variance/covariance structures are influenced by ideological strength, SEM simultaneously tests the direct effect of ideological strength (*i.e.,* mean score comparison) and its moderating effects on the correlation between the variables that lead from perceived diversity to follow-up action (*i.e.,* covariance structure test).

To investigate our question, we use zero-order covariance matrixes among strong, weak, and moderate ideologues. Model comparison has four stages. The first model (Model 0) has no constraints and provides a base for model comparison. The second model (Model 1) imposes equal constraints on the mean scores, minimizing the threat that the results are confounded. Any differences between the two models' model-fit indexes denote that the mean scores among strong, weak, and moderate ideologues differ statistically. The third model (Model 2) equalizes the variance of the analyzed variables in order to test the homogeneity of each variable among the three groups, and a difference between Model 1 and Model 2 indicates that the variance among the variables differs across ideological strength. The final model (Model 3), which tests the covariance structure among the variables for strong, weak, and moderate ideologues, has three components representing both direct and indirect influences on follow-up engagement. The first tests whether the direct effects of perceived diversity and prior participation on follow-up engagement differ among the three groups. The second two components detect differences in the covariance between perceived diversity and cognitive and affective responses, and also between these responses and follow-up engagement. It is thus the final model that tests the *processes* that

FIGURE 1 **Cognitive and affective routes for the effects of perceived political diversity on follow-up action-taking**



lead from perceiving diversity during deliberation to engaging in follow-up actions among strong, weak and moderate ideologues. Figure 1 illustrates these processes.

Data limitations. Before presenting the results, two central limitations should be noted (both are addressed in our conclusion). First, our reliance on cross-sectional data does not allow any claims regarding causality. Most importantly, our model assumes that cognitive and affective reactions come in response to political diversity perceived in a deliberative setting. Because the questions asked about how respondents felt during the last meeting they attended, these reported reactions may or may not have been linked with exposure to diverse views and may have been produced by other events that occurred during deliberation. In a similar vein, our reliance on self-reports means that some measures are weak and indirect. Especially the measures that tap cognitive and affective reactions are several steps removed from the actual processes, and also the perceived diversity measure may not accurately represent the diversity that was actually present. Nonetheless, while these limitations should be kept in mind and caution is needed when interpreting the results, we believe the advantages provided by being able to test our research question with these unique data justify the effort while also offering directions for future analyses that use more refined measures.

RESULTS

Before scrutinizing the processes underlying mobilization, we look at the relationships between the variables. Across the total sample, cognitive reactions to diverse views are less strongly linked to follow-up engagement ($r = -.06$, ns) than affective reactions ($r_{\text{enthusiasm}} = .13$, $p < .01$; $r_{\text{anxiety}} = .08$, $p < .05$; $r_{\text{anger}} = .12$, $p < .01$) and perceived diversity *per se* has no bearing ($r = -.05$, ns) (see Tables A1–A3 for correlations by ideological strength). These results offer the first insight into the tested relationships. We take the next step and account for ideological strength, first testing the mean scores among strong, weak, and moderate ideologues. Table 1 shows that strong ideologues are more participatory and knowledgeable than weak and moderate ones and are also less likely to report that they understood diverse views encountered during deliberation. There are no pronounced differences among the groups with regard to reported emotions and perceived diversity, although strong ideologues are slightly more likely to report anger and less likely to report anxiety or enthusiasm. Also, although they are more likely than weak and moderate ideologues to engage in follow-up actions, the differences are not substantial.

Although these mean differences are telling, it is the correlation/covariance structure that addresses our research question. We thus construct three models that test the associations among the analyzed variables among strong, weak, and moderate ideologues.[3] Are the routes that lead from perceived political diversity to follow-up engagement different among these three groups? The findings clearly suggest so. Table 2 describes the mean, variance, and covariance structure testing and the Figures 2–4 illustrate the direct mobilization through perceived diversity and prior participation, and the indirect effects exerted by perceived diversity on follow-up engagement via cognitive and affective routes. Importantly, these effects are estimated after accounting for the influence that political knowledge has on all the variables.

First, although the direct influence of perceived diversity on follow-up engagement is relatively weak among moderate ($\gamma = -0.01$), weak ($\gamma = -0.02$), and strong ideologues ($\gamma = -0.02$, all at $p < .10$), the coefficients notably indicate that this influence is negative. Perceived diversity also elicits cognitive reactions among all the groups, with strong ($\gamma = 0.34$, $p < .001$), weak ($\gamma = 0.35$, $p < .001$), and moderate ideologues ($\gamma = 0.23$, $p < .001$) alike relating it to understanding differences. Third, perceived diversity elicits different affective responses among the three groups. Moderate ($\gamma = 0.09$, $p < .10$)

[3]Overall, the goodness-of-fit indices (*i.e.*, χ^2) are the best among strong ideologues ($\chi^2 = 7.33$, $df = 5$, $p = .20$), followed by weak ideologues ($\chi^2 = 14.87$, $df = 5$, $p = .01$) and moderates ($\chi^2 = 16.77$, $df = 5$, $p = .001$). In short, only strong ideologues succeed to detect good model-fit. While the moderates and weak ideologues showed bad model-fit (*i.e.*, significant χ^2), we do not modify the models so that they are parsimonious and directly address our research question (Steiger, 1990). In other words, we do not apply any modification indexes because we use SEM to test the different mean and covariance structure rather than to develop or test a scale measurement.

TABLE 1 **Descriptive statistics for the analyzed variables**

	Moderates (n = 333)		*Weak ideologues (n = 163)*		*Strong ideologues (n = 213)*		
	Mean	*SD*	*Mean*	*SD*	*Mean*	*SD*	*Mean comparison*
Prior political/civic participation	4.62[a]	1.87	4.58[a]	2.00	5.35[b]	1.81	$F(2,706) = 11.70^{***}$
Political knowledge	3.78[a]	1.25	3.56[a]	1.44	4.14[b]	1.12	$F(2,706) = 10.55^{***}$
Diversity perception	5.22[a]	2.90	5.10[a]	3.04	4.96[a]	2.93	$F(2,706) = 0.52$
Enthusiasm	6.68[a]	2.43	6.77[a]	2.58	6.51[a]	2.81	$F(2,706) = 0.50$
Anxiety	3.79[a]	3.32	3.96[a]	3.34	3.53[a]	3.19	$F(2,706) = 0.82$
Anger	2.80[a]	3.05	2.85[a]	3.00	2.92[a]	3.06	$F(2,706) = 0.09$
Understanding differences	6.31[b]	2.51	6.57[b]	2.68	5.62[a]	2.90	$F(2,706) = 6.82^{**}$
Follow-up action-taking	0.31[a]	0.46	0.30[a]	0.46	0.39[a]	0.49	$F(2,706) = 2.25$

Note: $N = 709$. Row means with the same superscript differ at $p < .05$ in Bonferroni Post-hoc comparison tests.
$^{*}p < .05$; $^{**}p < .01$; $^{***}p < .001$.

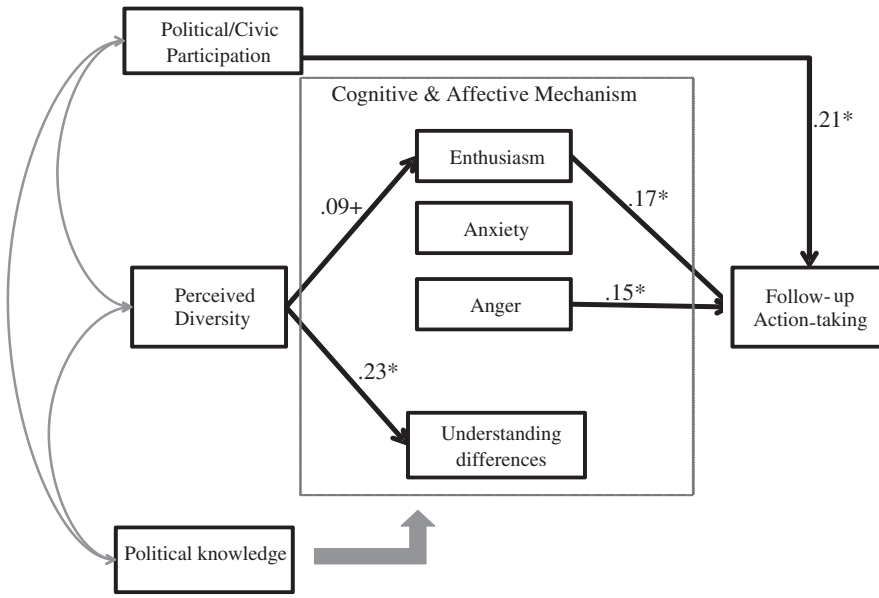
TABLE 2 **Tests of mean, variance, and covariance structures among three groups**

Models	χ^2	*df*	$\Delta\ \chi^2$ (Δdf)	$\Delta\ \chi^2/\Delta df$
No constraints (Base model)	38.97	15		
Equal mean scores (Model 1)	83.81	31	44.84 (16)***	2.80
Equal variance of seven variables (Model 2)	105.91	47	22.10 (16)	1.38
Equal covariance of psychological process (Model 3)				
Model 3A. Direct effects of perceived diversity and prior participation	109.97	51	4.06 (4)	1.02
Model 3B. Perceived diversity → Emotional and cognitive reactions	118.63	59	8.66 (8)	1.08
Model 3C. Emotional and cognitive reactions → Follow-up participation	136.61	67	17.98 (8)*	2.25

Note: $N = 709$.
$^{*}p < .05$; $^{***}p < .001$.

and weak ($\gamma = 0.13$, $p < .10$), but not strong ideologues ($\gamma = 0.08$, ns) react with enthusiasm to diverse views. Anxiety, in turn, is triggered among weak ($\gamma = 0.12$, $p < .10$) and strong ideologues ($\gamma = 0.15$, $p < .05$), but not among moderates ($\gamma = 0.01$, ns).

FIGURE 2 **Relationships among variables (moderates)**

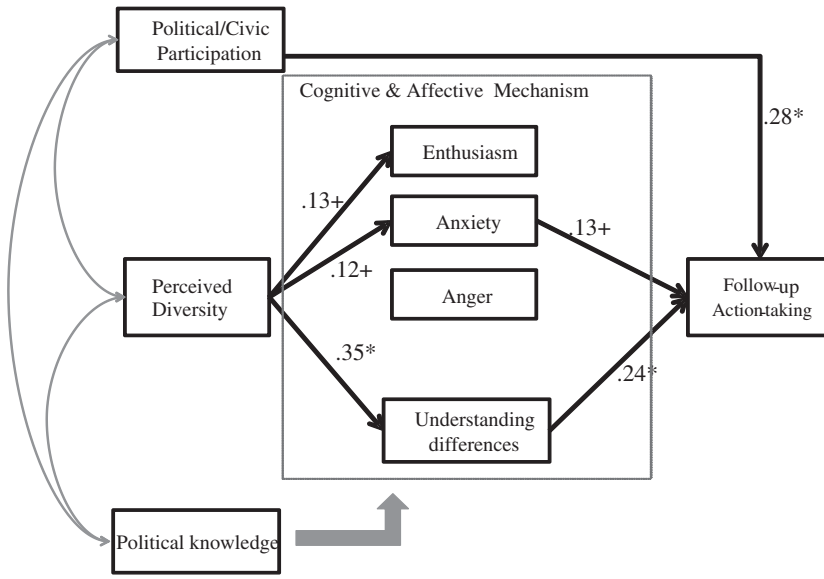


Note: $^{+}p < .10$, $^{*}p < .05$. $N = 333$. **Only significant paths ($p < .10$) are shown. Paths from knowledge to cognitive and affective reactions are not shown. Indirect effect via "enthusiasm" is significant at marginal level, $z = 1.87$, $p = .06$ (Sobel test; Sobel, 1982). Other indirect effects are not significant (via anxiety, $z = 0.14$; via anger, $z = 0.35$; via understanding differences, $z = 0.96$)**

Addressing the second part of our model, we ask whether cognitive and affective routes activated by perceived political diversity differentially encourage engagement in various follow-up acts among the three groups. Understanding differences is positively linked to mobilization among weak ideologues ($\beta = .24$, $p < .01$), while having no influence among the other groups (β values $< .02$, ns). With regard to affective responses, enthusiasm is positively related to follow-up engagement only among moderates ($\beta = .17$, $p < .01$), while not playing any role among weak ($\beta = -.08$, ns) or strong ideologues ($\beta = .07$, ns). Among weak ideologues, in contrast, it is anxiety that seems to be mobilizing ($\beta = .13$, $p < .10$; $\beta_{\text{moderate}} = 0.02$, ns; $\beta_{\text{strong}} = -0.01$, ns). Furthermore, those citizens who are generally participatory also engage in follow-up actions. This direct link is also moderated by ideological strength, in that it is more pronounced among strong ($\gamma = 0.31$, $p < .001$), than among weak ($\gamma = 0.28$, $p < .001$) and moderate ideologues ($\gamma = 0.21$, $p < .001$).

Finally, we address the processes through which perceived political diversity affects mobilization to follow-up action. The figures show that strong ideologues who encounter diverse views do not become mobilized through

FIGURE 3 **Relationships among variables (weak ideologues)**



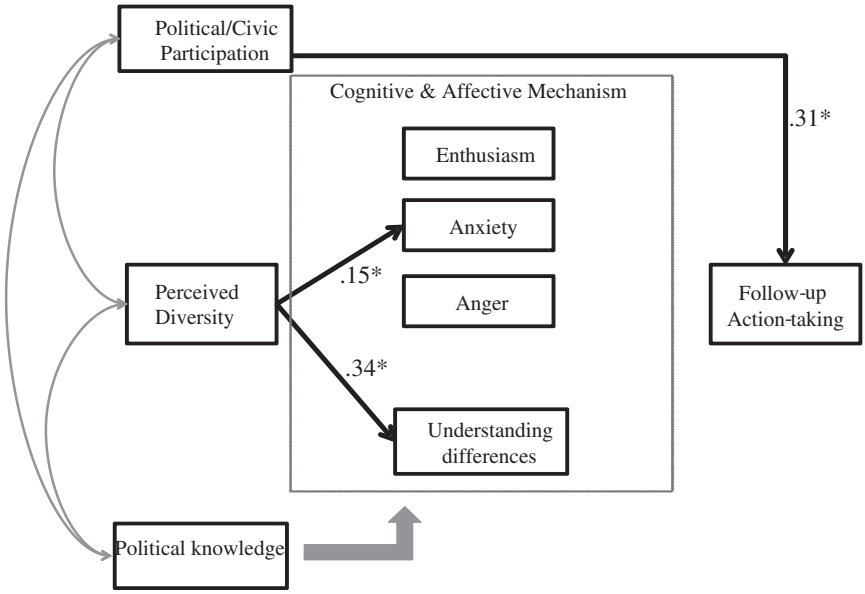
Note: $^{+}p < .10$, $^{*}p < .05$. $N = 163$. **Only significant paths ($p < .10$) are shown. Paths from knowledge to cognitive and affective reactions are not shown. Indirect effect via "understanding differences" is significant at conventional level, $z = 3.16$, $p < .001$ (Sobel test, Sobel, 1982). Other indirect effects are not significant (via enthusiasm, $z = 1.27$; via anxiety, $z = 1.18$; via anger, $z = 0.07$)**

increased cognition or elicited emotions. It is rather their habitual participation that motivates follow-up engagement. Weak ideologues, on the other hand, primarily depend on the cognitive route, in that perceived diversity increases their understanding and, in turn, encourages follow-up engagement ($z = 3.16$, $p < .001$). That is, although perceived diversity makes all the three groups understand this diversity more, only those with weak ideological commitments are mobilized to action by this understanding. Among this group, the indirect route through anxiety does not reach significance ($z = 1.18$, $p = \text{ns}$). Finally, only among moderates does perceived diversity elicit enthusiasm, which in turn increases follow-up engagement ($z = 1.87$, $p < .10$). That is, moderates appear to react with positive emotions to diversity and also translate this enthusiasm into engagement in follow-up actions.

DISCUSSION

Existing evidence supports two somewhat contradictory notions. Deliberation that assembles diverse people is said to encourage political participation. However, exposure to dissimilar views, which should occur during

FIGURE 4 **Relationships among variables (strong ideologues)**



Note: $^{+}p < .10$, $^{*}p < .05$. $N = 213$. **Only significant paths ($p < .10$) are shown. Paths from knowledge to cognitive and affective reactions are not shown. The indirect effects are not significant (via enthusiasm, $z = 0.07$; via anxiety, $z = 0.86$; via anger, $z = 0.58$; via understanding differences, $z = 0.98$)**

deliberation, may pull citizens away from the democratic process. The research on deliberative versus participatory democracy has generally not scrutinized whether the association between exposure to dissimilar views and participation is moderated by such factors as ideological strength. This research, moreover, has not asked whether the mechanisms underlying this association differ for different ideological subgroups.

In this study we aimed to address these issues. We not only examined whether perceiving a deliberative forum to be politically diverse differently influences engagement in charitable, civic, or political follow-up actions among strong, weak, and moderate ideologues. We also focused on the underlying processes, asking whether ideological strength influences the way in which cognitive and affective reactions to diversity result in follow-up engagement.

Focusing on the associations between the tested factors we notably find that—on average and across the total sample—political diversity perceived during deliberation has no direct effect on mobilization to follow-up actions. It does, however, elicit cognitive and affective reactions, with the former having no effect and the latter encouraging engagement. Increased understanding does not have a special bearing, in that those who report understanding differences are not necessarily more mobilized. In turn, consistent with prior

scholarship, enthusiasm, anger, and anxiety positively influence the propensity to take part in follow-up actions. Terminating the analysis at the aggregate level would lead to a conclusion that attending a deliberative forum that is seen as politically diverse neither encourages nor discourages participation directly.

We took the next step, accounted for ideological strength, and asked whether processes that underlie the tested association differ among strong, weak, and moderate ideologues. We find that although perceived diversity elicits understanding and anxiety among strong ideologues, neither cognitive nor affective reactions mobilize this group to action. Follow-up engagement among strong ideologues is related to their general civic and political participation rather than to diversity encountered in a deliberative forum. Perhaps, for this group, exposure to political discourse is sufficiently frequent and thus a single deliberation does not provoke cognitive or affective reactions to an extent that would encourage action. That is, strong ideologues may already know that politics happens in the world filled with plurality and conflicting values, and deliberation might be yet another activity that does not have central implications for their overall participation. We need to caution against putting too much emphasis on these results, however, due to our reliance on self-reported and relatively weak measures.

For moderates and weak ideologues, on the other hand, deliberation might provide a novel opportunity to encounter diverse citizens and hear new perspectives and thus taking part in public discussions may be especially cognitively and emotionally stimulating. Moderate citizens seem to be highly emotionally receptive to and affected by their deliberative experience. Perceiving political diversity elicits their enthusiasm, which in turn mobilizes them to follow-up actions. That is, for moderates positive rather than negative emotions or increased understanding matter to mobilization. This finding is consistent with some research, according to which moderates, who may be politically disengaged or have weakly differentiated cognitive structures, would rely on such simpler means to evaluate dissimilar views as peripheral message cues or affective evaluations. Perhaps for these reasons political participation among moderates is influenced by their emotional reactions to diverse viewpoints.

Weak ideologues, who fall in between strong and moderate ideologues on the political ideology continuum, incorporate aspects of both groups. For them, increased understanding is critical to follow-up engagement, in that weak ideologues not only report that perceived political diversity increases their understanding, but are also mobilized to follow-up actions by this understanding. This finding can also be explained by the reviewed studies on political ideology and cognitive complexity: inasmuch as weak ideologues are more cognitively complex than the other two groups, they would process

messages centrally. In other words, less entrenched in their convictions than strong ideologues and more politically informed than moderates, weak ideologues may be open to new perspectives that deliberation brings and rely on their cognitive maps to translate these perspectives into understanding and political engagement.

These conclusions need to be interpreted cautiously. As any study, ours comes with several limitations. As already mentioned, the cross-sectional design precludes any firm claims regarding causal direction. Although we conceptualize perceived diversity as preceding emotional and cognitive reactions, it might be the case that those citizens who are enthusiastic or who have extensive perspective taking abilities under- or overestimate political diversity. Also, because the questions about these reactions asked respondents about how they felt "during the last meeting" they attended, it may also be the case that respondents were angry, enthusiastic, or anxious in response to the topic, the organizers, the participation itself, among other issues that may not be related to viewpoint diversity. This limitation cannot be addressed, and we thus caution against drawing overreaching causal conclusions from our results. Fortunately, the final outcome construct, follow-up engagement, was assessed by asking respondents whether they participated in any charitable, civic, or political activities as a direct result of the last meeting they attended. Hence—at least with this measure—we tap the effects, albeit self-reported, produced by deliberation. This is an advantage over other cross-sectional studies that use general participation as the outcome variable, a variable for which we adjust treating it as exogenous.

Our study suffers from the second perennial problem in survey research, the reliance on self-reported measures. Most importantly, the measures of affective and cognitive reactions are weak and indirect, in that they are self-reports provided after a meeting occurred. Although we employ them to represent the routes through which citizens process diverse views, there is a leap between these measures and the actual processes, especially that emotions have components that may or may not be cognitively represented and easily available to self-report. Future research should validate our results with more direct measures used during or immediately after deliberation, for example testing affect with physiological reactions and determining the extent to which people engage in cognitive processing by information recall. Such studies would increase our confidence in the results presented here and would more directly speak to the role that cognitive and affective responses play in the process underlying political engagement.

With regard to political diversity, our measure captures perceived, not necessarily actual, diversity. Although the data cannot determine whether the forums were politically diverse, in order for diversity to have any effect, it has to be noticed and opinion differences will not produce effects unless

people are aware that diverse views are expressed (Mutz, 2002). Also, our reliance on self-reports does not allow making any claims about the processes that actually occurred in the forums and that may influence the ways in which people react to diversity. If a meeting is framed as a debate, entails personal attacks or silencing unpopular views then participants experience diverse opinions differently from how they do in a forum that is facilitated to promote deliberative ideals, by encouraging divergent views and giving them all equal weight. As aforementioned, the meetings that our respondents reported attending appear to have met many requirements to be considered deliberative. Nevertheless, studies should address how exactly the many specific processes emerging during deliberation influence participants' responses to diversity, and also whether and how these processes affect political participation.

In a similar vein, although we use perceived political diversity to represent exposure to dissimilar perspectives, there may be a disconnect between these two concepts. A forum could lack diversity and still be experienced as contentious and/or diversity could be present and nevertheless be unthreatening. Nonetheless, exposure to politically diverse views entails encountering at least some views that are dissimilar and with which one disagrees. We also believe that our measure is not as disconnected from political dissimilarity as some other conceptualizations often used in the debate on deliberative versus participatory democracy.

Further, our study focused solely on ideological strength. We selected this factor not only because it is related to political knowledge, engagement, and interest, but also because it is pertinent in a sociopolitical climate that is polarized along ideological lines and among political activists. Admittedly, scrutinizing ideological strength only gets us thus far, and scholars should test the moderating effects exerted by other characteristics, *e.g.,* attitude strength, intensity, or certainty. Such analyses would not only complement the findings presented here, but would also substantially benefit the scholarship.

Finally, our outcome measure—engagement in follow-up actions—might obscure some differences in the effects generated by perceived diversity. Because respondents were simply asked whether or not they engaged in any charitable, civic, or political activities after the last meeting they attended, we cannot determine neither the kind nor the number of the activities that were undertaken. Inasmuch as exposure to dissimilar views has differential effects on some activities and not on others, our single measure obscures those idiosyncrasies.

Despite these limitations, our study offers results with both practical and theoretical implications. We add to the debate on deliberative versus participatory democracy showing that a question "Does political dissimilarity increase or decrease political participation?" might be more complex than

generally acknowledged. Because the answer may depend on individual characteristics, the role that citizen-to-citizen deliberation, political discussion, network heterogeneity, or cross-cutting exposure play in participation should not be analyzed monolithically. In other words, research concerned with the effects that political dissimilarity has on opinions or behaviors should more closely attend to individual characteristics. Our study tested ideological strength, but other factors should be scrutinized. Not accounting for the various moderating effects may obscure the existing complexity and result in inconsistent findings.

We also show that testing the mean levels of various factors crucial to deliberation or political participation, even when broken up by individual characteristics, may also be missing the point. Although scholars often "actively seek, occasionally find, and enthusiastically celebrate evidence of changes in aggregate survey frequencies without attending to the underlying opinion processes at work" (Barabas, 2004, p. 688), scrutinizing these processes might elucidate the differential impact that diversity has on citizens' engagement in the democratic process. In sum, it is the scholarship that focuses on individual characteristics and also addresses the processes that underlie political participation, that will move us closer to resolving the debate on deliberative versus, or rather *and*, participatory democracy.

APPENDIX A

SAMPLE DESIGN

Two national probability samples were drawn for this project. The first was designed to obtain 1,000 interviews among adults in the 48 contiguous states. The second was designed to obtain interviews with 500 "deliberators." The samples were administered separately. For the general population sample, all adults were interviewed, while only those who qualified as deliberators were interviewed in the second survey administration. Both samples utilized Random Digit Dial (RDD) to generate random samples of telephone households in the U.S. Within each household, one respondent was selected. The RDD samples were drawn following a list-assisted random-digit-dial methodology using the GENESYS Sampling System, licensed by CSRA. CSRA samples utilize a "list-assisted" method of determining which telephone banks to include in the sample frame. A list-assisted method of sample frame enumeration cross-references data obtained from national telephone exchange records with telephone directory information to determine telephone banks that contain listed numbers. The GENESYS database is updated quarterly to contain all working banks with at least one directory-listed household. The sample was stratified according to U.S. Census Bureau estimates of adult

population across geographic regions, as defined by the U.S. Bureau of the Census. Thus, within each region, all telephone numbers in any working bank with more than one directory-listed household are included in the sample with equal probability.

SURVEY ADMINISTRATION

Interviewing commenced on February 10, 2003 and the project was closed on March 23, 2002. Overall, CSRA collected 1501 interviews, 756 with deliberators and 745 with non-deliberators. All interviewing was conducted at CSRA's center using a Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) system. Data were compiled from the CATI system on an average of every two days to review responses and assure data quality.

OUTCOME RATES

Response Rates

Using AAPOR RR3, response rates are 43.4 percent for the general population survey and 45.8 percent for the oversample.

Cooperation Rates

Considering individuals who could not be interviewed, because of language and other problems, as eligible respondents (AAPOR COOP1) yields cooperation rates of 48.9 percent for the general population survey and 50.8 percent for the oversample, while considering them as ineligible (AAPOR COOP3) yields a cooperation rate of 51.4 percent for the general population survey and 53.6 percent for the oversample.

Refusal Rates

Assuming all unknown cases are eligible respondents (AAPOR REF1) yields a refusal rate of 34.3 percent for the general population sample and 33.5 percent for the oversample. A refusal rate that incorporates an estimate of the percentage of unknown telephone numbers that are actually eligible yields a refusal rate (AAPOR RR2) of 40.5 percent for the general population sample and 39.2 percent for the oversample.

APPENDIX B

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS AND PEARSON CORRELATIONS AMONG THE ANALYZED VARIABLES

TABLE A1 **Moderates**

	1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*
Mean	*5.22*	*6.68*	*3.79*	*2.80*	*6.31*	*0.31*	*3.78*	*4.62*
SD	*2.89*	*2.43*	*3.32*	*3.05*	*2.51*	*0.46*	*1.25*	*1.86*
1. Perceived diversity	1.00							
2. Enthusiasm	0.11*	1.00						
3. Anxiety	0.01	0.10	1.00					
4. Anger	−0.01	−0.04	0.45***	1.00				
5. Understanding differences	0.23***	0.27***	0.00	−0.07	1.00			
6. Follow-up action-taking	−0.11*	0.12*	0.09	0.15**	−0.03	1.00		
7. Political knowledge	−0.15**	−0.10	−0.17**	−0.10	−0.08	−0.04	1.00	
8. Prior political/civic participation	−0.04	0.13*	0.03	0.06	0.02	0.19**	0.32***	1.00

Note: *$p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; ***$p < .001$. $n = 333$ (list-wise deletion).

TABLE A2 **Weak ideologues**

	1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*
Mean	*5.10*	*6.77*	*3.96*	*2.85*	*6.57*	*0.30*	*3.56*	*4.57*
SD	*3.04*	*2.58*	*3.34*	*3.00*	*2.68*	*0.46*	*1.44*	*2.00*
1. Perceived diversity	1.00							
2. Enthusiasm	0.12*	1.00						
3. Anxiety	0.15**	0.18**	1.00					
4. Anger	0.12*	0.10	0.33***	1.00				
5. Understanding differences	0.34***	0.38***	0.22***	0.00	1.00			
6. Follow-up action-taking	−0.05	0.08	0.13**	0.05	0.21***	1.00		
7. Political knowledge	−0.06	−0.15**	−0.19**	−0.07	−0.15**	−0.06	1.00	
8. Prior political/civic participation	0.01	0.19	−0.10	0.03	0.05	0.29***	0.32***	1.00

Note: *$p < .05$; **$p < .01$; ***$p < .001$. $n = 163$ (list-wise deletion).

TABLE A3 **Strong ideologues**

	1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*
Mean	*4.96*	*6.51*	*3.53*	*2.91*	*5.62*	*0.39*	*4.14*	*5.35*
SD	*2.93*	*2.81*	*3.19*	*3.06*	*2.90*	*0.49*	*1.12*	*1.81*
1. Perceived diversity	1.00							
2. Enthusiasm	0.10	1.00						
3. Anxiety	0.20***	0.17**	1.00					
4. Anger	0.09	−0.02	0.34***	1.00				
5. Understanding differences	0.37***	0.38***	0.17**	−0.10	1.00			
6. Follow-up action-taking	0.03	0.18**	0.03	0.12*	0.12*	1.00		
7. Political knowledge	−0.18**	−0.05	−0.20***	0.04	−0.14*	0.01	1.00	
8. Prior political/civic participation	−0.04	0.09	−0.07	0.10	−0.02	0.37***	0.28***	1.00

Note: $^{*}p < .05$; $^{**}p < .01$; $^{***}p < .001$. $n = 213$ (list-wise deletion).

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