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Deliberating or quarrelling?

An enquiry into theory and research methods
for the relationship between political
parties and deliberation

Master's thesis in political science

Trondheim, November 2010

NTNU – Trondheim
Norwegian University of
Science and Technology

**STIFTELSEN
FRITT ORD**

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Acknowledgements

For the most part, this thesis is the result of long hours of lonely work, taking considerably longer it should in getting finished. Nevertheless, there are a few people and institutions that deserve my gratitude in making this work possible.

Firstly, I should thank the subjects of study in this thesis, the student parliaments at NTNU and the University of Oslo, that were willing to let themselves be analyzed in this manner, and both actually seemed enthusiastic about being the subject of research.

The Freedom of Expression Foundation (Stiftelsen fritt ord) awarded me a scholarship, necessary to be able to travel to Oslo, get help with the transcription of long hours of debate, and get the equipment for recording. Without this support, it is unlikely that this would ever have been written.

My advisor, Professor Jonathon Moses, of course deserves my thanks for sticking with me until this was finished. In particular, his uncanny ability to answer emails so fast it almost appears he did it before I sent them has been invaluable.

Professor Moses should also be thanked for being the person to encourage this thesis in the first place. My initial idea was just writing an op-ed for the student newspaper balancing demands for introducing political parties with the words of Edmund Burke. Several other professors dismissed this project as unrealistic or completely uninteresting, but Professor Moses' contagious enthusiasm was what made me go through with it.

The intelligent and critical readers of my blog *Nachspiel at Polemarchus*'[1] also deserve thanks for comments and stimulating discussion. In particular, the political scientist blogger LFC with the excellent blog *Howl at Pluto*[2], who among other things pointed me in the direction of Nancy Rosenblum's (2008) *On the Side of the Angels.*

Lastly, I need to thank my life partner Arnhild, for her patience. She beat me to the master's degree by more than three years due to my constant distractions into other work. For the last year she has also had to tolerate the kitchen table of our apartment frequently being transformed into my personal office and many weekends spent secluded in my own little bubble of thesis work.

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[1] http://polemarchus.net
[2] http://howlatpluto.blogspot.com/

Contents

Index of figures

Index of tables

1 Introduction

Some of the inspiration for this thesis comes from an article in the student newspaper in Trondheim, *Under Dusken* (Grøttum 2005), and similar comments over the following years. Political science professor Anders Todal Jenssen insisted that the student democracy in Trondheim lacked legitimacy because of the low voter turnout and that the introduction of political parties would be the solution to this problem. Binding platforms would make student politicians accountable to the voters and increase support for democracy. As a student representative myself at the time, I was provoked. We were proud of the lack of polarization within the student democracy and, although I didn't know the term at the time, the level of deliberation. This started me on the quest for an alternative to Professor Todal Jenssen's strong belief in the necessity of political parties.

Democracy does of course seem unthinkable without political parties. Almost every democracy is dominated by a system of organized factions that structure, educate and drive the political process forwards. The necessity for such a system is no longer seriously questioned in political science.

I don't believe, however, that any institution should be beyond question. Even if we have no intention to get rid of political parties, we should strive to understand the effect they have on democracy. As I will show in this thesis, one such effect may be reducing open and free deliberation among decision-makers. This may be a cost we are willing to pay, but not a cost we should pay without knowing its size.

Deliberation should not be considered merely as a normative ideal for democracy, but also a descriptive model for understanding the workings of democracy. The amount and quality of deliberation may explain political decisions and outcomes that aggregative models do not. This should make deliberation a topic of interest even if one does not accept its normative justification. This is covered in chapter 2.

Institutions influence the way democracy works. If deliberation is an important characteristic of democracy, we should take interest in how institutional design affects deliberation. There has been some research on this, but political parties, integral to almost all modern democracies, seem to have been neglected in this respect. I will show that there are sufficient theoretical reservations

about their effect on deliberation that this should be a topic of proper empirical testing. This is discussed in chapter 3.

To test the relationship between political parties and deliberation empirically, we need an approach for measuring deliberation. We should have a method with a theoretically sound basis, that measures what we want it to, and that is acceptable within the wider sphere of political science (a discipline that is both theoretically and empirically oriented). I will examine various proposals for examining the amount and quality of deliberation and consider their respective strengths and weaknesses. This is the topic of chapter 4.

The Discourse Quality Index seems to be the most promising such method in use today. I have tested the utility of the method for addressing whether political parties weaken deliberation in a political system. To do this I applied the method to two democratic bodies: the student parliaments of the universities in Trondheim and Oslo, Norway. Due to a limited amount of data I did not get significant results concerning the question itself, but I have collected practical experiences and new insight into the method and its applicability. This is covered in chapter 5.

Quickly summarized, I find in this thesis that there seems to be sufficient theoretical grounds to support the assumption that political party systems are detrimental to deliberation. A major obstacle to empirical testing of this and other theories about deliberation is found in the current state of empirical methods. Several methods have been tried, but none seem to be able to completely combine the demands needed for the conclusions to gain general acceptance. The Discourse Quality Index seems to be the most sophisticated and promising of such methods, but there are still a number of problems that should be addressed.

1.1 Research objective

The central research question for the thesis is whether *political parties weaken deliberation in democratic bodies*. By this I mean that political parties have certain tendencies that serve to reduce the level of deliberation within the political system. In many cases these are the very mechanisms that make political parties an effective way of organizing large scale democracy and making it work.

It is important to emphasize that this does not mean that I claim democracy would be better without political parties. In fact, history seems to show us that it is unlikely that democracy can survive at all beyond a very small scale without political parties to structure the process.

Nevertheless, it is important to know what side effects this has on democracy itself, in this case through changing the climate for deliberation.

What this does mean is that we expect that a working democracy with political parties tends to have less deliberation than a democracy without. The latter is not an entirely theoretical construction. Such democracies exist, although not in a larger scale. National government is the main area of interest for political science, and the question may thus seem irrelevant. However, if we can prove that this effect exists, we can in turn move on to consider different party systems to find possible compromises between party rule and deliberative decision making.

Within these pages, I will limit myself to outlaying the theoretical basis for the thesis and examining the ways in which it may be tested.

1.2 Theoretical and ideological background

In my opinion, any good academic should be open about the theoretical and ideological origins of his work. In so doing, an academic will put the reader in a position to make his own judgement as to the extent this has influenced the academic work.

I believe in deliberation. I believe in open and free dialogue and that this is beneficial to political decision making as well as most other areas of society. Although shared by many great thinkers, this is a belief based as much upon my own experiences and what I consider common sense as it is on the convincing nature of the theoretical arguments. I am, however, aware that all, or even most, political scientists do not share this strong belief. I will therefore try not to take such a belief for granted or as a necessary basis for this paper. I will focus on why deliberation should be of interest regardless of whether or not one believes it is the way to revitalize democracy.

I will also admit that I come into this process with a considerable prejudice against the role of political parties in democracy, particularly as manifested in the current political system in Norway. I have a background as an active participant in the political process myself, and this thesis is in many ways the result of a growing frustration with the role of political parties. This frustration caused me to withdraw from an active role within politics and caused an interest in studying parties as a phenomenon.

Although this theory does not draw explicitly on institutionalist theory, it is in many ways informed by it. An underlying assumption that is not discussed much further is that the shape and

3

nature of political institutions affects behaviour. In this particular instance that is recognizable in the theory that the institutionalization of political factions into parties affects the deliberative behaviour of political actors.

A last and important part of the foundation for this work is a holistic approach to political science. There seems to be much emphasis, particularly in America, on emphasizing divisions and making exclusive categories in the human and social sciences. Political science is something distinct from political theory, philosophy, sociology, language theory and so forth. I believe that although these labels occasionally have their use, social science will be stronger, better and more useful if it can draw upon a broader theoretical and methodical basis, without excluding on the basis of disciplinary origin. I therefore draw on theory from several fields in this thesis, not putting much effort into making the distinction about what belongs under which label.

2   Deliberation and theory

I will now try to outline two different perspectives on democracy that form much of the basis for this thesis, and show that we can indeed point to a perception of deliberative democracy that may serve not just as a normative ideal, but also as a descriptive model. As my main concern is the study of models of representative democracy, I will take the desirability of democracy and the necessity for representation as a given. The relation between voter, representative and the final decisions made is therefore the basis for these two perspectives.

The first perspective is the one I perceive as the dominant perspective in current political science, and the basis for much of the current democracy trends in the western world. I choose to call this *aggregative democracy*. The defining terms for this view is citizen preference and responsiveness to this preference. Individual preference exists a priori, is formulated by the citizen, taken as input to the political process which gives a political outcome. The representative is viewed as a delegate and receives his legitimacy from the voting power awarded him by the citizens. Equality, through an equal distribution of political power, is the primary goal of the democratic process.

The term *aggregative democracy,* as used in this thesis, is taken from Amy Gutmann and Dennis Thompson's book *Why deliberative democracy?* (2004:13-21). It is sometimes referred to as liberal democracy, a term I find to be somewhat misleading as it is not the only relevant

take on democracy even from a liberal perspective. Indeed, the Rawlsian revival of liberalist theory undermines the rational choice theory that modern aggregative democracy is based upon. Despite this and other arguments to why aggregative democracy and rational choice theory have their weaknesses, they still persists as the most prevalent ways of understanding politics in contemporary political science (Dryzek 2000:31-33).

The second view of democracy is based on quite different assumptions and ideas of democracy. Like Gutmann and Thompson (2004:13-21) I refer to this as *deliberative democracy*. This perspective is not contrary to the first in the sense that they are incompatible. Not every aspect of democracy can be explained by differences in power and self-interested behaviour, and everything can certainly not be explained by deliberative principles. I consider power-oriented and deliberative explanations to be complimentary ways of analysing democracy in order to gain as complete an understanding of it as possible.

Deliberation is a word that defies a single comprehensive definition, and has many uses both in political theory and common usage. Before going any further I find it fruitful to devote some space to the definition of the concept itself.

2.1.1 Defining deliberation

Robert E. Goodin (2003:54) takes the first step in defining deliberation as "weighing of reasons for and against a course of action." In the sense used here, it must however be more than introspective reasoning, it must be a public form of reasoning conducted within what Jürgen Habermas(1989[1962]:249) refers to as a "public sphere".

It must be an environment in which communication is equal and distributed, and where there is an opportunity for immediate reply to statements. Posing a statement in a public forum may be termed as the equivalent to "posting notices for all to read", but it doesn't become deliberation until it is heard, internalized and responded to (Goodin 2003:60). More than this, deliberation must also be geared towards forming public opinions not restricted by authoritarian power (Habermas 1989[1962]:249). Participants in deliberation must thus have the common goal in mind of forming a public opinion that can be put into action. To be open to reaching a consensus with your opponents is thus a minimum prerequisite for deliberation. This does not mean that deliberation must necessarily result in one.

This public sphere doesn't necessarily have to be a single all-encompassing forum of discussion; Habermas envisions a system of many overlapping spheres of deliberation. This opens for the opportunity of a system with parties as individual public spheres in which deliberation is conducted that overlaps with the public sphere of the representative body, in which deliberation is conducted between members of various parties. The question is thus whether this system makes for poorer deliberation than a system where parties don't exist to form public spheres of their own.

2.2 Aggregative and deliberative – two different perspectives on democracy

Samuel Freeman (2000:373) is among the writers to argue that deliberation serves as a political ideal, not as a way of understanding politics. It certainly appears true that most theorists that cover the subject write about it in normative terms. It is, however, possible to think of deliberation as an analytical tool for understanding politics that may hold explanatory value regardless of one's normative point of view. Francis Sejerstedt (1983:60, my translation) is among the writers to put an emphasis not only on the normative side, describing the division between aggregative and deliberative politics like this:

> In reality, we are speaking of two rather fundamentally different views of what politics is, based on different views of humanity, and with great consequences both for the analytical and normative content of political theory.

According to Sejerstedt (1983:68-9), there has clearly been a tendency to over-emphasize conflicts of interest in analysis of politics in Norway. Historically, he claims that for the most part the success of one group is not at the cost of any other – there have been no major conflicts of interest. Consensus about interest questions seems to be prevalent; the actors are largely committed to the common good. Division and regime changes have not come about because of conflicts of interest but because of conflicts of management. As such he argues that what I have called the aggregative view of politics significantly misrepresents the historical nature of politics in Norway. I see little reason why we should assume Norway to be exceptional in this case.

Through this chapter I intend to show that a deliberative perspective can indeed be used as a way to understand politics that may give insight into politics, where a purely aggregative model of explanation fails. During this discussion it is important to keep in mind that this is a discussion

6

of ideal types and ideal models. I do not believe that either model completely explains empirical reality, but they present two different ideals against which empirical observations can be measured in order to identify important mechanisms.

2.2.1 Different views of the citizen

As Sejerstedt points out, the difference between aggregative and deliberative democracy can be traced back to two different ideas about the citizen, or for that matter human nature. Aggregative democracy has its root in economically oriented theories of behaviour, with a tendency to view the citizen as a *homo economicus*. Theories of deliberative democracy tend to view the citizen as an individual guided by reason and a sense of fairness, more in keeping with the philosophical tradition associated with republicanism and communitarianism, but still held by early liberalist philosophers. Although they can be classified as two quite distinct ideal models of man, both models of democracy could allow some "softening" of the stereotypes without completely destroying the fundaments they rest on.

2.2.1.1 Homo economicus

The origin of homo economicus must be traced back to Thomas Hobbes, who based his theories on the idea that self-centredness, even though not necessarily rational, was the basic nature of humanity. With rationality added, an ingenious mechanism by which this could lead to cooperation and mutually beneficial arrangements was invented by Adam Smith (2001[1776]:IV.2.9) through his conception of "the invisible hand" of the market. It was however not Smith himself that proclaimed this as a general model for the nature of humanity. Smith perceived people as characterised by moral sentiment. His theory of the invisible hand was meant solely as a model for market behaviour (Monroe 1991:1-2; Smith 2001[1757]:1-I-I).

The actual concept of homo economicus is said to come from John Stuart Mill (1967[1836]), although the term itself was coined by his critics (Persky 1995:222). It is however important to note that Mill (much like Smith) coined his homo economicus not as a description of the driving forces of human behaviour, merely as a descriptive to limit the discipline of political economy. Those who moved homo economicus from the area of economics to politics and made it into a more general theory of human behaviour were the 20th century theorists now associated with the rational actor theories, first and foremost among them Joseph Schumpeter, Anthony Downs and

Kenneth Arrow (Almond 1990:117-121; Arrow 1951; Downs 1957; Monroe 1991:2-4; Schumpeter 1962[1942]).

In his essay "On the Definition of Political Economy; and on the Method of Investigation proper to it," Mill 1967[1836]:321-2) describes the view of man that is the basis of political economy:

> [Political economy] is concerned with [man] solely as a being who desires to possess wealth, and who is capable of judging of the comparative efficacy of means for obtaining that end. It predicts only such of the phenomena of the social state as take place in consequence of the pursuit of wealth. It makes entire abstraction of every other human passion or motive; except those which may be regarded as perpetually antagonizing principles to the desire of wealth, namely, aversion to labour, and desire of the present enjoyment of costly indulgences.

Mill identifies the view of man in political economy with a rather narrow set of interests. The only interests of man as far as political economy is concerned are accumulation, leisure, luxury and procreation. This has been the basis for most economic thought in the centuries since (Persky 1995:223). The essence of the homo economicus as used today is a human being who always behaves rationally. When presented with a choice, economic man will invariably make the choice that improves his personal *utility* the most. In economics this is represented by a utility function that shows which effect in utility the individual gets from different sets of choices.

Contemporary rational actor theory has not deviated much from the original definition laid out by Mill. To defend the application of market analogies to the study of politics, homo economicus is still defined in very similar terms.

A major problem for liberalism in the last near-century has been that much of the theory has hinged on the concept of the *homo economicus* which clearly deviates from commonly accepted ideals of morality and norms of acceptable behaviour. Even in economics, the rationality assumption is under pressure. Experimental economics, experimental psychology and election research have made it apparent that narrow selfish rationality fails to explain both economic and voter behaviour. There is evidence that people both have a propensity to cooperate without personal benefit and a sense of fairness in relation with other people even without the possibility for being punished for their actions. As such it seems that both empirical studies and common sense seem to contradict the supposition of the selfish homo economicus (Edlin et al. 2007; Gintis 2000; Henrich et al. 2001). For modern economics, the predictive capacity of the models

is the primary concern, not the realism of the assumptions. That does not justify the assumptions sufficiently for political theory purposes when the goal is to understand the process itself.

One attempt to save the theory of rational action is to separate the conditions of rationality and selfishness. It is conceivable that a citizen might have a preference for community and the well-being of his friends even if there was no perceptible gain in terms of Mill's identified interests. As long as such interest could be identified and quantified, it could be included in the citizen's utility function, making his behaviour goal-oriented, but not necessarily selfish. The critics' reply is however that this undermines many of the theoretical assumptions of the model itself. The models necessary to map such kinds of behaviour also create paradoxes that require ever more complex models to evade. The sheer complexity of some of these approaches serves to undermine the usefulness of introducing social preferences to models of rational behaviour (Dryzek 2000:32; Edlin et al. 2007; Margolis 1991; Monroe 1991).

2.2.1.2 The fair and reasonable citizen

The most classical deliberation theory draws heavily on republican theory in its view of the citizen. The classical republican ideal of the altruistic citizen only oriented towards the public good (Pocock 1998) is certainly the one that would conform most ideally to deliberative theory. It would however be an over-simplification to equate the two. Deliberation does not require an altogether altruistic citizen; it requires a *fair and reasonable citizen.*

To the fair and reasonable citizen, the idea of private interest must, when the situation warrants it, be superseded by the *common good.* This is certainly the ideal of the political actor, expressed for example by Burke (1999[1774]:4.1.25). Even Adam Smith, credited with the very invention of the mechanisms justifying rational actor theory, clearly expresses such a view of man in *The Theory of the Moral Sentiments* (2001[1757]:1-I-I):

> How selfish soever man may be supposed, there are evidently some principles in his nature, which interest him in the fortune of others, and render their happiness necessary to him, though he derives nothing from it except the pleasure of seeing it. [...]That we often derive sorrow from the sorrow of others, is a matter of fact too obvious to require any instances to prove it; for this sentiment, like all the other original passions of human nature, is by no means confined to the virtuous and humane, though they perhaps may feel it with the most exquisite sensibility. The greatest ruffian, the most hardened violator of the laws of society, is not altogether without it.

Smith clearly believes that humanity is driven by other sentiments than the profit maximizing behaviour of the marketplace, and this is the main argument behind what I have called "the fair

and reasonable citizen". To be fair and reasonable, one does not necessarily have to be entirely altruistic. It is still possible to have a keen self-interest, as Smith alludes to, but the citizen must have the capacity to lay these aside in deference to the common good of society and overall fairness to legitimate interests of others (Miller 2003:183-4). This is the justice, defined as fairness, that John Rawls claims we can expect "[...]under conditions favourable for deliberation and judgement in general" (Rawls 1971:48). This reservation is particularly important in terms of its implications for the requirements of political life. The citizen is assumed to have an innate sense of justice and fairness, but it does not necessarily guide his decisions before he is exposed to the reasoned views of others. Rawls traces the difference between *rational* and *reasonable* thought back to Immanuel Kant and the differences between the categorical and hypothetical imperative. Rawls proposes a view of reasonable man as people that are willing to adhere faithfully to a set of norms that can be justified as valid for all. *Reciprocity* is the key word in this situation. One can expect rational behaviour, but it is unreasonable to base decisions on premises one cannot expect to be acceptable to all (Rawls 2005:47-54).

A similar line of thought to the reasonable individual is presented by Habermasian theorists as the concept of the "generalized other" with which the individual should be able to sympathise (Eriksen and Weigård 1999:80-84). Also with reference to Kant, Habermas draws upon the idea of principles that are acceptable to all as the basis for a general morality that may in turn lead to generally acceptable norms of behaviour (Eriksen and Weigård 1999:95-105).

2.2.2 Personal interest and the general will

In *The Social Contract*, Rousseau (2004[1762]:30) distinguishes between "the will of all" and "the general will", distinguishing between private interest and common interest. As the name implies, aggregative democracy focuses on the aggregation of individual interest, while deliberative democracy focuses on the best solution for society. This may or may not be the same thing.

In the aggregative model, inherent in the aggregative idea, is a conception of interest as something constant and preordained. The citizen already has a set of interests before any process begins, and the political process does not change these interests. If the behaviour of the individual runs contrary to this interest, it must be because of errors of judgement on behalf of the citizen. Within such a paradigm, the concept of the general will makes no sense at all. Only

individuals have will and interest, and the will of all can therefore never be anything but the will of the sum of the citizens.

For the deliberative democratic theorist, this question is not so simple. Interest is not a precursor to the political process, but formed as a part of it. Habermas' *Theory of communicative action* (1984) focuses on the concepts of *collective rationality* and *intersubjective reality*. The very reality the individual lives in is shaped by his relation to other individuals.

The citizen may enter the process with an idea of what he wants, but it is only through the measuring of his ideas against the ideas of others and the accumulation of information that interest is shaped. The preferences of the citizen are shaped by the social reality he is part of, and the necessity to act as a reasonable individual. As discussed previously, individual preference may or may not be important to the outcome of the process, but the goal of the process is finding the best solution for society as a whole, whether as the sum of the good of individuals or Rousseau's general will.

We can say that there is a difference in level of analysis between the two ways of describing democracy. In the aggregative democracy, interest is analyzed on the level of *the citizen*, while in deliberative democracy; interest is analyzed at the level of *the common good*.

2.2.3 The focus of democracy

Different views of the citizens, different views of the nature of interest and different levels of analysis lead to a different perspective about how agents in the political are expected to behave, which in turn decides how the system itself is shaped and understood.

Heinz Eulau, John C. Wahlke, William Buchanan and Leroy C. Ferguson (1959) examine the works of Edmund Burke to arrive at two important analytical notions of democratic representation: democratic *focus* and *style*. Both of these are important for this discussion. I will first discuss the focus and return to include the style of democracy in section 2.2.4.

Democratic focus concerns itself with what the concern of democratic representatives is, or should be. Burke (1999[1774]:4.1.25) differentiates between a national and a local focus for the representatives of parliament:

> Parliament is not a Congress of Ambassadors from different and hostile interests; which interests each must maintain, as an Agent and Advocate, against other Agents and Advocates; but Parliament is a deliberative Assembly of one Nation, with one Interest, that of the whole; where, not local Purposes, not local Prejudices ought to guide, but the general Good, resulting from the general Reason of the whole.

11

In Burke's portrayal of representatives in a national congress with a local focus, they would seek the best solutions for their local constituencies, naturally seeing each others as competitors for power. With a national focus they would deliberate in order to act in the best interest of the nation. This is also the principal distinction Eulau et al. (1959) make in their research. Their comparative analyses have examined differences between state and district orientation in American state legislatures.

In light of Rousseau's distinction in the precluding section, I will also interpret the focus of democracy in a somewhat more general sense than what Eulau et al. do in their article. Rather than differentiating between a "local" and "national" focus, I differentiate between a *specialist* and a *general* focus. A general focus means that the representative focuses on the common good of the entire group the body in question is elected to represent. A specialist focus will in this interpretation mean that the representative focuses on the interest of any group or even single individual within the entirety of the group represented. This would most likely be the representative's constituency, but could also be his party, another group he identifies with or even his own self interest. The important distinction is that a specialist focus means that one focuses on the interests of a unit less than the general interest of the entire group to be represented.

In an aggregative democracy, the representative is assumed to represent the aggregated preferences of his constituents. The nature of interest as predetermined on the individual level makes consideration of the general will meaningless if this is taken to mean something different than the sum of individual preferences. The aggregative representative must thus by definition have a specialist focus.

In deliberative democracy, where decisions are to be reached through deliberation, strict adherence to the preferences of any single individual or group becomes meaningless. To be able to convince others of an argument's merits without resorting to outside influences or mere bargaining requires appeal to universal ideals or values. This does in turn require that the ideal for the representative is a general focus.

2.2.4 *The style of democracy*

The other parameter which Eulau et al. (1959:744-5) draw from Burke is the *style* of democracy. The two are closely connected; indeed Burke (1999[1774]:4.1.25) seems to think

they follow naturally from each other. Eulau et al., on the other hand, find it important to treat them distinctly. Style relates itself to how representatives behave, whether they merely follow dictates from their voters or make judgements on their behalf. Eulau et al. (Eulau et al. 1959:749-50) refer to two distinct stylistic roles, the *Delegate* and the *Trustee*[3]. In the former role, the representative should not make decisions based upon his independent convictions and judgement, but should take instructions from his constituents in all important matters. In the trustee role, the representative should not take instructions from his constituents after he is elected. He should act as a *free agent*, using his own judgements and principles as a basis for making decisions on behalf of his constituents. Ideally, this extends to making "the right decision" even if directly contrary to the expressed wishes of his electorate.

For the purpose of this discussion, I shall not view these as exclusive archetypes in which we can fit each representative, but rather as different views about the ideal behaviour of a representative. In an aggregative model of democracy, it should be apparent that the delegate style is to be preferred. The main job of the representative is aggregation of the preferences of his voters, and it therefore follows that these voiced interests are what must guide his decisions. In the deliberative model, however, the representative is expected to make judgements based on his own reason and judgement. This necessitates a willingness to allow him at least partially the status of a free agent through the role as a trustee. We may expect him to deliberate both with his constituency and with other representatives, but in the end it is the enlightenment such deliberation instils in him that should be the basis for his decisions.

Figure 1: Focus and style of democracy

	Aggregative	Deliberative
Focus	Citizen	Common good
Style	Delegate	Trustee

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[3] They also refer to a third category, *the Politico*, but this is merely a middle position between the two other. For the purposes of this thesis, I consider a dichotomous categorization sufficient.

2.2.5 The political process

The aspects of democracy discussed above have severe implications for how one views the political process. Thus the two different views of democracy implicate quite different political processes. A citizen-oriented process of aggregation will by necessity be quite different from an output-oriented deliberative process.

2.2.5.1 The aggregative process

I have previously ascertained that the analytical focus of the aggregative democracy is the citizen rather than society, and that there are two conflicting views of the citizen. The aggregative theorist sees the citizen as a selfish and rational homo economicus, while the deliberative theorist considers the citizen a reasonable being concerned with fairness. From this follows a natural inclination to take different perspectives in analyzing democracy.

In aggregative democracy, the pursuit of individual interest by each citizen must necessarily lead to conflict, and these conflicts are what the political process is about. Who has power, how it is distributed and what this can tell us about the nature of these conflicts becomes very important. This line of thinking has its roots in Machiavelli, and has resulted in a diverse set of political theories. What all of these theories share is the focus on power as the driving force of politics. Analysis of politics, understood as political conflicts should thus focus on studying power (Eriksen and Weigård 1999:14-20).

To achieve fairness and equality for all citizens, it is necessary to distribute power evenly to make sure that everyone has equal opportunity to pursue their interests. Once this is achieved, the aggregative nature of politics should naturally ensure that the outcomes benefit society as a whole as much as possible, when this is defined as the sum of benefit to its citizens. This line of thinking is basically inspired by economics, for example the thinking of Willifredo Pareto about the optimal distribution of resources.

The basic principle is for public preference to be derived from the aggregation of individual preference. Market-like theories and analogies are applied to a great degree to describe how this can be possible. The election process becomes fundamental in this regard, as it embodies bestowing administrative and coercive power unto individuals (Eriksen 1995:33; Jenssen 1996:32-33).

14

Robert Dahl describes some of the most fundamental conditions of aggregative democracy in his book *Polyarchy* (1971)[4]. It is evident on the very first pages of his book, where he starts out by outlining the most important assumptions of his model:

> I assume that the key characteristic of a democracy is the continuing responsiveness of the government to the preferences of its citizens, considered as political equals. […]
>
> I assume further that in order for a government to continue over a period of time to be responsive to the preferences of its citizens, considered as political equals, all full citizens must have impaired opportunities:
>
> To formulate their preferences.
>
> To signify their preferences to their fellow citizens and the government by individual and collective action.
>
> To have their preferences weighed equally in the conduct of the government, that is, weighed with no discrimination because of the content or source of the preference" (Dahl 1971:1-2).

These can be said to be the basic premises of the aggregative process as a whole. They introduce one very central assumption: That of pre-existing preferences. Each individual that has a stake in government should according to the theories of rational action have clear preferences for the outcomes of the political process. These should exist completely distinct from the process itself, or be exogenous in economic parlance. The preferences themselves are given by the natural self-interest of the citizens, and only perceptions of them could be prone to change given no actual changes in external premises. Should preferences appear to change in the course of the process, it should either be explained as a distortion or misrepresentation of the true interests of the citizens and thus a source of an ineffective process, alternatively as a correction of errors in the formulation of interests.

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[4] It is possible to read a certain deliberative component into Dahl's polyarchy through the "inclusiveness" or "right to participate" dimension included in his categorization of democracy (Dahl 1971:5-9). In the way of procedures, it is however my opinion of Dahl's work as presented in *Polyarchy* (1971) and *On Democracy* (2000) that he leans clearly towards the side of aggregation through his focus on elections as the main mechanism of preference formulation as well as the very point of origin in pre-existing preferences. In addition, the criterion of exclusiveness he emphasizes seems to be restricted to the absence of exclusion from elections. Regardless of whether or not the reader agrees with me in this, Dahl's formulated assumptions still describe the necessary assumptions of aggregative democracy rather well.

Figure 2: A representation of the aggregative political process
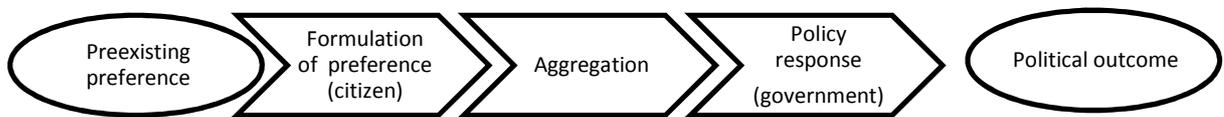
In this system, the political process is not a goal in itself; its purpose is merely to be a method of aggregating preferences. Joseph Schumpeter (1962[1942]:242) described its goal as reducing the cost of making decisions through being the most efficient aggregation mechanism possible. The true source of legitimacy in aggregative democracy is the closeness by which the political outcomes represent the pre-existing preferences of the citizens, or rather the belief of the citizens in the degree to which the political process ensures this.

The process is uni-directional with a fixed input that is handled by the process, making political outcomes that comply as closely as possible with the pre-existing preferences of the citizens. Possibilities for distortion of this process exists both in the formulation stage, aggregation stage and policy response stage if the process proves for example not to be robust enough against pressure from external interests or other mediating factors. To produce acceptable outcomes, participants in the process must have both sufficient and completely equal opportunities to formulate their preferences. Secondly, the political process must have sufficient provision to handle and aggregate these formulated preferences into a societal preference. Thirdly, the government must have sufficient mechanisms to correctly identify the policy responses that correspond with the expressed societal preference for political outcomes. Failures in either of these steps lead to outcomes that deviate from the pre-existing preferences of the citizens, and we can expect failures in each of the three steps to be cumulative.

The most important aggregation method today is the election of representatives. Competing representatives or factions formulate their programs. The degree to which they coincide with the formulated preference of the citizens is then measured through election. An input of votes into the aggregative process constitutes the formulation of a priori interests, while an output of parliamentary power is transformed into government responses to policy issues (Habermas 1995:33; Jenssen 1996:31-34).

16

The nature of aggregation itself makes the election forward-looking and promissory. The representative is elected on the basis of pledges or promises on how he will employ the power vested in him (Mansbridge 2003:516).

2.2.5.2 *The deliberative process*

In deliberative democracy, aggregating the preferences of the individual is not the primary concern of the political process. Rather, the process is viewed as an epistemological journey towards the most favourable outcome for society as a whole, reaching a rational conclusion that is in the common interest. This may or may not conflict with the personal preferences of a majority of the citizens, although it seems reasonable to assume that the interest (although not necessarily the expressed interest) of the majority and the interests of the nation as a whole will often coincide.

In the ideal deliberative democracy, all citizens would deliberate amongst themselves, being exposed to Rawls'(Rawls 1971:48) "favourable circumstances", reaching a conclusion by debate. If the outcome of the debate was not conclusive, a vote would be possible, with each citizen asserting his preferences within the realm of the reasonable. As stated in the introduction of this chapter, I have presupposed that this is not the situation in a modern democracy. The size and scope of democracy makes representation necessary to make decisions.

The deliberative political process is founded on the idea of the reasonable citizen, but also on the reasonable representative. Rather than seek to aggregate in order to reach the true *will* of the people, the deliberative process seeks to find the solutions in the *best interest* of the people. As each citizen has not participated in the whole of the deliberative process, neither can the expressed will of the majority be seen as the sole legitimization of a political decision. The arguments of the citizen insofar as he has been part of the process are important, but the mere statement of his will is not. The role of the representative is that of the *trustee*, entrusted by the citizen with the faculty of reason and the power to reach a decision based on deliberation in which the citizen can expect his arguments to be heard and given equal weight to that of others (Bessette 1994:40-46; Burke 1999[1774]).

Deliberative thought is not founded on the conflict of interest as the fundamental driving force of society. As each citizen is assumed to at least respect everyone else's need as equally legitimate to one's own, it is not assumed that a concentration of power necessarily leads to

abuse. Rather than focusing on limiting the amount of power a citizen can have over any other, transparency in the application of power becomes more important. Transparent uses of power makes it possible to subject any use of power to deliberation in order to discover whether or not it is in the best interest of the people.

Deliberative theorists have long struggled with how to explain the necessity or benefit of voting at all in a deliberative context. How can voting and elections play a part if the ideal is a deliberative consensus? At the same time we must concede that large scale democracy appears to be impossible without electing leaders and voting. Dryzek (2000:38) points out how critics have claimed that since there is no room for voting "there is no such thing as deliberative democracy" or that deliberative theorists "wish away the vulgar fact that under democracy deliberation ends in voting". In practical democracy it is of course inevitable that decisions have to be made by voting. The need for basic efficiency makes it impossible to pass every decision by unanimous consent.

Jürgen Habermas (1996:29; 2005:390) made an important turn late in his career, managing to explain how voting and elections are necessary for real deliberative politics and for making deliberative democracy possible, in reality reconciling a radical theory of deliberation with the institutions of constitutional democracy, so far owned by liberalism. Habermas' change of focus, or even "defection" as it has been characterized by some (Dryzek 2000:27), lies in the acceptance that the practical implementation of deliberative politics require some pragmatic solutions to make politics as deliberative as possible. Voting and elections become a way of storing power from deliberation, an interim transfer of communicative power from deliberation in the electorate to legislative deliberation. The election measures the support in the electorate for the positions presented and deliberated upon by each candidate, providing a biased starting point for parliamentary deliberation based upon the deliberative judgement of the citizens. This "stored" deliberative power can then be employed in the ensuing process. As the citizens invest their power in a subset of the people to continue deliberation as a parliament, parliament can in turn invest power and the responsibility for deliberation on certain issues to a committee as a subset of the parliament.

Two important differences exist between aggregative and deliberative democracy in the transference of power from the voter and the transference to political outcomes. Firstly, the voting process does not presume to aggregate the fixed preferences of the citizens, merely the

temporary outcomes of their deliberation. Furthermore, the process does not continue with a direct transference of this power into political outcomes as assumed in the aggregative process. Rather, legislators are expected to continue deliberation, reaching conclusions about the best policy responses in order to achieve the best possible outcomes. Finally: in the aggregative process, the citizen hands over all power through the act of voting. In the deliberative process, the election is not the only process by which the citizen can exert influence. Legislators are expected to keep up public deliberation through various channels and the pluralist system. Citizens may involve themselves in interest groups, call their congressman or otherwise contribute to deliberation throughout the entire process from the first discussion, through election campaigns, parliament deliberations and policy design and implementation. Finally, the circle is closed, or possibly advances to the next tier of an upwards spinning spiral, when citizen deliberation about policy continues leading up to the next election – with the possibility of immediate feedback through public deliberation in between. The citizen holds the power to keep influencing policy. Policy makers hold the power, not only to influence the citizen's perceptions of their policies, but also to influence their actual preferences through the process of public deliberation. At even or uneven intervals, the communicative power of their deliberation will once again be measured by election.

Figure 3: The deliberative political process
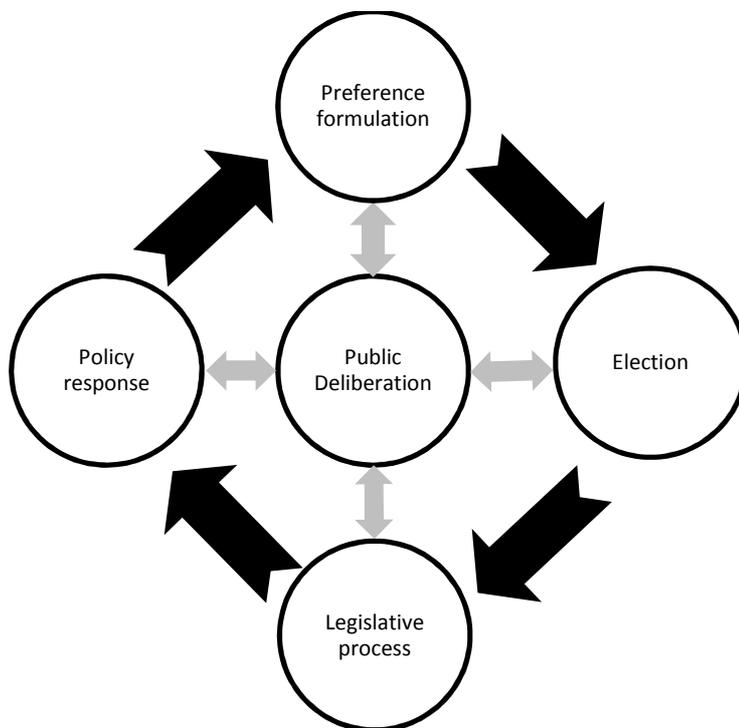
It is possible to claim that this leaves deliberative election with the same vulnerability as aggregative election: that the available voting options can never completely represent either the deliberative arguments or the aggregative preferences of any voter. With the assumption that the representative will behave reasonably, there is however a greater robustness to this choice in deliberative democracy. The deliberative election does not need to elect representatives that perfectly represent the aggregated will of the citizens. Instead, elected representatives should pay sufficient attention to the arguments of the entire citizenry and distance themselves from strong biases, either positive or negative, towards the arguments of any particular group.

2.2.6 Consequences for the study of politics

This chapter has presented two different democratic processes, or two different ways of understanding the political process, with quite different underlying assumptions. Neither model should be categorized as purely normative or descriptive. Depending on the point of view of the reader, they can be applied as both.

It should be apparent that strongly deliberative processes will interfere with the mechanisms of aggregation and vice-versa. The deliberative process of constant and bilateral influence (between representatives and the electorate) clearly undermines the hierarchal structure of

aggregation. Likewise, elections, plebiscites and polls legitimized by its aggregative power may interfere with the deliberative process by cutting debate short.

As mentioned earlier, Francis Sejerstedt (1983) shows, at least in the case of Norway, how the aggregative model is clearly unable to explain many major divisions in politics. I have already pointed out how current western democracy has deviated far from the normative ideal of deliberation. Current democratic practice is clearly imperfect by both standards when considered as normative ideals. Still, the very aspects that represent a problem of interference when considered exclusively in the light of one of the models constitute a point of strength when viewed in the light of the other.

This should be sufficient cause to seek out and apply alternative models to the understanding of politics. My belief is that deliberative democracy can exist as a complementary model to the aggregative in describing the workings of the political processes. I do not insist that deliberative democracy is necessarily a better descriptive tool than the aggregative, but I do maintain that they will both be able to explain some part of what goes on in politics. Any political process must be assumed to consist of some measure of deliberation as well as some measure of strategic application of power, for example through negotiation or the employment of voting power. The balance of the two may vary widely; it may even be the case that strategic political action is far more common than deliberative. Still, explaining politics solely through the mechanisms of aggregative democracy seems a limit that weakens our insight into politics as a whole. Decisions are sometimes (perhaps even often) taken in violation of the perceived self-interest. Even if we were to consider altruistic behaviour as consistently bad and detrimental to society, the fact that it exists means political science must be able to offer explanations of why and how it may change political outcomes.

The prescription for the study of politics must therefore be that we need both aggregative and deliberative ways of describing, measuring and defining politics. An exhaustive study of any process must necessarily include both the deliberative and aggregative nature of its workings, and to which degree the process is characterized by either. Thus we need tools for analyzing both. The current state of the science seems to be that we are well outfitted with tools for the measurement of aggregative democracy, but poorly stocked with empirical tools that fit deliberative politics. My conclusion is therefore that this is something that needs to be remedied. We need to find empirical tools that can adequately capture the deliberative nature of politics in

order to understand deliberation, its influence and which mechanisms make politics more or less deliberative.

3   *Parties and deliberation*

In the previous chapter, I argued that deliberation should be of interest to political science, whether one sees it as a normative goal or not. It should therefore be interesting for political science to discover which institutional arrangements serve to increase deliberation, and which serve to reduce it. I will now explain how we can expect the existence of institutionalized political factions, political parties, to reduce the level of deliberation in a democratic system.

3.1   *Political parties research and theory*

"Get the prices right" has been the slogan of economists, and a cure-all for most problems of resource allocation. According to Phillipe C. Schmitter (2001:67) political scientists have been peddling an almost equally strong slogan: "get the parties right" when it comes to building robust democracies. The right system of political parties has been the main tool for aggregation, the most reliable mechanism for accountability and the only mechanism for predictable and stable government (Schattschneider 1977[1942]:1).

The above statements are most certainly true for the fields of comparative and behavioural studies of politics. Political theorists, with the notable exception of the nation-building early post-war era, have on the other hand had a tendency to either ignore the existence of political parties or be sceptical of their place in a democratic political system. Nancy Rosenblum has made this the topic of her book *On the Side of the Angels* (2008). As with the study of deliberation, there seems to be a clear disconnect in the study of political parties between the field of political theory and the rest of political science. As Rosenblum (2008:3) puts it: "Political theorists have abandoned the field, and the study of partisanship is carried on in [empirically oriented] political science terms". Even if political parties are considered endemic to democracy, the disconnect is visible in the fact that they are not part of almost any definitions of democracy, and that national constitutions tend to not take them into account (Stokes 1999:243-5). Furthermore, even in rational choice and behaviouralist circles, research on parties appear to be in decline. There appears to be a growing perception that current research on the topic is

"[…]narrow-gauged, methodologically unimaginative, and theoretically thin" (Reiter 2006:616). All in all it appears that there is little satisfaction with the way political parties have been handled in political science in recent years and that barriers need to be crossed between theory and empirical science in order to create further understanding of a concept that seems deeply ingrained in and important to democracy, whether we like it or not.

The belief in the benefit of parties to democracy still prevails among political scientists even if some also assume that working democracy within parties is next to impossible (Pettitt 2007:2). This may be explained with heavy influence on party studies by the rational choice school (Strom 1990:565). In the aggregative model of democracy, the existence of intraparty democracy is unnecessary, since a party that does not represent an attractive basket of opinions will fail to attract voters from the citizens and be removed from office. How this basket of opinions is created is of little importance.

For the deliberative model, the assumed non-existence of intraparty democracy poses a larger problem. If parties are assumed to be led by small elites with little possibility for internal dissent, then their positions can hardly be the result of deliberation. The deliberative process gives the best results when deliberation is present at all stages. Non-deliberative processes, especially when coupled with methods of coercion, may be severely detrimental to deliberation by suppressing voices and arguments that would otherwise add to the debate. There are several theories that relate to this.

3.2 The Iron Law of Oligarchy

The idea of the naturally authoritarian tendencies of party organization was formulated most famously by Robert Michels (1962[1911]). His "iron law of oligarchy" explained how political organization leads to oligarchy. He observed how party organization tended to concentrate power and how that power took on a strongly conservative character in order to keep political elites in control. Parties inevitably moved from being means to an end to becoming ends in themselves. Even radical political parties and revolutionary parties, once gaining the strength to concentrate enough power at the top, would eventually become members of the same oligarchy. The bureaucratic nature of organization would inevitably lead to the suppression of internal dissent and the stifling of debate. As parties by nature strive to activate as large a portion of the masses as possible, they must "cover internal dissensions with a pious veil" (Michels 1962[1911]:334).

This is the idea that Marxists thought would lead to eventual revolution, but Michels also discussed how parties were able to sustain themselves, and the system, through the gradual transformation by assimilation of new leaders:

> The preponderant elements of the movement, the men who lead and nourish it, end by undergoing a gradual detachment from the masses, and are attracted within the orbit of the "political class." They perhaps contribute to this class a more creative energy and enhanced practical intelligence, thus providing for the ruling class an ever-renewed youth (Michels 1962[1911]:355).

The important idea here is that although new ideas are eventually allowed to seep through into the political class through the continuous assimilation of new members, the short term way of sustaining the political class itself is through the suppression of internal disagreement and dissent. In other words: parties sustain themselves through active suppression of deliberation.

His utterly cynical view of parties turned Michels into a convinced syndicalist, and has generally made his theories lose much of their credence in contemporary political science. They do, however, still touch upon the heart of the matter. The core of his theories is still extremely influential in political science today, even if perhaps not always identified as such. His main claim that political parties are authoritarian by nature may be traced to the very strong tendency to analyse parties as unitary actors. The striking lack of interest in analyzing the internal workings and the effects parties themselves exert on democracy and the state might be another reason for this disillusionment. A third might be the focus on aggregative models, in which the internal workings of parties are not particularly important (Wolinetz 1998:xv).

There are three important mechanisms by which Michel's iron law worked (Pettitt 2007:7):

1) The need for professional leadership.
2) The gratitude of party members.
3) The laws of tactics.

The need for leadership in a large state or organization should not be very controversial. This point is made by both Plato and Rousseau, who thought that the very idea of democracy was impossible without a class of unfree slaves to cater to the needs of those who must constantly engage themselves in politics (Rousseau 2004[1762]:77-9). This leadership, the political class, concentrates power, which in turn leads to a tendency to wish to preserve that power. Rousseau, Plato and Michels reject representative government (proposing different alternatives) partly on these grounds. The very idea of representative government, however, was instituted in order to

24

remedy these problems. John Stuart Mill (1991[1861]:80), and indeed the mainstream political thought following him, see it as the remedy rather than the problem. While not rejecting the authoritarian influences of large scale organization, the effect political involvement has on educating the masses is assumed to be a counteracting influence, certainly vital to the idea of public deliberation (Pettitt 2007:7-8).

Gratitude of the party members to those in power deals with the idea of not wanting to assume the responsibility of leadership and decision making oneself. There is much to suggest that this is a prevalent attitude among democratic citizens (Hibbing and Theiss-Morse 2002:1-2), but also research to show that the tendency is not entirely universal (Pettitt 2007:8).

The rise of rational choice theory has certainly made the importance of studying politics in terms of tactical behaviour a lot more accepted than it was in Michels' days. His tactics argument bases itself on the concept of "caesarism" or "Bonapartist ideology" (Michels 1962[1911]:212-23) as necessary for any party that wishes to compete for power. With these concepts, Michels refers to the tendency for the political leader to identify the will of the people with himself. As the supreme representative of the people, the political leader accepts that it is the people's will that he wields power on their behalf even to the point of reducing the power of the people over government. Once elected, opposition to the elected representative of the people becomes tantamount to opposition to the will of the people itself. Tactics enter into the mix when internal dissent in the party is sacrificed on the altar of "the larger cause" of fulfilling the electoral mandate of the people by tactical support of the party's leaders in the political struggle over government policy. These tactical considerations become much more important for a party in government or which has government ambitions (Pettitt 2007:9).

Michels terms his thesis not as a theory but an "iron law", underlining his absolutist view of the mechanisms he describes. This has led some to discard it as outdated and irrelevant for modern political science, the amount of research regarding it over the last couple of decades speaks a different truth (Leach 2005; Pettitt 2007; Rohrschneider 1994; Rucht 1999; Voss and Sherman 2000). The sum of research on Michels indicates that modern democracy appears to have proven that modern party-based democracy has certain oligarchic tendencies, but the many examples that can be found of parties and groups breaking the trend indicate that it does not seem justified to call it an "iron law".

Even if Michels' law has to be reduced to the level of a theory on the oligarchic tendency of political parties, the impact on deliberation may still be significant. Should it still prove to hold true as a general trend, we may expect that strong party organization, as seen in many European countries, may have the side effect of diminishing deliberation in the political system. Particularly the second and third arguments supporting the law appear to be directly related to deliberative practice in democracy. Party members' gratitude is in reality a method of outside influence that lead party members to make other considerations than the force of the better argument the deciding factor in decision making. The same may be said of both tactical behaviour by parties and by party members seeking the fulfilment of future goals rather than focusing on making the best decision in the matter at hand.

3.3 Group polarization

Michels' "Iron Law" portrays parties as debate arenas that provide very little room for a deliberative climate. Cass Sunstein has put forward another law that is very interesting in the deliberative perspective. In his article "The Law of Group Polarization" (Sunstein 2003) he shows that even if there might be deliberation within parties, that may not be a good thing for the overall deliberation in the political system. It is not deliberation itself that is the problem, but the existence of arenas for sub-deliberation that undermine and weaken unconstrained public deliberation.

The basic premise of Sunstein's paper is that people "enter discussion with one view and leave with another" (Sunstein 2003:81), also a basic assumption of deliberative theory. What Sunstein is concerned about is in what direction their views are likely to change in real deliberative settings. Sunstein finds a striking statistic regularity of group polarization: "...that members of a deliberating group predictably move towards a more extreme point in the direction indicated by the members' predeliberation tendencies" (Sunstein 2003:81).

The likelihood of such shifts is not the same for all kinds of group deliberation. In particular "groups with some kind of shared salient identity (like Republicans, Democrats, and lawyers, but unlike jurors and experimental subjects)" (Sunstein 2003:81) are subject to this. Internal deliberation in a political party can therefore be expected to have a particularly polarizing effect on its members. Furthermore, groups that base themselves on identification with a social group increases this effect, particularly when one has a rival "outgroup" (Sunstein 2003:85). This is a

description that seems to fit very well with the traditional class-based parties of the labour movement, agrarian parties and the like.

Sunstein also points out that the polarization of groups need not necessarily be a problem for democracy in and of itself. So-called "enclave deliberation" may in fact strengthen groups with an initially weak voice, increasing the number of available opinions (Sunstein 2003:93-5). This might particularly justify supporting political parties to actually strengthen deliberative democracy in societies dominated by the repression of the interests of particular groups, like the labour movement in the early 20th century. The "mass party" described by Maurice Duverger (1963[1951]) could fit rather well with this line of reasoning. There seems, however, to be a general consensus that modern western democracies are moving away from this model of party organizations. Political parties that represent particular underprivileged groups are no longer the norm. No single theory of "the new party" seems to be prevalent, but political theorists now speak of models such as the "catch-all party", the "electoral-professional party", the "cadre party" or the "cartel party" and several more (Daalder 2001:48-9). Neither of these models presents the modern party as a group that could plausibly fill Sunstein's role in creating beneficial enclave deliberation.

If political parties indeed work as a system for political polarization of groups, it does not bode well for deliberation. Deliberation requires openness and a will to bend to the better argument. As a minimum that means debate where all facts and arguments are laid on the table in a truthful manner. Group deliberation in advance, with little exposure to diverging opinion could then serve to create an environment for discussion with strong positions taken a priori with great robustness to counterarguments.

3.4 The benefits of parties and their respective downsides

As mentioned before, there has been surprisingly little research done on how parties actually function and what effects they have on democracy (Wolinetz 1998:xv). Among those to discuss the topic is Schmitter (2001), who considers the most important functions parties are supposed to have on democracy:

1. Structuring electoral competition through nomination.
2. Providing symbolic identity.
3. Forming government and providing structure to the legislative process.

4. Aggregating interests and passions.

With the assumption that parties fulfil these primary functions, their organization has become so intertwined with the idea of liberal democracy that it is near impossible to conceive of democratic states without them. This is especially true since modern states that have strived to be without the divisiveness of parties have most often turned out to become dictatorships rather than deliberative utopias.

From a pragmatic point of view, Schmitter's functions can easily be seen as effects that improve on the political process by structuring, ordering and simplifying to make the political machinery run all the more smoothly. A process without them, especially in large scale, would easily become so chaotic it would be greatly prone to abuse. Nevertheless, it is with careful examination of each effect easy to envision a possible side effect that would work directly to reduce the level of deliberation.

The *structuring function* of parties constitutes "...offering to citizens aggregated in territorial constituencies a choice between alternative sets of leaders" (Schmitter 2001:72). He points to this as the primary function of any political party (Schmitter 2001:74). In order to reduce the number of potential candidates to a manageable level, some candidates have to be discarded. In order to make an informed choice about who are to be prequalified to compete for the voters, a smaller group than the entire electorate have to be responsible. On both these two levels of exclusion, other opinions and choices are excluded, in effect being taken off the agenda before public deliberation in the entire electorate is an opportunity.

We could expect this to be stronger or weaker in different types of parties and different types of elections. With a system of primaries, particularly with a caucus model, a rather large number of people are included in the decision. In the typical European model, however, particularly in the Norwegian system I am most familiar with; the nomination process is conducted entirely by the active members of the party. Party members constitute only a small portion of the population, and even within the party, there are some smaller groups with much more influence over the process than others. It all serves the expediency of being able to make decisions efficiently, but it is every step of the way based on the need to reduce the number of people participating and the number of opinions taken into consideration.

As presented in section 2.2.5.2, Habermas' deliberative defence of elections rest on them as a way to measure and store deliberative power. Naturally, the more intermediaries there are

between the electorate and the candidates, the weaker this effect will be. In many cases several (or even most) candidates never get the opportunity to present themselves to the electorate beyond the party because they are excluded in the nomination process. Candidates that are nominated may still not even be known to the constituency as riding on the party ticket may mean they benefit from the trust the electorate has in the party itself, or even another candidate from the same party.

Single seat constituencies and primary elections might be possible improvements from a deliberative perspective as they connect the candidate more directly to the electorate, thus increasing the possibility for deliberation with, and about, each candidate.

Symbolic identity is the second of Schmitter's important party functions, and a continuation of the structuring process. The formation of symbolic identity is seen as a gradual process by which the parties that

> "... provide most citizens with a stable and distinctive set of ideas and goals (symbols) that anchor their expectations about democracy, orient them in a general way toward policy options, and make them feel part of the process of collective choice" (Schmitter 2001:72).

Important here is the ability to "orient them in a general way toward policy options". This is also particularly troublesome from a deliberative perspective. If one is already "generally oriented" towards something, it would of course mean carrying a bias towards those options. Furthermore, this orientation does not in Schmitter's view come first and foremost from deliberative processes, but from the party's "...capacity to manipulate symbols and memories in such a way that, over time, individuals come to identify exclusively with one party" (Schmitter 2001:76). Once again it is a process completely at odds with the deliberative process that demands that decisions are made based upon truthful and open information shared freely, not the manipulation of symbols and memories. Once again, an effect that may be expedient to the political process may be so at the expense of reducing deliberation.

The *forming of government* function could appear very innocent and necessary also from a deliberative perspective. Even in a purely deliberative system, someone must be able to efficiently carry out the decisions cast by the whole. Schmitter's analysis of what is necessary for this function, gives a very different idea: "Note that, in order to do this well, parties should be capable of maintaining a consistently high level of internal discipline during their terms in office" (Schmitter 2001:73). This is an argument that plays straight into the hands of Michels. The need for internal discipline would once again be directly at odds with the need for

deliberation. Whether it means that some arguments and suggestions are to be suppressed completely or merely kept within the party, it would mean that they would be unavailable for the general public. Internal discipline could also mean that representatives are required to vote loyally for their government, making decisions on a different basis than the one informed by deliberation in which they participate.

The parties' function of *aggregating interests and passions* is presented by Schmitter as more of an underlying assumption of the three preceding functions. This may be a function that in and of itself is not necessarily inimical to deliberation. On the other hand, neither is it a function that is particularly relevant from the deliberative perspective.

In conclusion, when considering Schmitter's work, it seems like three out of the four important benefits of political parties seem to be derived from mechanisms that might be actively detrimental to deliberation.

3.5 Conclusions on parties and deliberation

In this chapter I have examined three different theories of relevance to political parties that all appear to indicate that the very mechanisms that make political parties effective and successful are mechanisms that work to the detriment of deliberation in the political system. This should be a strong enough theoretical basis to at least raise the concern that this connection may be true. If one seeks to understand the relationship between political institutions and deliberative practice, it should therefore be interesting to subject this theory to empirical testing. That will be the focus of the rest of this thesis.

4   Approaches to the study of deliberative politics

As presented in chapter 1.1 my goal is to explore the effect organized factions have on deliberation, and to aid in bringing empirical political science and political theory together in order to be able to draw on the strengths of both.

A major hurdle stands in the way of such studies, namely finding a way to capture and evaluate the deliberativeness of any given debate. In order to be able to study deliberation - both in terms of who is more or less deliberative, where deliberation exists, and what the outcomes of more and less deliberative debate are - one has to be able to identify and evaluate the level of

deliberation in a given debate. As simple as it may sound, this is no trivial undertaking. A testament to this is the plethora of methods that have been proposed over the last few decades, only some of which have ever made the step into real world testing at more than a minor scale.

Edward L. Lascher wrote about this in his 1996 article "Assessing Legislative Deliberation: A Preface to Empirical Analysis". He predicted a "golden age" of empirical research on deliberation in legislative assemblies, but came to the following conclusion about the current state of research (Lascher 1996:502):

> "But let me be blunt: we are presently ill-prepared to assess legislative deliberation in practice, let alone to make recommendations for institutional reform.
>
> The biggest problem is an empirical one. While there are some rich single or multiple case studies that underscore the importance of deliberation (e.g., Derthick and Quirk 1985), there is little in the way of systematic, comparative research. For example, I am unaware of any study applying a set of standards to compare outcomes in processes that are relatively more and relatively less deliberative."

The field seems to have made some movement since 1996, but the inadequacies pointed out by Lascher are still relevant.

In this chapter I will look at different approaches to the study of deliberative politics. First, I will look at the requirements of a method by which deliberative politics may be studied empirically and draw up three criteria such methods can be evaluated by. Then I will proceed to examine four different methods that each appear to have some strengths that make them useful for such a project. Finally, at the end of the chapter, I make a structured comparison of them to arrive at the method that best seems to satisfy all three criteria and thus be the most likely candidate for the best method of studying deliberative politics empirically.

4.1 Requirements for an acceptable method

To take a systematic look at different methods, I have drawn up three criteria by which they may be evaluated. For a method to be well suited for the use I intend it must meet all of these three criteria as well as possible:

I. Acceptability - Must be a method that a large portion of empirically-oriented political scientists are willing to accept.

II. Completeness - Must be a method that is consistent with theory of deliberation.

III. Usefulness - Must be a method that is suitable for comparative analysis, preferably on a large scale and with a multitude of institutional arrangements.

A method that scores poorly on either of these criteria will be insufficient to provide evidence for either proving or disproving theories about deliberation in such a way that we can reasonably expect general political science to accept it.

I will now proceed to elaborate and justify each of these criteria before discussing a number of possible methods that appear to be likely candidates for satisfying them.

4.1.1 Acceptability

Empirically-oriented naturalism has grown into a very strong ideal for political science. Eriksen and Weigård (1999:79) describe it as following a two world paradigm consisting of an objective world of generally accessible phenomena giving themselves to rational analysis and a subjective world of irrational feelings, values, whims and fancies outside the systematic world that can be analyzed scientifically. Within this two world paradigm, deliberation has belonged to the second, and has therefore been considered inconsequential to the majority of political scientists.

Some deliberative theorists have responded to the lack of interest from the political science "mainstream" by ignoring the concerns of empirically-oriented scientists rather than trying to address them. The purpose of any normative position is of course to gain acceptance, and to achieve that goal, it seems less than productive to distance oneself from the majority of political scientists.

To be *acceptable* to the political science community at large, we must find a method that conforms as much as possible to the most commonly accepted standards of the political science profession. Jonathon Moses and Torbjørn Knutsen (2007:50) identify these as based on the *ontology of independent particulars*, the *epistemology of the correspondence theory of truth* and a *methodological focus on identifying patterns of regularity*. Arendt Lijphart has in turn identified a hierarchy of methods organized in descending order of usefulness to the naturalist political scientist (Moses and Knutsen 2007:52):

1. Experimental methods;
2. Statistical methods;
3. Comparative methods; and
4. Case-study methods.

A key concern of naturalist political science is also that dependence on the subjective viewpoint of the researcher should be counteracted by sufficient replicability. The legitimacy of the work stems not from the logic of its arguments alone, but from the possibility of other researchers repeating the research to uncover errors in the application of methods with resulting lack of validity. An acceptable method should therefore allow other researchers to replicate the process, either with the same data or with a new set.

According to Lijphart's hierarchy, an experimental or statistical method would appear to best satisfy this criterion.

4.1.2 Theoretical completeness

The second criterion regards the connection to political theory. To bridge the gap between the empirically and theoretically oriented branches of political science, this bridge must have sufficiently strong foundations at both ends. Various methods may have larger appeal to one of the sides, but the method chosen must both adhere sufficiently to the methodological strictures of empirical political science as well as rest on a basis of political theory that is sufficiently complete.

I recognize, along with Steiner et al. (Steiner et al. 2004:53) that the occasionally conflicting definitions and theories of deliberative democracy would not only make it unlikely, but theoretically impossible, to find an empirical method of investigation that would be consistent with the entire range of deliberative theories; at least if one should find one simple enough to be of practical use. The requirement for the ideally theoretically consistent method would therefore have to be a method that captures the entirety of a single strand of deliberative theory. The method should open every theoretically significant aspect of that theory for examination, preferably coinciding as much as possible with other theories. The minimum requirement of any method chosen is however that it has a sufficiently strong theoretical basis to be said to cover the essential characteristics of any single theory of deliberation.

One example of such a theory that may be operationalized into a research method is Jürgen Habermas' *Discourse Ethics*, as attempted by Steiner et al. in their Discourse Quality Index, and Lincoln Dahlberg (2002) in his research on the public sphere on the internet.

In the abovementioned article by Dahlberg (2002:31), he expresses concern about the theoretical completeness in current methods for research on deliberation, especially attempts to operationalize Habermas' discourse ethics:

> The fundamental problem is that operationalization requires researchers to focus upon those aspects of the public sphere for which narrowly defined and measurable indicators can be found, thus neglecting other aspects less amenable to quantification. The result is a serious loss of meaning. The best we can hope for is a limited and skewed (because some aspects are more measurable than others) understanding of the extent that the communicative practices under investigation fill the public sphere conception.

Dahlberg is especially concerned that *reflexivity* and *sincerity,* as criteria for good deliberation, are particularly likely to be left out because they are very difficult to observe and capture accurately. Whether someone is allowed to participate or treated with respect is much more readily observable in a debate than whether or not participants speak truthfully and really believe in what they are saying. A number of deliberative theorists have voiced similar concerns (Bächtiger and Steiner 2005:162-4; King 2009; O'Brien 2009).

4.1.3 Usefulness

The third criterion regards the usefulness of the method in performing practical research. To identify the factors conducive to deliberation, the method should be easily applicable to comparative analysis, both with low-N strategies such as the *method of difference*, but also with high-N methods such as the *method of concomitant variations* (Moses and Knutsen 2007:94-115).

In order to study deliberation as a general phenomenon, and especially to single out separate factors that promote or counteract it, we need to be able to study deliberation in various contexts. It is therefore preferable that we find a method that allows for comparison of debates that are different in nature. Preferably the same method should apply with equal ease to parliamentary debates through civil society organizations to kitchen table conversation. Steiner et al. (2004:53-4) speak of this as the empirical power of the method. They find it important that it relies on observable phenomena in order to achieve sufficient reliability. When interpretation is necessary, as is the case with coding qualitative data, it is a great advantage to have precise and sufficiently clear instructions available. This could make it possible for different coders to employ the same method to different sets of data and produce comparable results. The usefulness of any data gathered, and the likelihood of being able to draw authoritative conclusions increases with the

amount of data one has access to. Standardized and comparable data lay the groundwork for new research and the advancement of the field as a whole.

4.2 Potential methods

I will now examine four methods that have all been suggested for the empirical study of deliberative politics. This is surely not a comprehensive list of possible approaches, but it is a selection of methods that appear to show particular promise. The first method, Grice's Maxims, is a very well tried and developed method from language studies; the second and fourth, Speech Act Analysis and the Discourse Quality Index, are methods used by political scientists that have seen application on similar topics to the one at hand; Pragma-Dialectics, the third method presented, has not to my knowledge been put to extensive practical tests, but bears considering on account of its novel approach.

4.2.1 Grice's maxims

The first method I will examine is based on the tradition of language studies. This is an important origin for much of the theory of deliberation. A core theorist of language and communication studies is H. Paul Grice (1975:45-7), who has established a list of maxims for good and effective communication. These have been employed by researchers of that discipline as an analytical tool, and bear much similarity to Habermas' maxims of formal pragmatics, for example as discussed by Eriksen and Weigård (1999:54-6). These maxims amount to a form of social contract between people involved in discourse, forming norms of expression.

As basis for a research method, these maxims have been employed more or less directly by analyzing and counting violations in real debates. Behaviour that deviates from Grice's norms might be seen as behaviour detrimental to deliberation. Measuring the amount of such "rule-breaking" is thus a possible avenue to determine the quality of deliberation (Krogstad 1999:202-5; Skedsmo 2007).

Social anthropologist Anne Krogstad (1999:202-29) is among the researchers who introduced this method into social science, through a connection to gender research, for an analysis of the behaviour of politicians in televised debates. She uses this to distinguishing between issue-oriented and image-oriented behaviour. In the case of televised debates over EU referendums,

the analyzed types of violations were: "Long-windedness, credit-claiming, performance, question evasion and negative attention towards fellow debaters" (Krogstad 2001:157).

4.2.1.1 Description

Krogstad draws upon the work of gender studies researcher Karen Gomard in her operationalization of Grice's maxims (Krogstad 1999:203, my translation):

1. Quantity: Say only what is necessary according to the purpose of the conversation.
2. Quality: Be honest. Say only what is true and not what you lack sufficient evidence for.
3. Expression: Express yourself in a precise and direct manner without ambiguity and circumspectness.
4. Relations: Be relevant.
5. Sociality: Be polite.

The fifth category is introduced by Krogstad herself in addition to Grice's original four. She defends this by reference to the fact that Grice himself touches upon this subject in his text, although he fails to include it in his final list of maxims (Krogstad 1999:203-4).

On the basis of these five categories of maxims, Krogstad identifies five breaches that are selected as particularly interesting to her research. It is important to note that her principal focus is the separation between issue and case orientation in televised debates, so it might be necessary to select other breaches as the most important in an analysis oriented towards analyzing the level of deliberation. Her five breaches are (Krogstad 1999:203, my translation):

1. Width
2. Self-promotion
3. Rhetorical embellishment
4. Evasion of questions
5. Attacks on opponents

The first breach may not appear to be self-explanatory. What is meant by this is arguments, digressions and examples that move outside of the context of the current debate, attempting to connect it to wider phenomena than the one in question (Krogstad 1999:203, 205-14).

4.2.1.2 Strengths and weaknesses

Grice's maxims are rooted in linguistic theory, and are based directly on a consistent set of theories within that discipline. I am however mostly concerned with deliberative politics. The questions should therefore be to what degree they comply with deliberative theory. Habermas (2005:385-6) himself has commented on this. He refers to it as an example of "philosophical reconstructions of basic competences." His satisfaction for this method seems to be only partial, as he claims to "prefer a stronger conception of 'rational discourse' for explaining an epistemic notion of deliberative politics." He appears to be concerned that this kind of approach only considers the veneer of potentially deliberative politics without delving into the truth behind the words. Thus we seem to be returning to the question of the criterion of truthfulness that was touched upon in chapter 4.1.2. On these grounds, we can consider the method to be fairly well grounded in theory, but not wholly theoretically complete. This reservation is more or less the same as one which will be brought up in chapter 4.2.4 regarding the Discourse Quality Index.

I consider this method to be on a reasonable level when it comes to the acceptability criterion. Its main strength lies in the easily quantifiable nature of the data. Counting the numbers of breaches one can, as in Krogstad's research, show the percentages of breaches they commit, and what kind of breaches these are (Krogstad 1999:218). These could, given sufficient amounts of data be subject to statistical analysis. The weakness in this regard must be the evaluative nature of the research. The researcher must do an evaluation of what constitutes breaches, which in turns requires an amount of background knowledge about the context and practices of the subject body that is studied. Replicability could be strengthened by very explicit evaluation criteria.

In terms of usefulness, the method has clear strengths. As noted regarding the acceptability, the method lends itself rather easily to statistical analysis, which would make it well suited for concomitant variation comparisons. It is not as information-rich as some other methods, but its simplicity makes generating larger quantities of data much easier than with the more thorough qualitative analysis or more complex systems of coding and indices.

4.2.2 Speech act analysis

Katharina Holzinger (2005) has made another important contribution to the empirical study of deliberative politics through her analysis of conflict modes in legislative debate. Differentiating between *arguing* and *bargaining* as mode of conflict resolution, she has used

speech act analysis to discover which is more prevalent in two cases of German legislative debate. The method holds promise to discover which type of institutional factors further the one type over the other.

By Holzinger's (2005:241) own claim, her work is the first application of this method in the field of political science. It is also of linguistic origin, based on the work of John L. Austin and John R. Searle in the 1960s. Like pragma-dialectics and Habermas' theory, it is based on pragmatics, the study not of the actual utterances[5], but what is meant by them.

The distinction between arguing and bargaining as modes of communication can be traced back to the work of Jon Elster, who introduces these two terms to differentiate between ideal types of behaviour associated with the metaphorical forum and marketplace respectively. In Elster's work these two are part of the trichotomy of arguing, bargaining and voting as the three usual forms of decision in a modern society. He claims that political decision processes usually consist of all these three to a varying degree, but that arguing is the part that belongs to the deliberative (Elster 1998b:5-12; Holzinger 2005:240). The claim that bargaining and voting cannot be part of deliberation remains contested among deliberative theorists, among others by Habermas (2005:387-8) in direct response to Holzinger's work.

The method is in many ways similar to the method based on Grice's maxims as discussed in chapter 4.2.1, but there are some significant differences. These will be explored in chapter 4.2.2.2.

Cornelia Ulbert and Thomas Risse (2005) have also conducted studies in deliberative politics based on this method, but this review is based first and foremost on Holzinger's implementation as her objective is directly related to determining the level of deliberation in legislative debate.

4.2.2.1 Description

As previously noted, speech act analysis is rooted in linguistic studies, where it is a common part of the methodical repertoire. In our current context Holzinger is first and foremost concerned with so-called *illocutionary acts*, the pragmatic action the speaker performs by the utterance of words, the effect he intends to make. Different illocutionary acts have a set of requirements or rules they must satisfy in order to qualify as such, namely (1) what can be said,

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[5] The study of the actual utterances, focused on words and phrases is called *semantics*. Insight into the semantics of a statement is presupposed for pragmatic study (Holzinger 2005:241).

(2) what social preconditions must apply, (3) what one must assume the speaker's motivation to be and (4) what the action consists of (Holzinger 2005:241-2).

Holzinger defines a number of illocutionary acts associated with bargaining and arguing respectively. Bargaining acts may be such as to demand, to offer, to promise or refuse, while to claim, assume, ask, justify and conclude are examples of arguing acts. Some acts may be either bargaining or arguing, for example to ascertain non-agreement or to reject and must be analyzed in their propositional context to be classified (Holzinger 2005:241-4).

4.2.2.2 Strengths and weaknesses

The theoretical completeness of the method in terms of deliberative theory appears to be rooted firmly in Elster's deliberative theory and his decision trichotomy. Without access to the actual constitutive rules used by Holzinger in defining the illocutionary acts, it is difficult to ascertain to what extent she has captured the other important constituents of Elster's work, for example the trichotomy of motives (Elster 1998b:6). I can only assume that such concerns have been dealt with properly.

However, a more pressing matter is the critique of the application of speech act analysis in the first place. Ulbert and Risse (2005:363) themselves argue that analyzing the mere quantitative distributions of such acts in fact gives us very shaky grounds on which to draw conclusions about deliberativeness. It is also impossible to ascertain on these grounds whether actors are motivated by strategic interest or argumentative rationality in presenting the arguments they do. This appears similar to the earlier mentioned reservations in chapter 4.1.2 by Lincoln Dahlberg and others about the difficulty of measuring sincerity in political debate. Curato (2008:7) presents this as a common critique against the whole theory of discourse analysis, that it merely counts words, thereby ignoring the importance of the statement for the resolution of the argument as a whole.

A more conclusive strength of the method lies in its easy quantification and clear rules of classification that provides both robust reliability of the results and possibilities for replication. This makes the method comply much better with the requirements of the acceptability criterion than for example the pragma-dialectic method. This also provides good opportunities for comparing results by different researchers. The method also appears to be relatively less work-intensive than the pragma-dialectic method, further increasing the possibility of being able to use

it to conduct large N research. This should make the method more compliant with the acceptability and usefulness criteria.

The clear classification criteria that constitutes the method also appears to be its major strength over the Grice-method described in chapter 4.2. An exercise of personal judgement on behalf of the researcher is still necessary, but this judgement is done within very explicit strictures, which would be likely to appeal more to naturalist political scientists than the more open application of the Grice maxims. The theoretical base in the social scientific theory of Jon Elster, explicitly linked to deliberation, should also serve to underline the relevance of its application to studies of deliberative politics.

4.2.3 Pragma-dialectics

The third method I will examine, Pragma-dialectics, has been proposed by Nicole Curato (2008) as a method that is well-suited for the study of deliberation. It may be said to be a return to the linguistic theory that is the basis of Habermas' theories of deliberation. Far from being the only basis of deliberative theory, as some authors appear to suggest, Habermas' discourse ethics is among the most comprehensive and widely cited deliberative theories. It is also the work to which Steiner et al. ascribe much of their work. As Curato (2008:8) points out, even if it is among the most cited theories, it is still rare to see empirical work actually based on the linguistic theory it is grounded in.

Using pragma-dialectics as a method for researching deliberative practice is Curato's proposed remedy for this. Pragma-dialectics is based on the work of Franz H. VanEemeren and Rob Grootendorst, with its theoretical roots in discourse analysis. It is oriented towards studying discussion as an attempt at resolving differences of opinion through reasoned discussion. As Habermas' theories, it builds on linguistic theory and sets out a series of norms one can expect to be followed in reasoned discussion. The extent to which these norms are followed in actual practice becomes the basis on which one can evaluate the deliberativeness of a particular discussion (2008:1).

The pragma-dialectical method bases itself on the analyst's own interpretations of the essentials of arguments. This requires much knowledge about the context and the speakers in order to make correct interpretations. It is sensitive to the fact that mere interpretation is inadequate for systematic scientific research. The authors separate *interpretation* from *analysis*,

where the latter is interpretation through the goggles of an a priori assumed theoretical point of view. It is therefore essential that the analyst also has good working knowledge of the theories behind the method to be able to apply them correctly at all times (Van Eemeren and Grootendorst 2003:73-4).

4.2.3.1 Description

The method depends on regarding a series of speech acts as a whole, and analyzing the conflict resolution in stages. The first process in this is *reconstruction* of the discourse into an order that conforms with the pragma-dialectical ideal model of interaction. This involves four steps.

The first is *deletion* of all parts of the discourse that is not relevant to the particular disagreement to be studied. This may include deleting whole or parts of speech acts. The second is *addition* of relevant parts of the discourse that are deemed to be implicit. Well reasoned additions based on the knowledge of the analyst are important to present the discourse as a whole that can be analyzed. The third is the *substitution* of confusingly ambiguous or vague statements with clear statements that express the unequivocal relevance of the argument to the discourse at hand. The final step is the *permutation* of the text so that the various speech acts are arranged in the order that clearly brings out their relevance in the various stages of the ideal model of interaction (Van Eemeren and Grootendorst 2003:95-110).

In this process, the principles to be applied are those of *maximally reasonable reconstruction* and *maximally argumentative interpretation*. These two principles imply that one is to construct the dialogue in such a way as to give the speaker maximum credit possible for contribution to the resolution of the conflict, and when there is reason to doubt the communicative function of a statement, it shall be considered to be argumentative in nature (Van Eemeren and Grootendorst 2003:114-17).

Relevant speech acts in a critical discussion are *assertives, directives, commissives* and *declaratives.* Discussion moves from a *confrontation stage* through an *opening stage*, into an *argumentation stage* and finally a *conclusion stage*. Each of these has acceptable rules of speech, regulating what types of speech acts are considered acceptable. Most important for the study of deliberation will be the argumentation stage, in which the heart of the discussion ensues. In this stage, the only acceptable speech acts are those of *argumentation* by way of an assertive,

acceptance (or denial) of such an assertive by way of a commissive, or a *request* of further argumentation in order to be able to potentially accept the position of the protagonist (Curato 2008:10-14).

Van Eemeren and Grootendorst (2002:182-3) forward a list of ten commandments that any discussant must follow in order to engage in proper critical discussion. With these ten normative criteria there are in turn associated a total of 34 breaches or fallacies that are considered contrary to proper critical discussion. Based on these it becomes possible to devise a coding scheme that might measure the degree of deliberation in a debate through the interaction between speech acts rather than the reductionist study of each speech act separately. The theory does not allow for coding of every separate speech act, but at the level of a single debate it becomes possible to measure a degree of deliberation (Van Eemeren and Grootendorst 1992:212-7).

4.2.3.2 Strengths and weaknesses

The main strength of the method for the study of deliberative politics must be said to be its theoretical completeness, as demonstrated by Curato (2008:8-10). It can be said to be a faithful adaptation of Habermas' theoretical foundations, most importantly his *universal pragmatics*. Habermas' project may be said to be incomplete as it doesn't give directions for how deliberation may be studied in the real world. The pragma-dialectical method shows how this can be achieved in practice without compromising the theory.

My most important concern about this method when it comes to theoretical completeness is its strong reliance on formal logic and associated fallacies. Embedded in the method is the assumption that discussion can only be deliberative when conducted by correct application of argumentation schemes and logical models. When applied to deliberative politics, this would mean that logically invalid arguments would have to be considered non-deliberative behaviour regardless of the nature of, and reason for the logical breach. This is problematic if the essence of what one wants to study is the participants' devotion to the ideals of deliberation and the level of their attempts at following these rather than their rhetorical and logical skills. I consider it possible to make a deliberative argument that is logically invalid. In fact, it may be considered a very important part of the deliberative process itself to discover and address logical fallacies in argumentation as a way of reaching the best possible conclusions of the debate. Uncovering a logical fallacy in the arguments of the opposition may be the best tool available to convince them

that your position is better justified; a true application of the "forceless force of the better argument". Pragma-dialectics – designed more to identify efficient discussion than actual deliberativeness – excludes this, which may be considered a validity error.

This is an instance of not separating the amount and quality of deliberation as Lascher prescribes. If we consider these to be substantially different concepts which we can expect to be affected differently by institutional and other influential factors or affecting outcomes differently, then any method that doesn't make such distinctions becomes less satisfactory.

Compliance with the acceptability criterion must be considered to be this model's primary weakness. It is a qualitative method, based on linguistic theory that does not lend itself very smoothly to quantification. This might be considered a weakness by many political scientists. A greater problem is however the amount and level of personal judgment that must be exercised by the analyst. Not only is it necessary to correctly interpret statements, but the model also requires the addition of implicit statements and the subtraction of irrelevant clauses. Furthermore, one should rearrange statements in order to create as complete a statement as possible. All in all this amounts to a large amount of editing of the data that is not very easily documented, heavily impairing the possibility of replication of the research. I do not claim that extensive documentation of the additions, subtractions and permutations would be impossible, but complete documentation would be so work-intensive as to seriously reduce the amount of data it is possible to process through a method like this.

Without extensive collaboration between researchers in order to harmonize the experiences and foreknowledge drawn upon to make the interpretations of statements it would also be very difficult to directly compare analyses conducted by different researchers, further reducing the usefulness of the method.

Within the research tradition of linguistics, from which the model originates, neither of these objections are very problematic. When the goal is acceptance within political science, I do however find it very unlikely that this model could be deemed satisfactory.

4.2.4 Discourse Quality Index (DQI)

The DQI is the result of an extensive research project on parliamentary debate run by Jürg Steiner and André Bächtiger based out of the Bern Center of Interdisciplinary Deliberation Studies at the Bern University in Switzerland. The most thorough presentation of the method and

their findings is presented in the book *Deliberative Politics in Action. Analysing Parliamentary Discourse* (Steiner et al. 2004). The project is concerned both with analyzing the antecedents that are beneficial to deliberation and the substantive outcomes of a high level of deliberation.

They also outline four criteria that are the basis of their quest for a method: "(1) it should be theoretically grounded, (2) it should tap into observable phenomena, (3) it should be general, and (4) it should be reliable" (Steiner et al. 2004:53). These criteria correspond reasonably well to the requirements I have laid out. (2) and (4) are important for my requirement I, (1) corresponds more or less directly with my III, and (3) and (4) together are important for fulfilling my requirement II. How well the DQI method actually corresponds to these criteria remains a matter for discussion.

4.2.4.1 Description

The method bases itself on Habermas' theories of communicative action, especially his conception of *discourse ethics* (Habermas 1996[1992]), but the authors also draw extensively on the work of John S. Dryzek (2000), Lucio Baccaro (2001), Amy Gutmann and Dennis Thompson (2003) and others (Steiner et al. 2004:16-27).

The approach is based on breaking a debate down into separate speech act, based on the idea that each individual act can be evaluated on a continuum between being ideally deliberative and completely non-deliberative in character. A theoretical choice is made to focus on *demands*, coding only speech acts or parts thereof that concern actual demands for action that should or should not be taken. This is explained such:

> Our emphasis on demands stems from the fact that they constitute the heart of the deliberation. That is, demands stipulate what ought to be done and what ought not to be done, and this normative character puts them at the center of discourse ethics (Steiner et al. 2004:55).

The speech acts considered relevant by this measure are coded according to a set of objective criteria to allow for quantitative analysis (Steiner et al. 2004:170-9). They use different versions of the DQI, depending on which criteria are considered the most relevant. The most used variant, the DQI-3 focuses on the indicators of *respect, levels of justification* and *constructive politics* (Steiner et al. 2004:149). The DQI-4 variant also includes the indicator *content of justification*.

The *respect* indicator is broken down into three separate categories, respect for *groups* to be helped, respect for *demands* of others and respect for *counterarguments*.

In particular, respect towards the demands of others is considered by Steiner et al. to be an indicator of deliberation rather than bargaining. In a pure bargaining situation, they argue that opponents' demands need only be accepted, with no need to explicitly value them. In a deliberative situation, on the other hand, reciprocity demands that one is willing to "concede the point" when the opposition presents valid and relevant arguments for their cause (Steiner et al. 2004:58-9).

The *level of justification* concerns to what degree and with what level of sophistication a participant presents justifications for his demands. The difference between an inferior and qualified justification is that proper linkages between demand and arguments are given, while a sophisticated justification consists of several reasons either for the same or different demands. No particular reason is given as to why presenting one reason each for two separate demands is a more sophisticated justification when presented in one speech act rather than when divided into two separate ones (Steiner et al. 2004:57).

The *constructive politics* indicator measures whether the speaker is sitting on a previously announced position, or whether he is fielding new proposals. Whether these proposals are attempts at mediation or proposals to a different agenda is noted (Steiner et al. 2004:59-60).

The *content of justification* indicator concerns whether arguments are about the common good or group interests. Explicit references to the common good, either in terms of the difference principle or utilitarian arguments are indicators of high deliberative quality, while explicit references to group interest count negatively (Steiner et al. 2004:58).

4.2.4.2 Strengths and weaknesses

This method is a clear compromise between the three criteria outlined in section 4.1. The method keeps much of the quantitative acceptability of speech act analysis as employed by Holzinger while adding complexity that increases the theoretical completeness. The creation of a scale also makes for excellent usefulness for both high and low N comparative analysis.

As pointed out earlier, the method has a thorough theoretical basis in Habermas' discourse ethics with added justification from a wide array of contemporary deliberative theorists. Still it fails to resolve the concern voiced by Dahlberg (2002:31) and others about the ability to tap into the less observable criteria, especially the truthfulness criterion.

To maintain focus on observable phenomena, thus retaining acceptability, the developers make a pragmatic choice in this case due to the difficulty of finding a measure of this characteristic (Bächtiger et al. 2005:232; Steiner et al. 2004:56). They focus on observable indicators that can presumably be classified through objective standards. Where they run into difficulty with applying sufficiently objective criteria, they consistently choose to avoid having to pass individual judgement by "erring on the side of pessimism" (Steiner et al. 2004:142) or leaving the parameter out, as is the case with the truthfulness requirement. This carries the advantage of being able to claim objectivity, but weakens the theoretical completeness.

In a recently published assessment of the method, Laura O'Brien (2009:6-7) also makes the point about the theoretical incompleteness resulting from the omission of the sincerity criterion from the DQI. This is not allowed to overshadow its positives sides, and leads her to a positive conclusion about the way in which the DQI implements Habermas' theory. In the same journal issue, Martin King (2009:4) is less forgiving, claiming "[…]that Steenbergen et al's attempt to operationalize the theory produces conceptions that distort, reduce and omit vital notions of the ideals it aims to measure". Although the former critic fails to draw the necessary conclusions of her observations and the latter appears to discard the entire method based on a shaky methodological basis, they both highlight the major problem resulting from the omission of factors that are among the most important to Habermas' work.

Another potential methodological reservation is the choice to analyze deliberation in a thoroughly reductionist fashion. Speech acts are considered completely isolated from each other and the average of the scores of all speeches represent the total DQI score for the debate. The interplay between arguments is only captured to a limited degree through the "respect toward counterargument" indicator (Steiner et al. 2004:58-9,177-8) where explicit mentions of counterarguments are considered. This very strong reductionism raises some issues about the understanding of the interplay between speech acts that is a natural part of deliberation, clearly being a weakness compared for example to the more qualitative Pragma-dialectic method.

4.3 Conclusions on method choice

The discussion in section 4.2 through may be schematically summed up as follows:

Table 1: Overview of methods

	Acceptability	Usefulness	Theoretical completeness
Grice's maxims	Reasonable. Relies on linguistic interpretation but with clear criteria.	Fairly good. Easily quantifiable.	Somewhat lacking. Consistent, but does not cut deep enough.
Speech act analysis	Fairly good. Depends on objective criteria for coding.	Fairly good. Easily quantifiable and comparable.	Somewhat lacking. Depends on defining deliberation by arguing and bargaining.
Pragma-dialectics	Low. Relies heavily on subjective interpretations and transformations.	Somewhat lacking. Work intensive and. Difficult to compare cases.	Good. Mostly consistent with Habermas' theory.
Discourse Quality Index	Fairly good. Attempts to minimize subjective judgement.	Very good. Quantitative index.	Reasonable. Consistent but some weaknesses.

The Pragma-dialectic method stands out as the method most theoretically complete. This is not unexpected given the clearly qualitative bias research in this field has had so far. This method does however stand out as the weakest on acceptability. Both the Grice maxim method and Speech act analysis appear to be within reasonable limits on the acceptability and usefulness criteria, but don't have sufficient theoretical completeness. The Discourse Quality Index, despite some serious theoretical reservations appears to be the only method among the four that conforms to all three criteria on a reasonable level.

Another great advantage to this method over the others is that it has been developed for just the kind of research I aim to do, so it requires little adaptation in order to be applicable. The research team behind it also deserve credit for their open access view towards research, having published extensive notes on their research both in the form of a book and on their project web page (Bern Center for Interdisciplinary Studies of Deliberation 2007a; Steiner et al. 2004).

5   A test study of factions and deliberation

As established in the previous section, the Discourse Quality Index appears to be the most adequate method developed for empirical study of deliberation. To gain further experience with the model and its usefulness for studying the relationship between factions in politics and

deliberative discourse, I conducted a study on two Norwegian representative bodies. As the goal is to prepare the ground for future congruence case studies, I selected two bodies that were as similar to parliamentary politics as possible, but of which at least one had no organized political factions. This was found in the student parliaments of the University of Oslo and the Norwegian University of Science and Technology in Trondheim.

The test study shows little identifiable difference between the two parliaments in terms of deliberativeness. The main reason for this may be an insufficient quantity and width of data for the analysis. Thus few, if any, conclusions can be drawn about empirical concurrence and causality on the basis of this study. The study does however demonstrate that the Discourse Quality Index may be applied to such research, while raising a few further questions and suggestions for possible refinement.

5.1 Research design

The study was conducted by examining one student parliament with an institutionalized system of political factions and one without. As they share most other characteristics other than this, a significant difference in the level of deliberation can most likely be explained by the effect of political factions. This following the method called a difference case study, analyzing the differences in otherwise similar cases (Moses and Knutsen 2007:98-100).

5.1.1 Case selection

Following the original sampling principle of Steiner et al.'s (2004:99-100) DQI research, I have relied on theoretical (or typological) sampling for the case comparison. This means selecting cases according to theoretically-based expectations, filling a set of categories. Originally developed for qualitative case studies, there seems to be little ground why it should not also be applicable to quantitative analysis for the purpose of examining theoretical assumptions. Along with Steiner et al. (2004:100), I consider a typological sample an indispensable precursor to later large scale research in order to produce results with possibilities of statistical generalization.

In this case the categories are with and without the presence of formalized factions. This is an example of a deductive typological theory. I start with a deductive theoretical assumption about causality: that deliberation in a body with formalized factions will be less likely to be

deliberative than a body without. The important independent variable in this case is the dichotomous variable "presence of formalized factions" which can be reduced into two types: *with* and *without* (George and Bennett 2005:244-8). Further following J.S. Mill's *method of difference,* I then try to find cases that are as similar as possible, yet still may be placed in the different typological categories. I can of course not guarantee that there are other characteristics of the two bodies that account for any difference that may be encountered, but I account as well as possible for the important factors indicated in other research (Moses and Knutsen 2007:98-100; Steiner et al. 2004:100-3).

The theoretical sampling categorization has primarily been on the institutional level, selecting two institutions that fit the theoretical categories and are as similar as possible in other respects. The original study of antecedents by Steiner et al. also had a typologically selected sample of 52 parliament debates (Steiner et al. 2004:104).

An alternative sampling strategy would have been to look at a variety of democratic assemblies without political parties, as for example found in different civil organizations. This is a viable strategy for further research in the area, but it would be a much more complex study requiring a sample much beyond the feasible in this project.

The debate sampling has also been subject to the constraint of availability. The limited number of sessions to choose from within the project period, as well as the available resources, forced me to choose just two sessions from each parliament. At the parliament at the University of Oslo, I chose the only two meetings within the project period. At NTNU I chose the two meetings in which I anticipated the most real political debate according to the scheduled case load. I avoided meetings with a large number of elections, as these are by convention conducted without plenary debate in both parliaments. Within these four meetings, time, economic and manpower constraints have limited me to a study of 6 debates, containing 200 relevant speeches. The analyzed debates were selected through a process of elimination in which purely procedural debates or proceedings where no specific proposal for action was debated were removed. In addition, debates with no substantial counter-proposal to the original proposal were also eliminated. This left 4 debates at the University of Oslo that were selected. At NTNU there were 3 potential debates, of which 2 were selected. The third was omitted because the amendments proposed to the proposal were so minor that there appeared to be little substantial disagreement over the proposal. With the number of coded speeches at NTNU already well exceeding the

number at UiO, I considered the likelihood that the last debate would change the significance of the outcomes as too unlikely to warrant coding.

5.1.2 Data collection

The material in Steiner's research has been based on two kinds of sources. Where available, they have been coding on official transcripts from the proceedings. Where these are unavailable, for example in closed committee meetings, they have worked from own transcripts of sound recordings (Steiner 2008). As my chosen parliaments have no official transcripts, I have been forced to employ the latter method.

The debates recorded were all part of open meetings by the Student Parliament of Oslo and the Student Parliament at NTNU. Recordings were done openly using an electronic recording device, thus requiring no particular permission other than the consent of the meeting leadership. All meeting participants were explicitly made aware of the recording and its intended purpose by me or the debate moderator. In one of the debates, I was myself asked to moderate the meeting. I am aware that this may be perceived as a possibility to influence the data. In meetings such as these, however, the role of the moderator is purely formal; his conduct is guided by very strict formal rules and informal norms. Deviation from these rules usually elicits very quick and decisive censure from experienced members and observers, and the actual possibility for the moderator to influence the debates beyond enforcing is very limited. As moderator in the debate, I was also very careful to take a conservative position in interfering with the debate. As a result the number of actual interventions by the moderator in order to enforce order was very low. For these reasons I believe the chance that I influenced the debate in ways that created distortions to be miniscule.

5.2 The debates

As mentioned in section 5.1.1, I selected four debates from the UiO and two from NTNU as the basis for the coding. Following is a qualitative description of each of these debates.

5.2.1 The University of Oslo

The general impression of the University of Oslo debates were that there was a less "harsh" debate climate than what I have experienced a few years earlier. The level of civility was clearly

higher. The character of the debates, and particularly the early closing of the speaker lists, gave the impression that the debates were less designed to be a forum for actual decision making and that participants had generally decided on their voting beforehand. There were even a couple of instances of clearly referring to how "we" as a group within the parliament were going to vote, clearly indicating that voting was decided in an internal discussion before the floor debate.

5.2.1.1 Faculty of extra-faculty activity

The first debate at UiO was conducted on March 26th 2009, as the continuation of a postponed debate from February 19th (Studentparlamentet i Oslo 2009) the same year. It concerned a proposal for an administrative reorganization, creating a separate university faculty for university research centres and other units that don't fit within the established faculty and department structure at the university (Skipenes 2009:19).

The main division line in the debate was whether or not the proposal needed to include a guarantee that each unit reorganized would retain both its academic autonomy and its level of funding. There were some clear examples of interest group arguments here, on behalf of units that would become part of the reorganization. Nevertheless, most speeches were still focused on finding solutions and the good of the university as a whole.

5.2.1.2 Rector election

The debate concerned whether or not the Student Parliament should take a clear stand on behalf of the student in the electoral campaign for becoming new university Rector. There were two candidates on election, and some members of the assembly had clear preferences one way or the other. The main debate was, however, reduced to whether or not either candidate should be supported.

In this debate, the level of respect for opposing demands seemed markedly lower, but only in two speeches was it expressed so clearly it warranted being coded as such. These were however serious enough breaches of conduct so as to influence the mood of the entire debate, that appeared markedly more hostile than most of the other debates.

5.2.1.3 Statute revisions

The last debate coded was a debate in the Student Parliament over revisions of their statutes. A proposal was presented by the executive committee that contained several somewhat

controversial suggestions. The debate centred about two issues: What representation the local faculties should have in the parliament, and whether the students on the university board should be in full or part time positions.

This debate was characterized by several instances of explicit disrespect towards the suggestions and demands of others. Proposals were several times described as "horrendously bad", "silly" or with similar derogatives.

5.2.2 NTNU

The general impression from the NTNU debates is that they were more characterized by genuine deliberation. The way speeches are phrased and the way the debate is conducted clearly indicates that the delegates treat it as a debate forum in which real decisions are made and where the debate is expected to affect the outcome of the decision-making.

5.2.2.1 Exam assessment

The first coded debate at NTNU was regarding a proposed statement about the need for revisions of exam assessment procedures. In addition to several minor issues, conflicting demands were presented regarding the use of external assessors and whether exams should be graded by one or two assessors. The debate was significantly longer than either of the UiO debates, counting 83 relevant speeches.

There were a few instances of group interest arguments and a few instances of clear disrespect towards the demand of others, clearly overstepping the boundaries of deliberative behaviour. Compared to the high number of speeches in the debate, such behaviour cannot be said to dominate the debate. Nevertheless, it seemed higher than the usual practice in the student parliament at NTNU.

5.2.2.2 Budget priorities

The other NTNU debate was about the students' priorities for the university budget process, and counted a total of 50 relevant speeches. It was centred on a prioritized list of proposals from the executive committee, with several proposals for changes and amendments.

The debate was more or less completely free of group interest arguments and had only a very few instances of disrespectful speeches. It clearly gave the impression of being the most deliberative of all the debates included.

5.2.3 Method

Chapter 4 covers most of the process in selecting the method to use. A large number of methods were surveyed in order to find the method that showed the most promise according to the chosen research criteria. Although no method seems to be without serious weaknesses in this regard, Steiner et al.'s (2004) Discourse Quality Index appears to be the most completely developed model that complies with all the criteria to a reasonable degree.

To test the practical application of the method to a slightly different type of setting than the parliament setting studied by Steiner et al., it was important to try and follow their method as faithfully as possible. The documentation relied upon is first and foremost the book *Deliberative Politics in Action* (Steiner et al. 2004), as well as further coding instructions and examples available through the web pages of the Bern Center for Interdisciplinary Deliberation Studies (2006; 2007b; c). Despite the effort to be as faithful as possible to the instructions of the original research, it became necessary to make a few adaptations in order for the codings to be meaningful in the context they are used here.

Preliminary adaptations are described here, while I go into more details on the experiences with the practical application in section 5.4.

5.2.3.1 Relevance

The DQI specifications operate with a rather narrow definition of what constitutes a relevant speech act. To be relevant for the discourse in deliberative politics, it is necessary that the speech presents a clear demand to the agenda in question (Steiner et al. 2004:55). Speech acts such as clarifying questions or remarks unrelated to the debate are removed from the analysis. This appears to have been relatively unproblematic in the original research, but less so in the debates I analyse. A common practice of presenting oral proposals for discussion without formalizing them, and numerous amendments to many proposals, sometimes makes it challenging to identify the exact demand presented or supported by a particular speech act. I found it necessary to violate Steiner et al's premise of "erring on the side of pessimism", rather having to exercise my best judgement in discerning what demand a speech act relates to. In this work it proved necessary to consider all the contributions of a speaker in a particular debate in order to track his position and potential changes. I have therefore specified in shorthand for each speech what I have interpreted as its demand. Speeches have then been coded with a (0) not relevant, (1)

implicit demand or (2) explicit demand. Speeches that at first sight were obviously irrelevant have been left out of the coding altogether, while speeches that are coded with (0) on this indicator are left out of all subsequent analysis. The (1) and (2) scores are not actually included in the analysis, but retained for future reference.

5.2.3.2 Participation

This variable was coded exactly according to the coding instructions (Steiner et al. 2004:171), coded as (1) unless a speaker explicitly stated that he or she was interrupted. Not a single instance of interruption was found in the material.

Steiner et al. (2004:56-7) rely on a negative definition of participation. If a speaker is not directly prevented from participating, then participation is good. They assume this to be an unproblematic definition in formal debates, as participation is guaranteed by formally established rights. When one assumes participation as guaranteed, we can question whether or not it is a relevant indicator at all.

5.2.3.3 Level of justification for demands

The variable was coded as per the instructions in the original coding instructions (Steiner et al. 2004:171-3), with four categories: (0) no justification, (1) inferior justification, (2) qualified justification and (3) sophisticated justification. The later coding instructions (Bern Center for Interdisciplinary Studies of Deliberation 2006) specify a division of the latter category into "broad" and "wide" sophisticated justifications. As this was not part of the original work, and the original work makes no such distinction, I chose to keep the original coding.

The coding instructions allow for the use of personal judgement in coding into categories (2) and (3) if implicit linkages between demand and reasons are sufficiently clear that the coder considers it beyond a reasonable doubt that it is understood by the other participants in the debate. It proved necessary to accept implied linkages to a large degree during the debates, especially as demands were often implicit themselves, as discussed in section 5.2.3.1.

5.2.3.4 Content of justification for demands

According to the coding instructions, this variable is coded in four categories, (0) explicit statement concerning constituency or group interest, (1) neutral statement, (2a) explicit statement of the common good in utilitarian or collective terms, (2b) explicit statement of the common

54

good in terms of the difference principle (Steiner et al. 2004:173-5). The distinction between types of common good arguments is not used in the rest of the original work, and the theoretical basis of the research gives little reason to assume that these are either more or less deliberative. Their effect on the DQI is still weighted the same, so I decided to omit the distinction for the sake of simplicity.

An accurate description of what constitutes the "common good" proved a bit difficult in dealing with parliaments that in essence constitute an interest group at the university. In the issues discussed, both the interests of the university as a whole and the interests of the students as a whole could be at stake, and occasionally in conflict. This speech act presented in the UiO debate on the rector election (speech act #3), gives examples of both reasoning for the common good of the students and the common good of the university:

> I want to take this opportunity to say why I think Wyller is the best candidate to lead the university for the next four years […] He has presented this for us, and through his election platform given a clear and precise picture of what kind of visions he has, what he wants; a unitary idea of what he wants the university to be. […], but what is important to me is that Wyller has given a clear and precise signal that he will prioritize the students and that research where the students are will be prioritized.

As the purpose of the parliaments is to represent the students, I found it meaningless to characterize a statement that opposed the good of the student to for example that of faculty members as non-deliberative. Thus I chose to code both arguments about the good of the university as a whole and arguments about the good of the students as a whole as statements of the common good.

5.2.3.5 *Respect indicators*

In the original coding instructions (Steiner et al. 2004:176-8), the two first respect indicators, towards the groups to be helped and the demands of others were coded on a scale of (0) to (2). These proved not to be very problematic and were coded as instructed.

The last respect indicator, respect towards counterarguments, presents a larger problem. The instructions were for coding on a scale of (0) to (3). In the first two categories, a code of (0) was for explicit disrespect, (1) was a neutral speech act, while in this a code of (2) was given to an explicitly respectful act. In the instructions for this indicator, however, the indicator (0) was reserved for "counterarguments are ignored". Steiner et al. give no justification in their work for why ignoring a counterargument is considered worse than explicitly degrading it, let alone why it

is exactly twice as bad[6]. Steiner et al. (Steiner et al. 2004:65-7) point out themselves that it is in reality two coding decisions: whether or not an argument is ignored and whether that argument is spoken of in positive or negative terms.

In the 2006 instructions, they seem to have changed this practice. Now they code (0) for explicitly negative statements, (1) for ignoring arguments and (2) for neutral mention of arguments (Bern Center for Interdisciplinary Studies of Deliberation 2006). This seems to resolve the above-mentioned puzzle about the priorities between the codes. The same coding instructions also clarify that this should only be coded when a specific counterargument is voiced in response to a participant in a way that clearly warrants a response. This has been the basis for my coding decisions on these issues.

With these problems in mind, I decided to code the third respect indicator in the same way as the others. A code of (0) was given for explicit disrespect of a counterargument or obviously deliberate misrepresentations and omissions. (1) was given for a neutral speech act, and (2) was given for a speech act that explicitly valued an argument presented for the opposite position in the debate. Speech acts for which no responses to counterarguments were given, and where this could not be clearly taken as an instance of ignoring counterarguments, were originally coded as (9) N/A. When creating the index, N/A codes were recoded to a (1), representing a neutral statement. The alternative would be to code the entire speech as a "system missing" case, losing valuable data on the other indicators. Simply calculating the index without this indicator would of course be tantamount to coding it as a (0), creating further distortions.

The later versions of the coding instructions (Bern Center for Interdisciplinary Studies of Deliberation 2006; 2007b) include a further refinement of the respect indicator by introducing a new respect category, "respect by reference". Rather than focus on respect towards the arguments of other participants, this focuses on respect for the speaker. It is coded only when other speakers refer to participants with a different position than their own. The indicator is scored with a (0) for no reference, (1) for personal or partisan attacks on other participants, (2) for a neutral reference to another participant and (3) for personal or partisan praise of another participant. In trying to keep consistency between the respect indicators, I decided to change the coding to the regular (0)-(2) scale, removing the "no reference" category and treating it as a (9)

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[6] The difference between a neutral statement (2) and ignoring (0) is 2 points on the indicator, while the difference between a neutral response and degrading is (1) point.

N/A code. In composing the index the N/A result was recoded into (1), consistent with the reasoning regarding the counterarguments.

5.2.3.6 Constructive politics

The coding instructions on this category (Steiner et al. 2004:178-9) separates between speech acts in which the speaker sits on his position (0), presents an alternative proposal (1) or presents a mediating proposal (2). An "alternative proposal" is one in which the speaker outlines a proposal which is not part of the proposals currently discussed. A mediating proposal is a proposal in which the speaker moves from his previous position to suggest a proposal that might be more acceptable to the opposition.

This typology depends on a very narrow conception of debate in which it is clearly discernible what constitutes a proposal and not. There is also no category for coding a proposal that goes beyond being "mediating", one that in fact constitutes a real change of position. The reason this is not included in the coding scheme is presumably because it is near unthinkable in a regular parliament setting. This is of course an important indicator of deliberation, a vital component of which is "yielding to the forceless force of the better argument". To account for this, I included a category (3) speaker explicitly adopts the proposal of the opposition.

5.3 Conditions for deliberation in the two parliaments

The research of Steiner et al. suggests four institutional arrangements that promote deliberation: consensus institutions, second chamber debate, veto players and non-public arenas (Steiner et al. 2004:98). As I will show here, the differences between the two bodies studied here are so small with respect to the DQI precedents that it seems reasonable to expect that they should cause little difference in expectations about the DQI score in the two parliaments. If a significant difference should be found, it would therefore appear to be an indication that Steiner et al.'s antecedents are insufficient to explain the variance. I offer a new hypothesis that might explain such differences based on the literature on political parties presented in chapter 3, that the existence of political parties (or similar organized factions) weaken deliberation.

There is not much written documentation on the more informal practices of these two parliaments, and they have to my knowledge not been the subject of earlier structured research. Therefore, the evaluations herein rely to a large part on my own experiences. I have personal

experience with the practices of both parliaments through extensive involvement with student politics both at the local level at NTNU and at the national level through the Norwegian Union of Students (NSU). The latter has brought me in extensive contact with the student parliament at the University of Oslo.

5.3.1 Consensus institutions

Steiner et al. make use of Lijphart's (1984) dichotomy of consensus and competitive democracies to separate different styles of democracy. This division has been very influential as an analytical tool in comparative politics (Steiner et al. 2004:79).

Competitive democracies, also referred to as majoritarian democracies, are characterized by a system where everything is based on the decisions of the majority. The ruling party can safely disregard a parliamentary minority. Likewise, the opposition has very little incentive to cooperate with the government. When compromises and consensuses are reached, voters might give credit to the ruling party causing the opposition to lose votes at the next election. The opposition rather has incentives to destabilize and undermine the decisions of the government in order to prove their failure (Steiner et al. 2004:81-2).

What Steiner et al. emphasize the most about consensus democracies is the existence of grand coalitions that both require internal deliberation in order to be able to make informed decisions, as well as weaken electoral competition. According to Steiner, politics becomes less of a zero-sum-game in such democracies, as other parties than the largest have good opportunities to influence politics. More diffuse processes of decision making also makes it more difficult for any single actor to claim political victories as his own, thereby reducing the value of the outcome for others. All these factors may be expected to increase the level of deliberation (Steiner et al. 2004:79-80).

Both parliaments discussed here appear to be more like consensus democracies than competitive. In the election of their executive committees and appointments to other important positions, they both practice some form of representational voting system[7], ensuring that any sufficiently large minority is ensured representation.

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[7] In Oslo: A Single transferrable vote system (Paulsen 2007:5.8 §10,§11). In Trondheim: A simplified proportionate voting system (Studenttinget NTNU 2008:§5.2).

The formalized factions in Oslo open the opportunity for minority groups to maximize their influence through negotiations. Through negotiated electoral cooperation, where positions and votes are exchanged between factions, they ensure that no majority is able to secure more positions of influence than the approximate proportions indicated by the election results. In the year studied here, the parliament president represented the radical left faction, while the vice president was a conservatively oriented non-partisan representative.

In Trondheim, the absence of formalized factions makes the negotiation system practiced in Oslo all but impossible. No representative is able to commit the votes of any other, and can thus not be effective at trading support for candidates. Still, a proportional voting ensures that if different special interests are represented, large minorities should be secured representation. Without negotiations, however, electoral competition between minorities may let a large coherent group seize a more than proportional share of positions compared to their number of parliament representatives.

With the absence of identifiable factions that can take credit for decisions or be punished for ineffective government, the incentive for undermining the majority associated with competitive institutions seems absent in the NTNU system. That no such factions have arisen may also be taken as a sign that there is no culture for such behaviour.

It thus appears that although neither system perfectly embodies either definition, they both lean more towards being systems of consensus than competition.

5.3.2 The role of veto points and players

Veto points are points of the process at which the consent of a particular person or group is necessary in order for the process to move forward. Veto players are groups or institutions that have the power to stop or delay a process (Jochem 2003:4-13). Steiner et al. (Steiner et al. 2004:82-84) identify these as a particular institutional arrangements that promote deliberation. According to Steiner (2004:82), such arrangements are always present in consensus democracies.

Internally, both parliaments seem to have few, rather weak formal veto points and no strong veto players.

Outside the parliaments themselves, it is possible to look at the university institutions themselves as very strong veto points affecting student parliament politics. The parliaments themselves have very little formal power, and all suggestions and issues pertaining to university

matters must pass through the university system before they can hope to be converted into actual action. Because of this, the various actors in the university, most notably the university boards and rectors could be interpreted as veto players in relation to the student parliaments. Having such strong veto players outside the influence of the parliaments would therefore be conducive to deliberativeness according to Steiner et al.

5.3.3 Second chamber debate

Steiner et al. (2004:86-7) also found that second chambers of parliaments were generally more deliberative than first chambers. Stronger norms of civility, smaller chambers, longer terms and generally older and more experienced members were factors considered to contribute to this.

Neither of our two parliaments have a bicameral system. Their executive committees could be said to embody some of the features of a second chamber, but they do not fill the role as a second round of debate, rather they generally debate issues and make a recommendation before debate in the parliament proper. Therefore, this antecedent cannot be seen as present in either of our democracies.

5.3.4 The publicity of arenas

With reference to Jon Elster (1998a), Steiner et al. (Steiner et al. 2004:87-8,128-31) also found that closed debates were more deliberative than open debates. Elster in particular highlight that there are two mechanisms at work here: public debates may induce a tendency to "play for the gallery" where the participants work to highlight their arguments (and undermine those of their opponents) for the audience rather than to reach good conclusions. On the other hand, public debates may allow less bargaining and more thorough argumentation, as the public might expect decisions to be made on a rational basis rather than through political machinations. There seems to be much debate on this issue, both among empirists and theorists, with considerable nuance to it, but those clearly labelling themselves as deliberative theorists appear to be leaning in the direction of closed deliberation, and Steiner et al. find that closed arenas seem to have a positive effect on deliberation (Bohman 1999; Chambers 2004; Goodin 1996:341; Meade and Stasavage 2008; Naurin 2008; Rawls 1997).

Both parliaments conduct their debates in formally open meetings, where everybody has access. At one occasion, there was even an attempt made to stream the meeting on the internet.

Despite this, the actual result of this openness appears to be rather scarce. In no case were there more than 10 persons present at the meeting beyond those with a formal role in the proceedings. Both universities have active student newspapers, but these rarely seem to report from the actual proceedings of the parliaments. The newspaper *Universitas* in Oslo seems to report on divisions in the parliament more often than its counterpart *Under Dusken* in Trondheim, where such reports seem nearly non-existent. I do however find it more likely that this is an endogenous factor to the system, due to the formalized factions that make divisions easier to identify in Oslo In any case it appears to contribute very little to the actual publicity of the proceedings.

Nevertheless this is something that could bear closer examination. In future research, one could for example do a review of articles in the two papers or conduct interviews with editors.

Although both parliaments hold open meetings, there is a difference in who is given speaking rights. According to the Rules of Proceeding of the Student Parliament in Oslo (Studentparlamentet i Oslo 1993:§3), only holders of office in the Student Parliament or a related position has the right to speak and make proposals to the parliament. At NTNU, according to the parliament regulations (Studenttinget NTNU 2008:§3-6) the right to speak is open to everyone, and all NTNU students have the right to make proposals. This is an institutional factor that can be seen to have consequences for deliberation in the parliaments. On the other hand, these regulations are not set in stone, and they are frequently amended and changed by the parliaments themselves. This happens with such a frequency that I find it reasonable to treat them as endogenous to the political process. Instead of being exogenous constraints on deliberation, I rather find them to be a result of the emphasis each parliament puts on deliberation.

5.3.5 Conclusions on Steiner's antecedents

From the discussion in this chapter, there seems to be little in the antecedents that Steiner et al. found to be significant that dictates that either of our two parliaments should be more deliberative than the other. They both seem closer to consensus than competitive democracy with a similar degree of publicity, without veto-points or second chambers. The first and second antecedents should count in favour of deliberation with the two latter against. Still, they account for little difference between the two.

5.3.6 Introducing formalized factions as an antecedent

With little difference identified according to Steiner's antecedents, we can turn to examine what actually is different between the two, the presence of formalized factions. In the student parliament in Oslo, there is an elaborate system of political factions that to some degree mimic that of the party system in the Norwegian parliament. In Trondheim, there is no system of political list elections, and particularly in later years, there has been a culture of disregarding political and ideological affiliations. With reference to the theory discussion in chapter 3, I introduce this as a new antecedent. My hypothesis is that a democratic body with an established system of formalized factions will be less likely to be deliberative than a body with no such system.

It is not surprising that Steiner et al. did not include this as an antecedent in their research. They were focused on national parliaments, and with the exception of a few Pacific island states (Rosenblum 2008:468), we have no examples of national parliaments without a system of organized factions. Contemporary political science tends to consider these inseparable from democracy.

With the modern day pluralist dimension of democracy, other forms of democracy become increasingly relevant in society. Many organizations in civil society have a significant impact on democratic processes. These display a large range of different forms of organization, to a large degree various forms of democracy. Few of these operate along the same lines of formalized division that national democracy does. Regardless of whether we can achieve national democracy without factions, it should be interesting for political scientists to learn more about what effect factions have on democracy and the dynamics of democracy without them.

Furthermore, if we expand the analysis of deliberation to include a larger variety of debate settings, we should be able to gain more insight into institutional characteristics that promote and hinder deliberation. Drawing upon such insights ought to be of interest to political scientists interested in deliberation and how it influences or may influence democracy.

As shown in chapter 3, there is reason to believe that factions may have a detrimental effect on deliberation in political bodies. I also expect that sufficient empirical investigation will show this effect to be prevalent in different styles of democratic organizations today. If so, it may not be reason to discard factionalism in democracy, but it may be reason to take another look at how we want parties to operate in democratic processes.

As mentioned earlier, the main difference between these two parliaments is the presence or absence of formal political factions. The student parliament at UiO practices a system of list elections. Registering a list is open for all students, and requires only that a sufficient number of eligible candidates are registered on the list. The faction behind each list presents a common political platform, and generally has a spokesperson or leader in charge of negotiation with other factions over positions and other issues. During the year, the factions usually hold faction meetings between the meetings in the parliament in which they discuss and find a common position on the topics at hand.

The lists with the longest traditions, and the strongest tradition for unitary behaviour, are the ones tied to political parties or ideologies. There is a Social Democratic faction tied to the Labour party, a Blue list tied to the conservative party Høyre, a green list, left alliance, liberal list, moderate list and so forth. The second group of lists is the so called faculty lists. This is a somewhat newer phenomenon, with its origins in the recently abolished system with faculties as electoral districts. These include factions such as the Realistlista (the Sciences list), SV-lista (the social sciences list), Juristlista (the law list) and so forth. These are lists not directly tied to ideologies or parties, but to the electorates they draw upon. Lastly, one candidate from each faculty is elected by ballot to act as the faculty representative of that faculty, often a member of the local faculty student body. The composition of these groups is as follows:

Table 2: List representation at UiO

Faculty lists	10 repr.
Ideology/party lists	18 repr.
Faculty representatives	16 repr.
Total	**34 repr.**

(Studentparlamentet i Oslo 2009)

We can see that a little over half the representatives are elected from the traditional party or ideology lists, while the other half are tied to faculty representation. According to my own experience and my impression of general discussion, the representation of the faculty lists is unusually high in the session that has been studied here, compared to previous sessions. In the session after, however, the number of faculty list representatives had increased to 13, possibly signifying a more long term shift away from ideologically motivated elections.

In the NTNU parliament, there is no formal recognition of political factions. Rather than elections by political lists, each candidate runs independently on his or her own platform, with the faculties as electoral districts. There are multiple mandates per faculty, distributed according to the number of students. Although candidates occasionally flag their ideological preferences in the elections, at least since the late 1990s, this has generally not been a major point for most members, and most tend not to disclose this. No formal procedures give any kind of recognition of factions within the parliament, and there is a general tendency to frown upon factionalism. Whether or not more informal political networks exist is hard to establish, but I have no indication that such is widespread.

If the theory is correct, we can on this basis expect the student parliament at UiO to be less deliberative than the student parliament at NTNU.

5.4 Results

The general impression from the debates is that the similarity in debate climate between the two parliaments is much greater than the impression I have from personal experience a few years earlier. This view also appears to be supported by the fact that there is no significant difference between DQI-4 for the two parliaments. Observations were, however, limited to two separate meetings in each parliament within the same election period. It seems reasonable to expect a high correlation of deliberativeness between speeches within the same debate, as speakers tend to be influenced by the current climate of debate. Therefore such a narrow data base must be considered insufficient for drawing clear conclusions.

Regarding the method, practical testing gives several new insights into its applicability for analyzing debate. The coding instructions would require further specification and some revision if they are to be considered generally applicable to all kinds of structured debate. The test study also further highlights some of the methodical reservations made in chapter 4.2.4, as well as raising some questions about new factors not captured by the method.

Taking a quick look at the non-parametric correlations[8] shows that there is no significant difference between the DQI-4 score for the parliaments. The correlation between parliament and all the various components is also very weak. The only correlation that is statistically significant

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[8] Treating the parameters as being nominal (which parliament) and ordinal (the various scores), means we cannot analyze "normal" correlations with Pearson's test. Instead, the data must be analyzed non-parametrically, using the Spearman's rho method (Eikemo and Clausen 2007:53-4; Ringdal 2001:288-9).

on the 0.95 level is the content of justification indicator, with a slight improvement at NTNU over UiO. The closer the correlation comes to +/- 1, the more closely linked the two parameters would be. In this case, a correlation of -0.154, relatively close to 0 shows a rather weak link. According to the current data, it is in other words only slightly more likely that a debate at NTNU is conducted with justifications more acceptable within a deliberative framework than at UiO. There is no difference in expectations of deliberative behaviour between the parliaments on the other components.

Table 3: Nonparametric correlation (Spearman's rho) between parliament and DQI components

	Correlation[9]	Significance	N
Level of argumentation	,073	,304	201
Content of Justification	-,154(*)	,030	200
Respect	-,122	,076	214
Constructive politics	-,033	,629	217
DQI 4 score	-,053	,456	199

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
 (Positive correlations indicate higher levels at UiO; negative correlations indicate higher levels at NTNU.)

5.4.1 Relevance of speeches

Speeches were coded along to Steiner et al.'s relevance criterion, modified as described in section 5.2.3.1, giving the following number of relevant speeches per debate:

Table 4: Number of relevant speeches

Debate	Relevant speeches
NTNU Assessment	83
NTNU Budget	50
UiO Extra-faculty activity	13
UiO Spring of possibilities	18
UiO Rector election	16
UiO Statutes	19

Experiences with the selection of relevant speeches further confirmed the suspicion that the DQI method is specifically designed for a parliamentary practice where each participant makes

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[9] Correlation between the parliament in which the debate was conducted and the various components. NTNU was dummy coded 0, UiO dummy coded 1, so a negative correlation score shows a higher score at NTNU and vice versa.

only a single, or very few, speeches, trying to capture the entirety of the debate with each speech act. In both the parliaments analyzed here, the norm is to make rather short speeches, including only one or a limited number of arguments in each speech. There is a lot of variation between speakers as to whether or not they repeat their demand(s) with each speech. This makes it necessary to also take supportive arguments into account where it seems clear that these are part of an argument with demands that follow implicitly from statements in previous speeches.

5.4.2 Participation

Not a single instance of interruption of speakers as measured in the DQI (Steiner et al. 2004:171) was observed during the studied debates. This seems to indicate that both parliaments have near-perfect conditions for participation, according to Steiner's definition. This underscores the relevance of the question of whether the participation indicator is inadequate in capturing this theoretically important aspect. Steiner et al. also exclude this criterion frequently, as breaches are too rare to make a difference (Steiner et al. 2004:62,148). This appears to indicate that the current operationalization of the participation criterion is not very relevant.

A negative definition of participation, whereby the level of participation is defined by the lack of visible obstacles to participation might be replaced or supplemented by a positive one, in which actual participation is measured. Level of participation, measured as the proportion of representatives actually presenting speeches, could be one way of capturing participation. Another could be measuring the level of attendance, in which proportion of members in attendance is measured.

If deliberation was considered a good way to affect the outcome, you would expect more participants to try and make a difference in the debate. Not contributing to the debate, sharing no information at all, must also be considered just about the least deliberative behaviour possible. Even presenting deliberately misleading information may provide other participants with further insight. The only instance in which non-participation could be considered good deliberative practice would be if the speaker genuinely had nothing to contribute to the debate, and participation would only be irrelevant or confusing even to one's own understanding of the issue. If it was a general trend that representatives were so unable, it would appear that the election process had failed at producing representatives at all suitable for the job of conducting deliberation.

Table 5: Debate attendance

Debate	Relevant speeches	# of speakers [10]	Attending members	Total members [11]
NTNU Assessment	83	24	24	27
NTNU Budget	50	13	21	27
UiO Extra-faculty activity	13	5	23	32
UiO Spring of possibilities	18	10	19	31
UiO Rector election	16	8	19	31
UiO Statutes	19	8	23	32

As seen by the table above, in the debates covered here, there were differences both in the level of attendance and the number who contributed to the debate. Two meetings in each body is of course too little to identify a general trend, but an overview of the total level of attendance for the entire period for each parliament shows that the level was 65 % at UiO and 85 % at NTNU[12]. No record of the number of speakers exists, so this can only be taken as an indication that there might potentially be an environment with lower participation at UiO, despite the fact that both parliaments have perfect participation according to the DQI criteria.

It would appear that an ideal method should have a better measure for participation than the current DQI indicator. Looking at the total number of speakers as compared to the potential number of speakers in a debate could be one way to do this. That would require analysis at the debate level rather than at the speech act level that forms the basis for the DQI.

5.4.3 Level of justification

There were no statistically significant differences in level of justification between parliaments or debates.

I have already commented on the problems presented by the level of justification factor. The debates characterized by a large number of short speeches appear to be captured very poorly by this way of coding. It is generally very difficult to present sophisticated justifications in 1

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[10] Also including non-members participating in the debate at NTNU. Non-members are generally barred from speaking at UiO, see section 5.3.4.

[11] Both attending and total including executive committees, excluding seats not elected.

[12] According to official records from both parliaments, counted by number of members with voting rights present at opening roll call for each meeting, compared with the total number of potential members. Representative slots that were not filled were not deducted, as the times of election was not known. These might have caused minor variations in the numbers.

minute, but with recurring speeches one can still explore several justifications for a single proposal.

For example in the NTNU debate over a two-assessor system for exams, one particular speaker made 7 separate relevant speeches. Over the course of those 7 speeches, the speaker presented at least 4 separate arguments[13] for the measure in question, but only a single argument in any one speech. Each argument was addressed by the opposition in turn. As a result, this was coded as 7 instances of inferior (1) or qualified (2) justification. Opposition refutations of the arguments were similarly presented one at a time. If these arguments had been presented in a single speech, with the subsequent need for the opposition to address them with several arguments in one speech, they might instead have been coded as a few instances of sophisticated (3) justification, in turn increasing the average DQI score of the debate.

This is a challenge that the pragma-dialectical method (presented in section 4.2.3) in particular was focused on addressing. This solution is however problematic, as reorganization of arguments, combining and adding implicit arguments makes the whole process very little transparent and difficult to replicate. A possible middle ground that could work in practice would be to treat all speeches made by a single speaker regarding the same demand as one single speech, analyzing all presented arguments as a whole, according to the DQI criteria, without actually changing their structure and adding "missing" parts. As with the potential fix for the issue with the participation indicator mentioned in the previous section, this would also require analyzing the debate at a level above individual speech acts, and would also require more personal discretion on the part of the coder, potentially strengthening validity at the cost of reliability.

5.4.4 Content of justification

As seen in Table 3 (on page 65), content of justification indicator is the only DQI indicator with a statistically significant difference between the parliaments. In the parliament at NTNU, there appears to be a slightly higher level of content of justification than in the parliament at

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[13] Speaker number 4 presented arguments in speeches no. 5, 23, 25, 37, 56, 85 and 87 of the debate on exam assessment system. Separate arguments were made regarding the likelihood of improving the exactness of grading, the measure as improving the overall quality assurance system, the relative cost of the measure and the prevention of personal relation bias in assessment of exams.

UiO. This means that at NTNU, as we can see from the table below, this is the result of more explicit references to the common good in the NTNU parliament (code 2), than at UiO.

Table 6: Frequency crosstab - Content of justification vs. parliament

		Content of Justification			Total
		0	1	2	
NTNU	Count	7	109	16	132
	% within Parliament	5,3%	82,6%	12,1%	100,0%
UiO	Count	6	60	2	68
	% within Parliament	8,8%	88,2%	2,9%	100,0%

Linear-by-linear Chi Sq. association test: p = 0.031

This aspect might be particularly interesting also for qualitative analysis. The nature of the group interest references made could possibly tell us more about the causality behind any quantitative difference. Taking a quick look at the actual group interest statements made in the two parliaments show that the examples found at NTNU mostly refer to the apparent division between the students of different faculties, particularly between students of technical sciences on the one hand and the social sciences and humanities on the other. This is clear, for example in this statement from an engineering science student in the NTNU debate over the assessment system at exams:

> […]We should be serious about this and actually make priorities, and there are many things I find more important than having two assessors, especially for the engineering science students. Among them I think there are quite a few that think other things are more important. (NTNU debate on the assessor system, speech act #77)

Finding traces of this division was very much expected. Tensions have at times been high between the engineering science student council(s) and other student bodies in the university. Even though the current student councils of the technical sciences have no direct representation in the student parliament, and thus don't constitute an organized faction, it appears reasonable to suspect that some of the antipathies of other arenas also appear in the student parliament.

Perhaps more interesting was the lack of partisan statements in the formally factionalised parliament in Oslo. Only 6 speeches were clearly catering to group or constituency interest, coded as (0) on the content of justification scale. Of those 6 instances, none explicitly mentioned

partisan groupings. They either referred to pure personal interest, the interest of a particular constituency group or other special interest group in the university.

This may just be just coincidence on account of too little data, for example that these debates by coincidence were on issues with a lower than usual level of partisan polarization. It may also, however, be a sign that former partisan divisions have weakened and that the real difference both in partisanship and deliberative attitude between the two parliaments is now weak or non-existent. In any case, he current data gives no clear support to the claim that partisanship affects the content of justification in the Student Parliament of Oslo. More data is needed to make clear conclusions on this issue.

5.4.5 Respect

Two out of the four respect indicators do at first glance appear to show significant differences between the parliaments. The NTNU parliament both had fewer instances of explicit disrespect and more instances of explicit respect towards the demands of others. This supports the impression gained from qualitative analysis of the data, where the UiO debates appear to have a tendency to more harsh language, using terms like "ridiculous" or "silly" about proposals in a debate. The numbers in either direction are small however, so it appears to be hasty to draw very clear conclusions on the basis of these numbers.

The instances of disrespect at UiO were not clearly partisan in content; they were rarely made with reference to political faction. Nevertheless, there were no instances of disrespect towards members of one's own group. Although the number of disrespectful comments in general was low, a qualitative assessment seems to indicate they were reserved for members of other factions. They were usually characterizations along the lines of: "I think it's a bit silly to claim that [...]" (debate 23, speech #8) or "[This suggestion] can only be described as incredibly bad" (debate 24, speech #5).

If we look at the numbers for the respect indicators, we see that for only two indicators is there an apparently significant correlation. Treating the categories as ordinal indicators, this can be found with *Spearman's rho* non-parametric correlation (Eikemo and Clausen 2007:53-4; Ringdal 2001:288-9). Both the respect towards group and respect towards demand indicators have a p-value of less than 0.05, indicating that it is likely that there is a real correlation between the parliament in which the debate was held and the level of respect.

However, the real numbers behind the correlation on the respect towards group indicator seem particularly weak. With only 5 speeches deviating from the neutral statement, I find it hard to accept this as a significant correlation. With only one coder, we cannot assume the coding to be exact enough to make conclusions from so few instances. On the respect towards demand indicator, support for the correlation is based on a few more deviations from the neutral statement, but still too few to give much confidence in the reliability.

Table 7: Nonparametric correlation (Spearman's rho) between parliament and respect indicators

		Code[14]			Correlation[15]	Sign.	N
		0	**1**	**2**			
Toward group	NTNU	1	132	0	,198 (**)	0,004	214
	UiO	0	62	4			
Toward demand	NTNU	5	115	13	-,235(**)	0,001	215
	UiO	10	55	1			
Toward counterarg.	NTNU	11	79	8	-,094	0,226	167
	UiO	9	47	3			
By reference	NTNU	1	127	5	-,036	0,602	214
	UiO	0	65	1			
Aggregate respect					-,122	0,076	214

(**) Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

When we aggregate by adding the respect indicators together, there is still not a significant correlation on the 0.05 level. In addition, the methodical concerns about such aggregation are also still relevant. The separate indicators can at best be considered as an ordinal scale. The simple addition of ordinal values together still seems somewhat dubious.

5.4.6 Constructive politics

As noted in section 5.2.3.6, the constructive politics indicator was perhaps the most challenging indicator to code and analyze. Most of the debates included a number of proposals, but rarely were they framed in the form of ideal positions and mediating proposals. Many

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[14] The codes used, according to the coding instructions discussed in section 5.2.3, standardized on a 0-2 scale where 1 is for an explicitly disrespectful statement, 1 is a neutral statement and 2 is an explicitly respectful statement.

[15] Correlation between the parliament in which the debate was conducted and the various components. NTNU was dummy coded 0, UiO dummy coded 1, so a negative correlation score shows a higher score at NTNU and vice versa.

proposals are also just minor reformulation of existing demands to improve the wording. It was therefore difficult at times to discern what constituted a different position, what constituted a mediating proposal and what was in reality the same proposal.

I also felt the need to introduce a new code to this parameter, reserved for the instances where a speaker explicitly admits to change to the position of the former opposition in the debate. Provided that this is the result of yielding to the better argument and not the result of coercion, such behaviour must by deliberation's very definition be considered a good indicator of deliberative debate. The code should not be used if one were to explicitly make a statement that signalled the intent to accept the proposal when making it clear that this was out of strategic concerns or coercion, although I would consider it unlikely that such statements would be made explicit in plenary debate.

5.4.7 Deliberative quality index

As we could expect from the lack of significant differences according to the individual factors, there is also no significant difference between the two parliaments' performance on the total DQI index. Using Steiner et al.'s DQI-4 index, the difference between the average score between parliaments is far from being statistically significant:

Table 8: DQI-4 comparison

	UiO	NTNU	Total
Mean DQI-4	9.92	10.24	10.12
Standard deviation	2.09	2.13	2.12
Spearman's Rho correlation[16]			-0,053
Correlation significance			0,456

As I will discuss further in the next chapter, this may be because the original thesis is wrong, that the institutional factions at the UiO do not have significant influence on the deliberative environment. On the other hand, the number of speeches analyzed, the number of representatives included and the spread over time periods may be too small to make the analysis sufficiently robust. More data will be needed to be able to conclusively discredit the theory.

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[16] Correlation between the parliament in which the debate was conducted and the DQI score. NTNU was dummy coded 0, UiO dummy coded 1, so a negative correlation shows a higher DQI score at NTNU.

6 Conclusions

There seems ample theoretical basis to support a theory that institutionalization of political factions through political parties has an effect on deliberation. To understand this phenomenon and to gain more insight into how democracy works, this should be a topic for further research.

6.1 Why were there not significant differences in discourse quality between the parliaments?

This study clearly offers no empirical evidence to prove that political factions have a deteriorating effect on deliberation. The simplest explanation for this would be that the hypothesis is wrong: there may simply be no such connection. Alternatively, it might be the case that the method is not suitable for studying the phenomenon. I believe both these conclusions are too hasty, and offer three reasons that might explain the lack of significant difference, even if the hypothesis is correct.

Firstly, the number of speech acts studied is probably too low. The conclusions drawn by Steiner et al. (Steiner et al. 2004) about the antecedents of deliberation are in most cases based on more than 1,000 cases – over 5 times the valid number of cases in this analysis.

Secondly, we might expect a strong variation between parliament sessions. These are relatively small groups of people that interact closely over the course of a year. Personal relations might affect and modify the institutional factors in either direction within a single session. This might (by coincidence) have been a year in which personal relations created different conditions for deliberation than what has been the case over (for example) a five-year period. To get certain information about general trends one should therefore analyze the discourse in the parliament over several years.

Thirdly, the electorate's preference for partisan politics might be at a low, resulting in relatively poor election results for the factions most strongly related to political parties. At UiO, the so called "faculty lists" made a good election in the year before this study, so the number of declared "partisan" representatives was relatively low. This is another coincidence that might have affected the outcome of the analysis.

To finally be able to discredit the thesis or theory it would therefore be necessary to increase both the amount of data and the spread over time. Hopefully, the exposition of the method done here, and the preliminary data, may serve as the starting point for such a study.

6.2 Conclusion on using the DQI method for the study of deliberation

The ideal method for analyzing deliberation should have both the theoretical completeness of qualitative methods and the analytical rigor of quantitative methods. Comparing several methods employed for the purpose indicates that the Discourse Quality Index appears to be the method that comes closest to achieving this. There are however a number of reservations that should be dealt with.

Regarding theoretical completeness, the method does – by the authors' own admission – completely omit the truthfulness criterion of deliberative theory, not taking into regard whether or not participants are actually truthful when they participate in debates. It is possible that this really is impossible or nearly so to measure. The inadequate measure of participation is a larger concern that seems to have been treated much too lightly in the work of Steiner et al.

Methodically there are several more concerns. Perhaps most important is the way the index is composed. The summation of ordinal values to become a continuous scale seems dubious. At the very least, further justification is needed for why this is acceptable. Furthermore, the reductionist style of analysis, treating each speech act separately seems to create some problems, particularly in debates characterized by shorter, more frequent speeches. A solution to this problem might be to consider all speeches by a single speaker in a single debate as one. A more holistic approach to debates could also make it easier to find ways to measure participation, for example through considering the proportion of participants actually making speeches. This might however mean that one would strengthen validity by possibly sacrificing some of the reliability of the measures.

Despite these weaknesses, the basic approach taken by Steiner et al. appears to be the most promising way of moving forward into this field of research. A refined version of the method might be applicable both to analyze possible antecedents to good deliberation, but also to study the effects deliberation has on outcomes.

Adding further data, through following the two student parliaments examined in this thesis over time, may give more answers than I am able to provide here. Furthermore, with sufficient resources a broader strategy could be applied. By examining different venues for deliberation, for example within the civic and political spheres in a congruence case study, more thorough insight into both this and other antecedents could be derived. Both at the Bern Center for Interdisciplinary Deliberation Studies and at Senter for kommunalforskning at the University of

Tromsø (Bern Center for Interdisciplinary Studies of Deliberation 2007a; Jenssen 1996:92-3), such collections of data are already being built.

Such studies about different factors that influence deliberation could give grounds for more sophisticated analyses, showing not only causal connections, but also reaching conclusions about their relative importance.

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