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Deliberative Democracy, Chicago Style

1. The Strange Appearance of Deliberative Democracy

Chicago's neighborhoods might strike both casual observers and the initiated as rather infertile ground for the seeds of deliberative democracy to take root and bear fruit. The city's tradition of machine politics—a reward system that delivers spoils in exchange for obedience—hardly seems conducive to a politics that relies upon fairness and reason. Progressive reformers concerned with the efficiency of municipal government responded to this systemic undue influence by attempting to insulate urban administration from its politics. By the second half of this century, they erected insular bureaucracies designed to run according to the internal logic of managerial and civil expertise whose personnel would be directed internally by the combined knowledge of their profession and bound by its codes of service and responsibility. While these arrangements partially liberated municipal departments such as the police force and the school system from political machine manipulations, this shield of bureaucratic autonomy would also deflect more democratic or deliberative public scrutiny, criticism, and influence. The city's formidable grassroots tradition—its civic and neighborhood associations—might seem a more promising point of departure for popular deliberation. But the very reasons that organizations like Saul Alinsky's The Woodlawn Organization (TWO) evoke admiration and imitation—their ability to win pitch battles against these political machines and overweening bureaucracies—suits them well for gladiatorial arenas even as it renders them suspicious of those who propose reason and discussion as a strategy for engaging powerful antagonists.

Nor does the socio-economic terrain seem any more hospitable. Since it lacks most of those conditions that political theorists have thought necessary for any democratic institutions to operate smoothly—such as rough equality of means, high educational levels, and social unity—an especially demanding version like participatory deliberative democracy would seem to stand little chance. Aggregate levels of inequality in Chicago are probably no worse than in other American cities, but they are no better, which is to say that the gap between the rich who live on the city's "Gold Coast" and lakefront and its poor residents on the South and West sides is wide indeed. While children of the former enjoy ample public and private educational opportunities, those of the latter are condemned to attend what has recently been called "the nation's worst school system" by a former U.S. Secretary of Education.[1] In terms of cultural and ethnic variety, Chicago is macroscopically plural but many of its neighborhoods are homogenous socio-economic and cultural enclaves even as others are home to several cultural traditions and social classes. This diversity gives rise to racial conflict in formal arenas such city politics and administration and is visible in civil society in organizations like the "Latin Kings" and (black) "Gangster Disciples" street gangs.

It is altogether surprising, especially in light of this hostile context, that two recent institutional reforms have remade Chicago's public school and police systems into the most participatory and deliberative departments of their kind in the United States. Though much more will be said below about what exactly participation and deliberation mean here, consider the basic features of these organizations. The Chicago Public Schools (CPS) consists of some 540 elementary schools and high schools. Since 1988, each of these schools has been governed by its own elected "Local School Council" (LSC). LSCs are elected every two years that consists of six parents, two community representatives, two teachers, the school's principal, and an additional non-voting student for high schools. LSCs enjoy substantial powers and responsibilities such as hiring and firing principals of their schools, spending discretionary funds, and developing and implementing strategic plans for school improvement that address issues such as curriculum, instruction, physical design, and administrative operation. While individual

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[1] Chicago Tribune Staff. *Chicago Schools: 'Worst in America:' An Examination of the Public Schools that Failed Chicago* (Chicago, IL: Chicago Tribune, 1988).

schools thus gain wide latitude in determining their own affairs, they are by no means isolated from the larger city-wide system. District offices and city headquarters at the Chicago Board of Education (CBE) support the governance and improvement efforts of individual schools by training LSC members and others in, for example, techniques of principal selection, school budgeting, curriculum design, and strategic planning. They also hold individual schools accountable for producing good educational outcomes first by itself monitoring performance across schools and then by making the system more transparent by publicizing various dimensions of school operations such as test scores, student body demographics, funding levels, and attendance and graduation rates. Those schools that perform poorly are subject to disciplinary mechanisms such as increased scrutiny, active intervention to modify sub-par elements in a school's plan or its personnel, or complete "reconstitution" and receivership for cases of extreme failure.

The Chicago Police Department (CPD) implemented an architecturally similar reform in 1995. Disillusioned with the evident failure of two time honored strategies of policing—regular marked-car "preventative patrolling" and rapid response to emergency "911" calls for assistance[2]—the Department embarked on a major reorganization designed to encourage officers to pro-actively identify and address sources of crime and disorder in their patrol areas. Unlike most other American cities that embraced problem-oriented policing, however, the CPD reforms presumed that problem-solving efforts would work best with citizens involved at all stages. On this view, residents would often possess superior knowledge of problems in their neighborhoods and might sometimes have different priorities even when both were equally well informed. Therefore, a police-resident partnership might be better able to identify the most critical problems than police acting alone. Also, because police and neighborhood residents have different capacities and resources, partnerships might be more effective as well. Finally, more than a few public safety and police-reform activists thought that bringing citizens closer to sworn officers would enable them to better monitor police activities and hold them accountable for doing their jobs. These sentiments were institutionalized into a distinctive form of community policing that, like the LSC reforms, creates a kind of neighborhood governance

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[2] Sparrow, Malcom K., Moore, Mark H., and Kennedy, David M., *Beyond 911: A New Era for Policing* (New York: Basic Books, 1990).

over public safety measures. Now, in each of Chicago's 279 police beats, patrol officers and their sergeants meet regularly with residents to identify which public safety problems (e.g. a crack house) constitute the neighborhood's most urgent priorities, to develop strategies involving both police and civilian action to deal with those problems, to report back on the emergence of new problems and the success or failure of past strategies, and to develop new approaches when initial plans prove disappointing. Like the LSC reforms, neighborhood residents and officers do not operate autonomously from higher, more central authorities or broader publics. In the area of support, departments in the Mayor's Office and CPD provide training to both police and residents in the procedures and techniques of successful problem solving and also deploy community organizers to mobilize resident participation in the on-going effort. Regarding monitoring and accountability, the teams must document their problem solving activities and outcomes for review by managers and supervisors.

Compared to the hierarchical and insular structures which preceded them and to the alternatives found in other cities, the reorganized CPS and CPD are notably participatory, empowered, and deliberative. They provide residents opportunities to voice their opinions about police and school operations at the neighborhood level of resolution, where they can identify individual officials and actions for praise or condemnation on the basis of personal experience and contextualized knowledge. These reorganizations also provide channels in which individual residents can constructively alter the priorities and procedures of these street level bureaucrats. The reforms, in principle at any rate, are deliberative at several levels. At the level of the neighborhood, residents deliberate with their immediate public servants about their purposes, proximate goals, strategies, divisions of labor, and assessments. Should this local deliberation break down either in the sense that some parties unreasonably dominate group discussion or because it fails to produce outcomes (e.g. satisfactory test scores) that experience in other areas has proven feasible, central authorities may review and intervene with corrective or disciplinary measures. More globally, in the ideal, these arrangements would be ground informal deliberation in the general public and formal deliberation in central administration. When the operations of local units such as police beats and schools are transparent to the general public, they can provide the experiential basis for discussions

about the proper general policies, optimal local procedures, and acceptable levels of performance and outcomes. Similarly, administrative centers can scan the activities of their local units to identify and diffuse best practices through deliberation and to devise general policies and programs, again based on monitored experiences, to reinforce local deliberation.

These Chicago experiences, then, provide opportunities to interrogate the theory, practice, and promise of "empowered deliberative democracy." Conceptually, the institutional architecture is a touchstone from which to generate an institutionally grounded account of *practical* deliberation that has been for the most part ignored in the abstractions of contemporary political theorists of deliberation. Empirically, the Chicago experiments offer us a rich opportunity to examine how one variant of deliberative democracy plays out under quite diverse urban conditions. Furthermore, the harsh political and socio-economic climate in which these institutions operate throw several pitfalls of deliberative democracy into sharp relief. From this perspective, the first question is one of origins and transitions; how paths be cut from a decidedly non-deliberative institutional sets to ones that incorporate substantial deliberation? Skepticism about context and necessary background conditions follow. Once planted, can deliberation grow well even in the face of substantial inequality, cultural pluralism, and social and institutional conflict, or will these factors inevitably deform it into pathological processes? Finally, deliberative reforms constitute only a small portion of the tapestry of urban institutions. Conflict between contesting institutional logics and prerogatives may hamper deliberative processes even where they are in place, prevent them from expanding or developing necessary supportive roots, or ultimately undermine the stability of deliberative reforms and cause them to revert to prior forms such as hierarchical administration.

Succeeding sections examine the architecture, performance, and shortcomings of empowered deliberative democracy in Chicago. Part 2 describes the structure and responsibilities of neighborhood level school and police governance bodies that form the operational building blocks of empowered deliberation and show how they emerged out of centralized bureaucratic arrangements. But devolution is only part of the institutional design, and by itself is insufficient to establish robust participation, deliberation,

empowerment, or obtain effective service outcomes. Part 3 shows how central authorities in the CPS and CPD have partially reinvented themselves to support, monitor, and discipline the decentralized deliberations of neighborhood units and that these recombinant functions are essential to successful deliberation and is itself deliberative. After laying out this institutional design, the following three sections examine the character of actual deliberation and, insofar as data allow, its results. Part 4 describes levels and biases of participation in these deliberative institutions, part 5 discusses problems of domination and corruption (rent-seeking, self-dealing), and part 6 considers the extent to which these participants can be called competent and the organizational forms effective. Though theses reforms are quite extensive, they very incompletely operationalize the notion of deliberation and their future rests on very uncertain political foundations. Part 7 examines whether these beginnings might cohere into institutional forms that are deliberative and stable throughout, at the center as well as the periphery.

2. Beginning Deliberation Through Participatory Devolution

Far from the result of masterful design, these institutions arose haphazardly—themselves the result of fitful informal deliberations—as reformers inside city offices and activists outside of it groped toward more effective ways of organizing their police departments and schools. This long process of reform began in the late 1980s, when both agencies came under mounting criticism for their ineffectiveness and unresponsiveness. Though the CPD and CPS, like all large agencies, had suffered numerous such attacks throughout their histories and yet managed to retain their basic priorities and organizational structures, this round of skirmishes was different. Conservative forces failed to rebuff demands for change, and consequently the agencies—though independently and through very different paths—deeply reconfigured their respective bureaucracies. Both moved decisively away from centralized command by devolving authority to school staffs, parents, police beat officers, and neighborhood residents.

In the Chicago Schools, this reform process was the outcome of a pitched battle that pitted a diverse social movement composed of parents organizations, "good

government" civic groups, educational reform activists, and a coalition of business groups against traditional school insiders such as the Chicago Teacher's Union, the Board of Education, and leaders in the system's central administration. Two proximate events—media fallout from a blistering 1987 evaluation in which then Secretary of Education William Bennett called Chicago's School System "the worst in the nation" and a grinding teacher's strike that delayed the opening of classes for four weeks—crystallized long-standing sentiments against the CPS into concrete and well-supported proposals for reform. Though they varied in their particulars, most reformers blamed the large organizations that traditionally controlled the Chicago Schools—the Board of Education, it central administration, and the Chicago Teacher's Union—for poor school performance. They thought that these organizations had become more interested in managerial prerogatives, administrative salaries, and teacher benefits than in effective education. They seemed, furthermore, beyond the pale of reform: so long as they controlled the schools, reformers thought, the system would remain among the nation's worst.

Unlike many other cities where similar hostility to bureaucracy fueled drives to marketize education through supply side measures such as charter schools or demand side parental choice, reformers in Chicago were more impressed with democracy than the market. Though not generally hostile to choice mechanisms, their theory of action focused on the management and governance of individual schools. On their analysis, the main difficulty of the Chicago schools was that governance power lay too distant from the point of action. How could distant bureaucrats know enough about individual schools to make effective decisions? Even if they did know, what would prevent them from using their authority to benefit themselves rather than students in the system? Reformers offered solutions that would shift power over school governance to the schools themselves because, the theory went, staffs and parents there had both the information and incentives to make effective decisions. Most of the outside proposals thus demanded the creation of representative local councils for each school that would assume many of the operational and governance powers then held by central authorities. Both the Chicago Teacher's Union and the Board of Education rejected these proposals and offered tepid

responses that only reinforced reformers' perceptions that these organizations were interested mainly in their own aggrandizement and unwilling to accept outside discipline.

These differences ran too deep, and passions too hot, to be settled through informal negotiations or even within ordinary legislative procedures of the city. Education reformers eventually took their battle to the Illinois Assembly in Springfield, and there won a decisive victory. Reformers, for better or worse, got almost everything they asked for when the Assembly passed the 1988 Chicago School Reform Act. The law created one Local School Council for each of Chicago's school. Eleven adult voting members sit on each of these councils (high schools elect one additional nonvoting student member): the principal of the school, two teachers, six parents, and two members from the community. Representatives, elected every two years, enjoy considerable powers. First, LSCs are responsible for hiring, firing, evaluating, and determining the job definitions of the principals of each school. Second, they approve school budgets. LSCs also develop a required document called the School Improvement Plan (SIP). SIPs are a three year, long term plans that articulate improvement goals (attendance, graduation rates, achievement levels, school environment) and steps necessary to reach those goals for each school. The principal has primary responsibility for implementing the plan, while the council is charged with monitoring progress. Finally, reform legislation shifted control of "Chapter 1" funds, discretionary state monies allocated to schools on the basis of economic disadvantage, to the LSCs. This reform package made CPS the most decentralized and participatory urban educational system in the United States.

Through a very different path, the Chicago Police Department recently adopted strikingly similar organizational reforms under its "Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy" (CAPS). At the end of the 1980s, police forces and chiefs in many U.S. cities were engaged in a self-reflection and doubt about whether their two traditional methods—preventative patrols that demonstrate presence through marked vehicles and rapid response to "911" calls for emergency service—could address the diverse and severe crime and disorder problems they faced.[3] Typically, these reforms fell under the broad

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[3] See Malcolm K. Sparrow, Mark H. Moore, and David M. Kennedy, *Beyond 911: A New Era for Policing* (New York: Basic Books, 1990) and Herman Goldstein, *Problem Oriented Policing* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992).

rubric of "community policing" and called for officers to use their initiative and ingenuity to tackle particular problems of crime and disorder, and for them to move closer, sometimes to build partnerships with, citizens whom they served. In Chicago, two extra-departmental forces supplemented these professional internal impulses and shaped the eventual course of reform.

First, leaders from a sophisticated citywide public safety organization called the Chicago Alliance for Neighborhood Safety (CANS) used their policy expertise and position as a community voice in these matters to advance a community-centered vision of community policing through public task forces and less public discussions with senior administrators and city officials. From CANS's perspective, based upon its experience as advocate, police policy analyst, watchdog, and neighborhood organizing entity, other cities had largely excluded citizens from their reforms, and so they amounted more to policing of the community than in partnership with it. CANS activists thought that citizens ought to be full partners in community policing because they could provide important local knowledge, distinctive resources, and, most importantly, monitor police officers and hold them accountable.

The second important force was city hall. Mayor Richard M. Daley and his staff seized on the community policing as a good government issue to demonstrate the city's innovative spirit and commitment to fighting crime. Interest from the Mayor's office sped the pace of implementing policing reforms and perhaps favored versions that featured police-resident partnerships as more politically attractive.

Absent the street heat and legislative pressure that drove school reform, these discussions at the intersection of professional, political, and civic interests led quietly to the formulation of a participatory variant of community policing that was piloted in five of the city's twenty five police districts beginning in 1993 and then expanded to the entire city in 1995. Its basic outlines resemble the central features of the 1988 school devolution. Again recognizing the need to address situated issues with focused and contextualized attention, police officers were organized into some 279 neighborhood sized "beat teams" that would, in addition to their ordinary patrol and response duties, familiarize themselves with specific neighborhoods and their idiosyncratic problems. Also presuming that neighborhood residents possessed detailed knowledge of these problems,

resources for addressing them, and strong motivations to do so, the reform created

channels for resident participation. Specifically, open "community beat meetings" would

be held in each beat every month for the officers serving that area and its residents to

jointly engage in problem identification and resolution efforts.

        Thus CPS and CPD both reorganized themselves through radically devolutionary

measures that set in place three central planks of empowered deliberative democracy.

First, the reforms created opportunities for ordinary citizens to *participate continuously

and directly* in the micro-governance of two important institutions of urban life: schools

and police. For example, the creation of local school councils provide two levels direct

citizen access to the affairs of individual schools. Parents and community members who

desire formal authority and are willing to devote substantial energies in school governance

can run for election to one of the six parent or two community seats on each school's

LSC. Though LSC elections are formally competitive, the fact that the number of

candidates has approximated the number of open seats in recent years gives most of those

with the desire to serve an opportunities to do so. Those with less intense interests

attend and voice their views at their LSC's regular, typically monthly, meetings. The

CAPS community policing program features no formal governance councils. Instead, it

requires police officers in each beat to attend open meetings, usually held monthly, with

residents to engage in joint problem-solving around crime and disorder. Prior to these

reforms, residents relied upon attenuated, less regular, and in all likelihood less effective

methods influence over the decisions of these local institutions such as voting for their

city council representative, contacting their offices about specific concerns and relying on

the efficacy of subsequent constituent service efforts, or directly contacting police or

school officials to lodge complaints or raise suggestions. These channels of sustained

participation in local affairs increases citizens' and officials' knowledge of each other and

allow the former to hold the latter accountable through continuous scrutiny of their

priorities and actions.

        Second, participation under this devolution instituted *deliberative decision

procedures*. In most forms of political action, such as the aldermanic election and informal

contacting, citizens express their preference over this policy or that candidate or

occasionally opine a complaint. Under the LSC and community beat meeting provisions, however, citizens, with each other and with line level public employees, engage in a process of joint, structured problem solving to advance of collective goal of school or public safety improvement. Far beyond merely voicing a preference or an opinion, participants must formulate detailed priorities and plans of action through dialogue with one another and often take part in the implementation and monitoring of the programs they develop. This process can be called deliberative because, in the ideal, citizens and officials formulate their own opinions and proposals by listening to one another and collective decisions emerge from the give and take of reasoned discussion rather than from the clash of preconceived positions. Deliberation potentially increases both quality and fairness of collective decisions because they allow participants to bring diverse perspectives and information to bear and because it places a premium on the strength of reasons rather than privileging status, official authority, or numerical majorities.

In LSC governance, for example, deliberation occurs in the process of constructing, approving, and implementing each school's School Improvement Plan (SIP). In composing the SIP, a document that each LSC is required to submit periodically under the 1988 reform legislation, council members approve a three year plan for school improvement. In one sense, each SIP documents the interim results that school council and community's wider deliberations about its priorities and action plans. From another perspective, however, the process of constructing and writing a SIP is itself a deliberative process. Those involved—usually led by the principal but drawn from a schools staff and parental and community ranks—first develop an educational vision or mission statement for the school, analyze its present strengths and weaknesses, then construct curricular, instructional capacity, and physical plant strategies to advance its mission statement, and finally allocate staff and financial resources to implement and monitor the progress of those strategies. The outcomes of implementing these SIPs then feeds back into subsequent LSC deliberations and improvement plan revisions, hopefully setting in motion a progressive dynamic that enhances both the capacities of participants and the quality of strategies.

Deliberation in monthly community policing beat meetings is structured according to a similar problem-solving process developed jointly by officers and community-based

activists and subsequently taught to literally thousands of police officers and residents in
Chicago. Police and residents in a beat jointly generate a comprehensive list of
neighborhood crime and safety problems in a brainstorming process. They then agree to
focus on two or three listed items as priority issues, and then pool information and
perspectives to develop analyses of these problems. Out of this, they construct strategies
with which to address the priority problems and a division of labor to implement these
strategies. The success of these strategies is assessed in subsequent meetings, and groups
typically try to develop additional strategies to address stubborn problems or take on
new problems after resolving old ones. Again, this short feedback loop between the
planning, implementation, and results assessment may increase both the practical
capabilities and problem solving success of residents and police officers in each beat.

  These devolutions also establish a third element of *empowerment*: the expectation
that citizens' participation and deliberation will palpably and directly affect public action
and its results. Ordinary channels of political influence and public discussion are less
empowered on both of these dimensions. When one participates in deliberation in the
public sphere of mass media as a spectator or even as an author, votes for a candidate to
represent ones views, or even serves on advisory committees, there is but a thin
connection between one's views and official actions. In these processes, a citizen's views
must be aggregated with those of other voters, weakened by considering them across
multiple issue spaces, filtered up through the ranks of political representation, and then
once again diluted by administrative discretion as they are interpreted down the chain of
bureaucratic command. The Chicago reforms increase citizen power over public affairs on
at least two dimensions. First, since citizens join with "street level" public officials such
as teachers, principals, and police officers to analyze localized problems and develop
plans to respond to them, citizens expect their input to shape directly to the subsequent
official priorities and actions. Even if particular contributions are not incorporated into
interim plans, they will at least have been publicly considered against other proposals and
reasons in the course of deliberation.

  Beyond this, however, the reforms create opportunities for a sustained kind of
citizen engagement in which they can expect not only that their input will elicit official
response, but that it will affect the real problems that motivate their participation in the

first place. It is important here to distinguish between power over policies—for example the establishment of police discipline board, stricter sentencing policy, or equitable school financing—on one hand and the power to achieve the outcomes expected of those policies—such as reduction of police abuse, lower crime rates, or improved school performance—on the other. Political power is usually marked according to the former sorts of considerations because the later is, paradoxically, either presumed to follow unproblematically or deemed too complex to reliably assess. Under the Chicago reforms, however, the balance of attention rests at least as much on the achievement of concrete outcomes receives as on the selection of specific policy preferences or tools. Indeed, particular proposals are treated as working hypotheses in these deliberative procedures and so are always subject to reinforcement or rejection pending evaluation of the results they achieve. The nature and narrow focus of these procedures, then, empowers citizens in the additional sense that their deliberations can be expected to have observable effects in the world, and these consequences provide additional material for improved and continued deliberation.

3. Devolution Is Not Enough:
Reinforcing Deliberation Through Centralized Support and Oversight

Compared to the hierarchical bureaucratic form, these devolutions in police and school organization undoubtedly increase the scope for empowered citizen participation and deliberation. From their inception, however, even reformers who viewed bureaucracies as hopelessly ineffective and unresponsive saw some of the dangers inherent in decentralization and sought to remake central authority to combat those dangers. Additional early experience with these new institutions of neighborhood governance revealed more pitfalls that in turn required further reconfiguration of these administrative centers to support their action units in the neighborhoods. While this evolution was frequently unstructured and politically wrought, one can think of its driver as a recursive proto- (because of its haphazardness) and meta- (because its subject is the institutions of neighborhood level deliberation) deliberation. Its participants, this time

more highly placed officials and leading activists, improved the quality and effectiveness of deliberation by scanning their current participatory routines to identify and address systemic needs or defects. On this view, decentralization is not the final institutional blueprint for empowered deliberative democracy. Indeed, there is no optimal stable arrangement because focused deliberation can always reveal transformations that improve processes and outcomes. As we shall see, the ultimate fate and success of community policing and school reform in Chicago, and perhaps of many similar experiments,[4] may well depend upon their ability to include diverse and powerful actors in this higher order deliberation to avoid the machinations and vicissitudes of ordinary politics. In this section, we show how central authorities have begun to address the insufficiencies of decentralization by reorganizing themselves to further enhance the participatory, deliberative, and empowered character of community policing and local school governance. In particular, the CPS and CPD central offices have moved from attempting to direct operational minutia to supporting the self-directed governance and problem-solving efforts of their neighborhood units by providing training and other infrastructure on one hand and holding them accountable for the integrity of their deliberations and delivery of performance outcomes on the other.

Support: Training, Mobilization, and a Favorable Environment

       From the outset, advocates of police and school decentralization recognized that many citizens would find constructive engagement with professionals difficult. They therefore urged that training programs be developed and provided on a city-wide basis as a necessary part of the reform package. As it turned out, however, professionals would in both cases undergo exactly the same training as lay citizens, for the difficulties associated with exercising the power of deliberative problem solving were new to both. Since there was no body of off-the shelf expertise or experts in deliberative local governance, training was of necessity a boot-strapping process. In CAPS, activists and officers from the police academy developed a group problem-solving method and hands-on curriculum based on their early experiences with informal community-police partnerships and in the five prototype districts. Under a $2.9 million contract, the city hired the Chicago Alliance

on Neighborhood Safety (CANS), a community-based organization, to teach this curriculum to residents and officers. CANS dispatched teams consisting of community organizers, civilian trainers, and experienced police officers to each of the city's beats.[5] Over the three or four months' time that they spent in each beat, the team would teach deliberative problem solving by leading residents and beat officers through the practical reasoning process described above. By the end of the period, residents had often learned the process by applying it themselves and in many cases could see progress on the concrete problem that they had selected as part of the training exercise. J.C.P.T. ran for two years, and in that time organizers estimate that they trained some 12,000 residents and several hundred police officers. In a move that was controversial because this effort was generally regarded as successful, the city terminated the CANS contract in 1997 in favor of conducting training and mobilization activities from within city departments.

School reformers of both official and activist stripe also saw that LSC members might be initially bewildered by their new governance duties, and so developed their own series of training programs. During the first few years, groups within the CPS and non-profit community organizations like the Chicago Association of Local School Councils and the Beverly Improvement Association provided training on an *ad hoc* basis to schools and LSC members who sought it out. In response to the perception that many LSCs were failing, the Illinois legislature passed a second major school reform law, this one focussed on school accountability, in 1995. One of its provisions was that all new LSC members must undergo three days, or eighteen hours, of training or be removed from office. Training focused on basic school governance issues such as principal selection and contract terms, school budgeting, LSC member responsibilities, teamwork, and school improvement planning. This program resembled community policing efforts in that training was centrally coordinated by a University of Illinois group, but initially provided by experienced practitioners from community and school reform organizations as well as school system employees. As in the policing training program, the Board of Education

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[4] Such as those discussed in this conference.
[5] See Archon Fung. "Contract Expired: Is Chicago Poised to Take the Community Out of Community Policing?" *Neighborhood Works*, (March/April 1997): 8-9.

brought the program in-house in 1998 by banning outside, mostly community-based, organizations from providing basic training.[6]

Just as the creation of opportunities for direct self-governance does not imply that citizens will possess capacities to utilize them, neither does it mean that citizens will actually participate; some may not know, others may know but not care to join. In a second area of support, then, centralized efforts also aimed to boost awareness and participation in deliberative governance. Community policing outreach has employed both mass media and community organizing techniques. Since 1997, the city has spent $1.6 million annually on media efforts to advertise and educate residents about CAPS and its participation opportunities.[7] Partially as a result of these television and radio spots, billboards, and a weekly cable television program called "CrimeWatch," approximately 79% of Chicago's adults knew about CAPS in 1998.[8] These efforts have been supplemented by been supplemented by timed-tested community organizing methods. First provided as part of the CANS training program, and then later managed from the Mayor's Office, the program has included as part of its staff between 30 and 60 community organizers that publicize beat meetings and partnership possibilities by visiting churches, neighborhood associations, and individual residences.

Rather than the continuous outreach in community policing, citizen outreach in local school governance has tended to focus on the bi-annual LSC elections and it has been funded primarily through private sources rather than from city coffers. In the first year of elections, 1989, charitable foundations donated some $750,000 to community organizations to recruit LSC candidates, but this sum dropped to $318,000 and $215,000 for the 1991 and 1993 elections respectively.[9] In 1996, community organizations received some $216,000 in private donations—about one half of that sum was administered through the Chicago School Reform Board—to recruit and train LSC candidates.[10] Though

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[6] Dan Scheid, "Board Bumps Reform Groups from LSC Training" Catalyst (September 1998); Pflepsen, Alison "LSCs Lose 182 Members Who Didn't Complete Training," in *Catalyst* (May 1999).
[7] The Chicago Community Policing Evaluation Consortium, *Community Policing in Chicago, Years Five-Six: An Interim Report* (Evanston: Institute for Policy Research, May 1999): 18.
[8] Ibid.
[9] William S. McKersie. "Private Funding Down for LSC Elections" *Catalyst*. Vol. 7, No. 6 (March 1996).
[10]Dan Weissmann, Jennifer Randall, Lisa Lewis and Jason Grotto. "Did Community Groups Have an Impact," in *Catalyst* (May 1996).

causality is of course difficult to establish, many associate the generally downward trends in both the number of LSC candidates and voter turnout (discussed below) to this decline in funding for outreach.

Presuming individual motivation, new institutional opportunities, and programmed mobilization and education efforts conspire to bring participants who generate effective governance and problem solving strategies, successful implementation and beneficial effects will still depend upon various resources and the cooperation of other parties. A third way in which central authorities can help local units where they cannot help themselves, then, is by making their external legal, political, and administrative environment more conducive to local deliberative problem-solving. As with the content of citizen training programs, local experience will likely reveal the most urgent and fruitful subjects for this kind of centralized intervention. For example, many LSCs proposed restructuring the school day to allow more time for teachers to collaborate and plan classes as one of their initial improvement strategies. The collective bargaining agreement between the CTU and Board of Education, however, established precise work rules that prohibited local modification. In the next round of negotiations, the Board performed its facilitative role by building into the collective agreement a waiver option through which schools could modify the work day if teachers there supported the alterations.

To further illustrate how the administrative center can alter background conditions to favor local problem solving, consider a problem commonly targeted by community policing groups: drug houses that are often the foci of street violence and other disturbances in neighborhoods. Acting in isolation from one another, dozens of police-resident groups have converged upon a workable strategy to address drug houses. Residents try to persuade a landlord to clean up his property through, for example, eviction of problem tenants, reporting criminal activity on the property to police, and screening out potentially problematic would-be tenants, and maintaining or upgrading the property's condition. If a landlord responds to these entreaties, resident groups may assist his efforts in various ways, and their partnership is often sufficient to eliminate the problem. If the landlord refuses to cooperate, then residents begin to build a legal case that can be used in housing court to seize the property and thereby down the drug house.

According to the Illinois nuisance abatement law, a court may act against a drug house by "restraining all persons... from using the building for a period of one year" if it establishes that "nuisance was maintained with the intentional, knowing, reckless or negligent permission of the owner."[11] The nuisance in such cases is the trafficking of a controlled substance, and establishing negligence under this law requires three narcotics arrests on the property in question. To use this law, then, groups residents worked with police to concentrate patrol, surveillance, and undercover action that would result in three arrests. Then, residents would press the case in housing court by testifying that narcotics activities did in fact severely burden neighborhood life. This strategy to persuade first, then prosecute has shut down many of the city's drug houses.

Officials in the police department and Mayor's office took note of this strategy and secured two institutional changes that increase its effectiveness in the neighborhoods. First, a 1996 city ordinance whittled away real estate property rights by enacting a stricter version of the Illinois nuisance abatement law.[12] This ordinance imposes the burden of monitoring against illegal activities on the property owner and creates a fine for allowing a nuisance to occur. It subjects "any person who owns, manages or controls any premises and who encourages or permits illegal activity... shall be subject to a fine" for each day of the offense. Furthermore, whereas the Illinois law requires the illegal activity to occur inside the premises,[13] the new law only requires a geographic nexus between the problem property and nuisance. This provision is important because, as one officer put it, "your classic drug houses don't really exist any more because the dealers know that you can take the house away. Most of the action happens on the street in front of the house."

Second, the City's Law Department, called Corporation Council, has created a Drug and Gang House Enforcement Section that helps community policing groups utilize this law. They send staff lawyers to community beat meetings to provide legal expertise

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[11] 720 *Illinois Compiled Statutes*, Sec. 37-4 (1996).
[12] The ordinance described in this paragraph went into effect on November 11, 1996. See "Amendments of Titles 8 and 13 of Municipal Code of Chicago Concerning Liability of Property Owners and Management for Unlawful Activities on Property." *Chicago City Council Journal* (July 31, 1996): 27730-27735.
[13] The state statute was originally targeted against prostitution.

in the formulation and implementation of problem-solving strategies.[14] If residents

identify and prioritize a drug house, the lawyer will independently deploy the Law

Department's resources to eliminate that drug house. According to Dawn Bode, the

Section's Supervising Attorney, the office uses the same strategy of persuade first and

prosecute second, but with all of the power of city behind it.[15] When corporation council

targets a property, they first send city inspectors to document all code violations in

addition to the nuisance. It then invites the landlord to a meeting to discuss the situation.

The goal of this discussion is voluntary compliance and awareness as documented with a

resolution letter signed by the property owner. If the landlord doesn't respond to initial

letter, rejects voluntary compliance, or doesn't show up to the meeting, corporation

council pursues measures in administrative court. It asks for fine, and then for criminal

contempt charges that can result in 180 days imprisonment. These two background

measures, then, put the jackboot of the state at the disposal of problem-solving

communities in their efforts to eliminate drug houses by generalizing and strengthening a

strategy that those communities themselves invented.

Accountability: Monitoring, Adjudicating, Intervening, and Learning

In addition to supporting local units in these three ways, central authorities can

also enhance the public accountability and deliberative quality of police and school

governance by monitoring, publicizing, and when necessary intervening in local activities.

Though this design of democracy gives local schools and neighborhood beats powers to

construct their own plans of action, it does not grant license to refuse to plan either by

unreflectively continuing their old habits or by doing nothing at all. Perhaps due to

capriciousness or simple incapacity, the processes of some local units may unfairly

exclude some citizens, be controlled by powerful and self-interested local individuals, or

persist in their inability to address priority problems. Since local units subject to these

various kinds of "deliberative breakdown" will, because of the very nature of the problem,

be unable to restore the integrity of their internal democratic process, it falls to centralized

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[14] This program, called the "Corporation Council Program," is presently being tested in five "prototype" police districts. It began on November 1, 1996.
[15] Telephone interview (27 February 1997).

powers insure that local actors are indeed deliberating openly and effectively by constructing appropriate incentives and monitoring and rectification routines.

To assure that localities fulfill their minimal obligation to engage in the processes structured problem solving, both the CPS and CPD require LSCs and beat groups respectively to document their deliberative processes and consequent actions. As mentioned above, each LSC must prepare and submit annual School Improvement Plans that follow uniform CPS guidelines that prescribe the form, but not the content, of their deliberations. Community policing groups must submit both long term and monthly reports to document their deliberations and strategies. The officers in each beat, frequently working with residents, must prepare a detailed long-term report called a beat profile that describes the beat's resources, local institutions, demographics, and persistent problems. In addition to this baseline information, they must document their problem solving deliberations, including descriptions of priority targets, strategies to address them, justifications of those strategies, actions taken, and observable results for their district supervisors. Both the CPS and CPD supervisors review SIP and beat plans and return facially unsatisfactory plans—e.g. those with missing plan elements—to local actors to help assure that the stages of structured deliberation have been followed.

Such reporting offers a basic but quite imperfect indicator of the quality of deliberation, and two additional methods that offer more accurate assessments: inspection and complaint. In the former strategy, inspectors from central offices visit local units to both learn lessons from those that seem most inventive and to identify those that are performing poorly. Plans along these lines have been developed, but not yet adopted, for the CPS to establish a "Quality Assurance Agency" that would dispatch teams of educational experts—including consultants, master teachers and principals, and agency officials—to individual schools. Over the course of several days, the review team would observe classes, interview staff and students, and review planning documents in order to develop performance assessments.[16] The CPD has instituted a more hierarchical process in which top staff under the police superintendent meet with each of the 25 District Commanders to review levels of CAPS implementation, and there district commanders

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[16] See Steven R. Strahler, "It's Back-To-School Time Daley's Crisis Plan Begins To Take Shape" in *Craine's Chicago Business* (April 10, 1995): 3.

report on the activities of their individual beats. In addition to these pro-active inspections, which are costly and difficult to execute, passive means can also detect procedural breakdowns. These sorts of mechanisms depend on citizen complaints rather than centralized inspections. When a participants to local deliberation notice violations of deliberative norms, for example principals who disregard parent input or police officers who refuse to implement actions agreed to in beat plans, they can lodge complaints with higher authorities such as district commanders and or regional school staff. In the ideal, these complaints would then trigger active official scrutiny, and if necessary direct intervention. Though this dynamic does occur informally, on an *ad hoc* basis, neither the CPS nor CPD has implemented official citizen complaint systems and procedures to detect local governance problems.

While these three methods allow central personnel to monitor the procedural quality of local deliberations, concrete outcomes—the effects of local problem solving—must also be monitored from the center. A detailed knowledge of the outcomes is therefore necessary to test whether this form of democratic action indeed yields practical benefits. In addition to allowing external evaluation, the availability of appropriate outcomes data also feeds both local and system-wide deliberation. In their formulating their school plans, for example, LSC members often use trends in their own students' standardized test scores to identify weak instructional or curricular areas. By comparing their methods with those of similarly situated but better performing schools, LSCs sometimes find promising school improvement strategies. Careful monitoring of outcomes can also alert central authorities to local laggards and respond through some combination of discipline and support. Conversely, like local schools, central authorities can also identify particularly effective schools or beats through these comparisons and then consider diffusing more widely or expanding them into global reforms (like the drug house strategies described above).

Developing and applying outcome measures that can realize these potential benefits of monitoring is, however, no simple matter. The difficulty lies in constructing measures that accurately reflect the impact of local strategies but that are insensitive to changes beyond their control. Suppose, for example, that an LSC decides one year to adopt a computer-aided learning software package to supplement its third-grade reading

program and that this strategy actually boosts learning ability. Suppose further that students coming into the third grade in that year read less well than prior classes, and that the average reading test scores for that class end up lower than prior years' scores. Local decision-makers who rely on test scores alone will incorrectly infer that the program was not effective and perhaps decide to revert to the previous program. If this test score drop follows a recent history of decline, central authorities may incorrectly infer that the school council is incompetent. Similar difficulties clearly plague any attempt to directly connect the effectiveness of community policing strategies with short term trends in crime rates.

One response is to argue that local knowledge will always be thicker than any performance metric, and so to reject any decisions—especially those that issue from the center and over-ride localities—that depend upon performance metrics. But even the short experience with devolution in school and police governance, however, shows that even these poor metric can identify poorly performing local groups and trigger helpful interventions from central authorities. Foregoing performance monitoring due to its inaccuracy, therefore, means giving up a potentially critical tool for learning from successes and failures.

Another response is to continue to utilize the existing performance measurement tools despite their imperfections and their potentially counterproductive effects. Both the CPS and CPD leaderships seem for the moment to be satisfied with these traditional performance metrics, perhaps because their energies have been focused on the tasks of devolution and centralized support. It is also possible that they have undervalued monitoring because they have not recognized that accurate performance would be not just an assessment tool for oversight, but also feed the improve problem solving deliberations and local planning as described above. Beyond this, the status quo metrics are attractive because they are familiar and seem objective. The primary tool to assess student achievement in math, reading, writing, science, and social studies in Chicago, for example, is the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) which has been published continuously since 1942 and is used by school districts across the nation. Though the test, like standardized testing generally, has many critics it counts among its supporters many of the teachers who are accustomed to administering it, the Chicago Board of Education and central office

staff that demand *some* clear and defensible management device with which to assess school performance cross-sectionally and over time, and much of the public that demands accountability from the school system. Similarly, crime statistics for the city of Chicago have been gathered at both the municipal and federal (by the FBI Uniform Crime Reports) for more than fifty years and reflect obvious dimensions of public safety such as murder, rape, robbery, and assault. Altering metrics would require new administrative machinery and probably spark intense political conflict akin to the current battles over standardized testing.

Nevertheless, some reformers have offered a third response: develop performance metrics that are useful not only for comparing and assessing general conditions, but also for judging and therefore also improving the success of local governance efforts. Education researchers at the Consortium on Chicago School Research have developed a metric for the *productivity* of a school or grade within a school, defined as student academic achievement gains that result from school programming.[17] They propose the following two step method of calculating the productivity of a grade within a single school. First, take the subset of children who attended that grade for the entire year. Second, subtract comparable standardized test scores of that subset of students for a test administered at the beginning of the year from year-end test scores. This method discounts students who attend classes for only part of the year and so will not have received the full impact of the school's program. The method, furthermore, controls for differences in the preparation of students prior to enrollment in a grade, so that a teacher is not penalized for the weaknesses of the teachers that preceded her in a student's education. Annual productivity gains (or loses) that result from school specific factors can then be measured by subtracting one year's productivity from that of the preceding year. Such a system, these researchers argue convincingly, is a better tool with which central office administrators, LSC members, and the public at large can gauge the effectiveness of school governance efforts.

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[17] Details in this paragraph are taken from Anthony S. Bryk, Yeow Meng Thum, John Q. Easton, and Stuart Luppescu. *Academic Productivity of Chicago Public Elementary Schools: A Technical Report Sponsored by The Consortium on Chicago School Research* (Chicago: Consortium on Chicago School Research, March 1998).

The more general point here is that the construction and application of performance metrics, like the practices whose performance is measured, is a complex matter that itself ought to be the subject of participatory deliberation and open-minded transformation. Venerable metrics like test scores and crime rates were designed to track broad changes in the academic abilities of students and safety of neighborhoods and they may perform reasonably in that regard, though many doubt even that. However, they were not designed, and are much too crude, to be tools for the much more fine grained determinations of whether particular educational or policing activities are more effective than others. Incremental steps like the school productivity measures developed by the Chicago Consortium are welcome and seem to offer straightforward gains, but ought to be viewed as the beginning of a deliberative process to develop metrics that are ever more useful for assessing and thus enhancing school improvement and problem solving strategies, not the endpoint of a political or administrative struggle against current testing practices.

Central authorities would have two main uses for these improved performance metrics: to identify local bodies that are laggards or leaders in the effectiveness of their deliberative governance. Once they know who they are, they can intervene to improve laggards through support or discipline, and make the leaders known, study their sources of success, and perhaps reward them as incentives to spur on other groups. Even with the coarse metrics currently in use, however, the CPS, and to a lesser extent the CPD, central offices have begun to implement comparative programs of this kind. In 1995, a series of reforms led from the center by Mayor Daley and his long time associate and newly appointed CEO of Schools, Paul Vallas, sought to increase LSC and school accountability by disciplining laggards.[18] One of its central provisions created an "academic probation" status that marked schools where less than 15 percent of the students score at or above national norms on standardized reading tests as failing schools meriting centralized assistance and scrutiny. The program placed 109 schools on academic probation status in 1996, its first year of operation.

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[18] For a more detailed account, see Archon Fung. "Street Level Democracy: A Theory of Popular Pragmatic Deliberation and Its Practice in Chicago School Reform and Community Policing, 1988-1997," (Doctoral Dissertation, Massachusetts Institute of Technology Department of Political Science, 1999).

What sorts of corrective interventions did the CPS Office of Accountability impose? Far from re-establishing centralized direction over them, the probation program attempts to improve the quality of each's schools deliberative planning and problem-solving processes through center-locality collaboration. First, they provide additional educational resources by requiring each school to form a partnership with outside educational experts in the private or University sector. Second, they dispatched an intervention team, led by a probation manager assigned to the school, to work with staff and parents to review and improve their SIP by conducting an external review, use that report as the basis of LSC discussions to develop a Corrective Action Plan, and incorporate changes into successive SIPs. Finally, the Office of Accountability assigns a probation manager monitors implementation of the new plan and has powers to sanction the school if they fail to abide by the programs that they themselves constructed. Though the program has been in operation only a short time, the experience so far suggests that staffs and parents at probation schools, while at first wary of heavy handed CPS intervention, have generally experienced the program as a sometimes painful, but nonetheless collaborative and essentially self-directed project in enhancing their own planning capabilities and educational outcomes.[19]

Four observations emerge from this brief account of central authority in Chicago's community policing and school governance reforms. First, the current institutional structure is neither centralized nor decentralized; though local officials and ordinary citizens enjoy much more power and voice than under the previous, more top-down, arrangements, they remain dependent on central offices for various kinds of support and accountable to them for both process integrity and performance outcomes. Second, the role of central power shifts fundamentally from that of directing local units (in the previous, hierarchical system) to that of *supporting* local units in their own problem solving endeavors and *holding them accountable* to the norms of deliberation and achievement of demanding but feasible public outcomes. Third, support and accountability from the center advances the three democratic design goals—participation,

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[19] Elizabeth Druffin, "Spotlight Brings Focus: One School's Probation Story" in *Catalyst: Voices of Chicago School Reform* (June 1998); Fung (1999), esp. Chapters 8 and 15.

deliberation, and empowerment—that seemed to depend only on decentralized local autonomy in section 2 above. Centralized provision of community organizing and media outreach, for example, likely increases participation in these local governance opportunities. Training and monitoring of performance and process increase the quality of deliberation by increasing individual capacities, feeding relevant facts about the effectiveness of alternative courses of action into the process, and checking possibilities that powerful local actors capture governance bodies for their own selfish ends. It follows that these efforts to enhance the deliberative capacities of citizens and local officials, keep problem-solving processes open, and hold them to high standards of demonstrated excellence all contribute to citizen empowerment generally by increasing their abilities to know what they want (monitoring and publicity) and to get it through reasonable and participatory action.

Finally, each of these central functions, like the projects of improving public safety and educational effectiveness that they support, is a complex matter with no obvious solutions. Therefore, some of the same principles that motivate the deliberative transformation of school and police governance also apply to the design of these central institutions. In particular, participants should always assume that alternative strategies can do better than current routines, even when like standardized testing they are entrenched and enjoy wide support. Since the advantages of competing proposals are difficult to assess *a priori*—e.g. should mobilization support services be provided by a city agency or community based organization—institutions should admit that their expertise is limited and open space for competing proposals to operate on a pilot basis as a general matter rather than advancing the most politically expedient proposal as the one that happens also to be most effective. Finally, these decisions about central office methods should be based upon reasoned discussion of the results of these empirical trails and no decision should close off additional trials that reveal even more effective methods. Centralized interventions, themselves formulated through deliberation, would then further enhance the deliberative, participatory, and empowered character of otherwise isolated local actions. Though the neither the CPS nor CPD has achieved such a fully deliberative transformation, many of its essential elements are in place in both these institutions. In the rest of this essay, we examine how this partial implementation has performed in light

of general concerns about the demands and potential pathologies of empowered deliberative democracy.[20]

4. Who Participates?

Since a central concern for both those who advanced these reforms in Chicago and for empowered deliberative democracy generally is to more intensively involve citizens in decision-making areas from which they were previously excluded, the first operational question is who, if anyone, utilizes these participatory avenues? These new opportunities require much more time, knowledge, and energy from citizens than more common forms such as voting or contacting officials, participation *levels* may end up being so low that school officials and police officers end up deliberating with each other rather than with those they serve. Since those with less generally participate less,[21] this concern is especially pressing in the many poor neighborhoods of Chicago. Relatedly, there may be biases in participation, amounting in the limiting case to systematic exclusion, that cast doubt on the fairness of its discussions. For example, these meetings and offices might draw only the most wealthy or well educated or men more than women.[22] In this section, we draw upon an array of data sources to profile participation under the Chicago reforms and then comment briefly on what appropriate expectations and norms for engagement might be.

Overall Participation

To answer the question of how many citizens participate in Chicago's deliberative governance institutions, we rely on the official CPS election statistics and beat meeting attendance records gathered by CPD beat officers and then compiled by researchers at the Institute for Policy Research at Northwestern University. These records show that

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[20] ********* cite Fung and Wright, Introduction to Real Utopias IV.

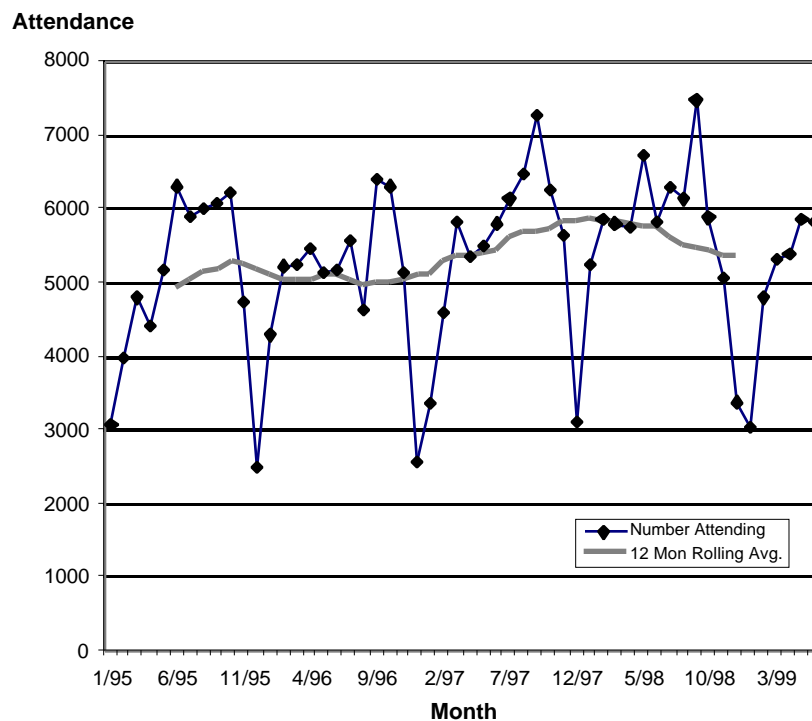[21] See, for example, Verba, Sidney, and Nie, Norman. *Participation in America: Political Democracy and Social Equality*. (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1987); Nagel, Jack. *Participation* (New York: Prentice Hall, 1987).

[22] Cite feminist arguments from democracy and difference, others.

community policing and school governance exhibit a similar pattern of aggregate participation: generally, a community beat or LSC governance meeting draws between ten and twenty participants. In the case of LSCs, the participants are sometimes interested parents or community members with no official position but are most often the representatives elected to govern the school. Community policing offers no formal positions for residents and so attendance is always fully voluntary.

The following chart shows monthly meeting attendance in Chicago's 279 beats from January 1995 (when the community policing program expanded from five "prototype" districts to encompass the entire city) until June 1999:

Figure 1: Monthly Police Beat Meeting Attendance, 1995-1999[23]

The wide month-to-month variation in beat meeting attendance corresponds to seasonal change; beat meeting attendance is lower in the winter months because whether makes it more difficult to travel to the meetings on one hand and because the lower cold weather

crime rates make police-problem solving seem less urgent on the other. With that
qualification, note two features of this chart. Compensating for seasonal variation,
between 5000-6000 residents attend beat meetings each month. Since there are 279 beats
and most meet each month, between 17 and 21 residents generally attend each meeting in
addition to five or six beat officers. This number, while a small percentage of the 4,000-
6,000 adults who live typically in a beat, is more than enough for problem-solving
planning and implementation. Second, though this structure of community beat meetings
has existed only since 1995 and so trajectories are difficult to discern, there seems to be a
slight upward trend in beat meeting attendance. This trend offers some preliminary
evidence against the concern that the demands of participatory democracy may result in
civic exhaustion and declining rates of participation.[24]

The conceptualization and measurement of citizen participation in LSCs is less
straightforward than in community policing. The number of people who attend LSC
meetings in the aggregate has not been systematically collected, and in any case most
meetings are perhaps only attended by the LSC members themselves and that number is
in turn fixed by law at six parents, two community members, two teachers, and the
principal for each school. LSC voter turnout is one obvious candidate, but quite imperfect
as an indicator because this governance mode focuses on sustained deliberative
participation as a central component of citizen engagement. So, consider an extreme non-
competitive case in which the number of candidates exactly equaled the number of open
positions, candidate voted for themselves and no one else vote, but the councils turned
out to be active and effective in deliberative governance. This case in which the machinery
of elections degenerates into voluntary engagement arguably scores high on the values of
deliberation, empowerment, and participation discussed above.

Since we lack, even in principle, accurate metrics for participation in school
governance we offer voter turnout and the number of candidates standing for election as

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[23] These data were provided to the author by Wes Skogan at Northwestern University's Institute for Policy Research.

[24] Fung and Wright (1999). For an argument that high frequency of elections depresses participation, see Robert Jackman and Ross Miller, "Voter Turnout in the Industrial Democracies During the 1980s" in *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 27, No. 4 (January 1995): 467-492.
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two imperfect measures. The following table shows the number of candidates and voters,

where available, in each of LSC elections since the initial contest in 1989:

Table 1: Local School Council Election Statistics[25]

	Year	Parent	Community	Teacher	Total
Number of Candidates	1998	4,106	1,540	1,471	7,117
(candidates per seat)		(1.2)	(1.4)	(1.3)	(1.3)
	1996	4,493	1,682	1,620	7,795
		(1.4)	(1.5)	(1.5)	(1.4)
	1993	4,254	1,495	1,612	7,361
		(1.3)	(1.4)	(1.5)	(1.3)
	1991	4,739	1,858	1,545	8,142
		(1.5)	(1.7)	(1.4)	(1.5)
	1989	9,329	4,818	2,429	16,576
		(2.9)	(4.4)	(2.2)	(3.1)
Number of Voters	1998	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	1996	68,210	24,519	29,313	122,042
	1993	33,701	23,544	27,435	84,680
	1991	44,735	35,583	30,514	108,832
	1989	113,008	97,276	34,902	245,186

In terms of both candidacy and turnout, participation was very high in the first year and

then dropped off to a lower, but relatively stable, level in successive elections. Levels of

candidacy are not so distant from the hypothetical just sketched. In the last three

elections, the ratio of candidates to positions has been less than 1.5 in all three categories,

which means that more than half of the seats are uncontested and so LSC service

resembles volunteerism more than competitive selection. Furthermore, since the ratio is

substantially greater than unity, few LSCs have empty seats. Despite their structural

differences, then, the patterns of LSC participation resemble those in community

policing. The number of citizens who actually engage in deliberation is much smaller than

the number affected (roughly 4,000 residents live in the area served by a school), but

LSCs are generally full so there are generally enough members to engage in school

improvement planning and the levels of participation are for the most part stable.

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[25] Catalyst Staff. "Local School Council Elections," *Catalyst: Voices of Chicago School Reform*, Vol. 7,
No. 8 (May 1996): 26. 1998 election statistics from Rosalind Rossi, "School Races Attract Few
Candidates" *Chicago Sun-Times* (April 6, 1998): 8.

Socio-Economic Bias

Who are these people that spend precious evenings discussing crime and schooling, and some portion of their days doing what they promised to do in those discussions? In terms of socio-economic advantages such as income and education, two general patterns emerge that are common to both school and police governance in Chicago. Surprisingly, those in low income neighborhoods participate as much as people from wealthier ones. This evidence weighs against the claim that participatory reforms will benefit the advantaged but leave the disadvantaged behind because they lack the wherewithal to engage. Within any given neighborhood, however, the more advantaged—homeowners and those with more income and education—participate at disproportionately greater rates. This pattern confirms the well grounded intuition that resources do influence citizens' abilities to participate.[26]

Engagement patterns in community policing are especially striking. There, contravening most empirical social science findings, residents from poor neighborhoods participate at *greater* rates than those from wealthy ones. The explanation for this counterintuitive trend is that the best predictor of neighborhood beat meeting attendance rate is the personal crime rate of the neighborhood, which itself tends to vary inversely with household income. The following table gives the multiple OLS statistics for beat meeting attendance rate[27] (attendees per 10,000 residents per meeting, with) regressed against: (i) the percentage of beat residents that are African-American, (ii) percent Hispanic, (iii) percentage of adults that have college degrees, (iv) median household income, (v) personal crime rate, and (vi) percentage of residences that are owned by their occupants:

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[26] Cite Verba, Schlozmann, and Nie. Others if necessary.

[27] This rate is given as attendees per meeting per 10,000 residents, with the attendance for each beat averaged over all available meeting data from January 1995 until May 1997. Crime rate is calculated from 1996 figures, and other remaining demographic data is drawn from the 1996 census.

Table 2: OLS Regression Results for Beat Meeting Attendance Rate

	Coefficient, B	*SE*	*Beta*
Pct Black	0.0275	0.0444	0.0630
Pct. Hisp	0.1012	0.0673	0.1285
Pct. College	-0.2174	0.1405	-0.1894
Median Inc	0.0004	0.0003	0.1824
PersCrime*	0.2038	0.0397	0.5512
% Own Home	0.0804	0.1086	0.0967

R Squared = 0.275
Observations = 270

* Statistically significant at the 1×10^{-6} level of confidence.

As can be seen from the table above, the only statistically significant factor in this regression—an the one with the most substantial coefficient—is personal crime rate.[28] According to this model, a increase of 40 crimes per 1000 residents (mean personal crime rate in Chicago was 84 crimes per 1000 residents in 1996) corresponds to an increase in beat meeting attendance of 8 persons per 10,000 adults, or some 4 persons per meeting in a medium sized beat. The same predicted increase requires, according to this regression, an increase in neighborhood mean household income of $20,000 (almost doubling the mean neighborhood median household income of $24,000). Interestingly, the effect of percent college educated on beat meeting attendance is small, but in the *opposite* of the expected direction; the regression model finds that the controlled effect of increasing the number of college graduates in a neighborhood weakly reduces beat meeting attendance. A decrease of 8 monthly participants per 10,000 adult residents corresponds to a 38% increase in percent of college graduates, tripling the mean percentage of college graduates in the beats (16%).

Though participation patterns in Local School Council elections have been less well documented and the trends themselves more equivocal, the data also weigh against the expectation that those in less well off areas will also participate less. In their study of the 1991 Chicago Local School council elections, the non-profit school reform organization Designs for Change (DfC) analyzed the number of candidates standing for

election to parent seats on Local School Councils according to student body
characteristics of race, income, and ethnicity. An average of nine parental candidates stood
for election at any given school, and the study found no substantial relationship between
levels of parental candidacy and (i) percentage of Hispanic students, or (ii) percentage of
African-American students (Designs for Change 1991: 7). The study found a slight
positive correlation between the percentage of low-income students at a given school and
the number of parental candidates standing for election in 1991. Authors of that study did
not report full regression results, and so the correlation may have been statistically
insignificant.

Using data from the 1996 Chicago Local School Council Elections,[29] we
independently analyzed the relationships between school-level variables such as school
size, percentage of students from low-income families at a particular school,[30] student
mobility,[31] percentage of African-American students, and percentage of Hispanic
students and two indicators of LSC participation: the number of parental candidates
standing for election at each school[32] and the parent turnout at each school election.[33]
Using this data from the 1996 elections, we did not find the slight positive relationship
between the number of parents standing for election at a school and the percentage of
low-income students at that school; instead, we found no discernible relationship between
these two variables at all. Figure 6 below groups schools according to percentage of low-
income students,[34] and then charts average number of parental candidates in the 1996 LSC

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[28] When %home owners is removed from the list of regression variables, both %College Educated and
Median Income become statistically significant at the 0.01 level, indicating multicolinearity between these
variables. .

[29] Candidate and turnout data were very kindly provided by Mr. Doug Dillon of Management Information
Services at the Chicago Public Schools. Demographic information on schools was taken Chicago Public
Schools, Office of Accountability, *The Illinois State School Report Card Data Book for 1995-96: An
Analysis of Student, School, District, and State Characteristics* (Chicago: Chicago Public Schools, 1996).

[30] A student is classified as "low-income" just in case he or she is from a family receiving public aid, lives
in an institution for neglected or delinquent children, is supported in a foster home with public funds, or is
eligible to receive free or reduced price lunches. In 1996, approximately four-fifths of Chicago students are
classified as low-income, while less than one-fifth of the students in the state of Illinois are classified as
low-income. (Chicago Public Schools 1996: 3).

[31] Student mobility at a school is defined as the number of students enrolling in a school or leaving that
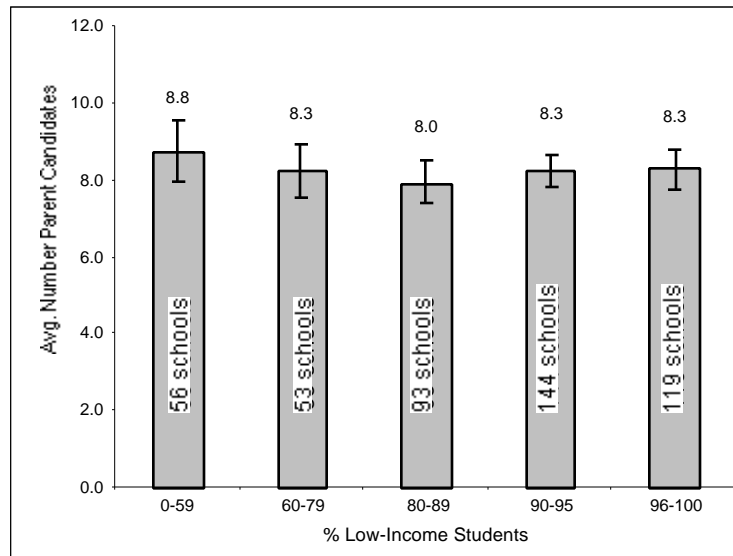school during a single school year. Students may be counted more than one.

[32] Recall that each LSC provides six positions for parent representatives.

[33] Parent turnout is given as the percentage of parents eligible to vote in the election who actually vote.

[34] 56 schools ranged from 0% to 59.9% low-income students, 53 schools were in the 60%-79.9% category,
93 schools in the 80%-89.9% group, 144 schools had between 90%-95.9% low income students, and 119
schools fell into the most distressed category of 96%-100% low-income students.

election for that group of schools. The error bars range of a 95% confidence interval for

the population mean in each of the groups.

Figure 6: Number of Parent Candidates vs. Percent Low-Income Students

This lack of correlation between the number of parental candidates and obvious

SES school-level characteristics was verified by regressing the number of parental

candidates against school size, percentage low income students, mobility rate, percentage

of African-American students, and percentage of Hispanic students. The results of this

multiple regression—coefficients (B), standard errors, and standardized coefficients

(Beta) are shown in the left half of table 5 below. It should be noted that these variables

explain very little—approximately 7.5% (R^2) of the observed variation in number of

parent candidates. Of the five independent variables, only school size bears a statistically

significant relationship with number of parental candidates. This 1996 data therefore

verifies the finding of the Designs for Change 1991 study that there is no statistically

significant relationship between the number of parents that stand for candidacy at a

school and race or ethnicity. Beyond this, note that the magnitude of the coefficients on

the statistically insignificant variables is quite low—a 50% increase (almost three standard

deviations) in low-income students would generate an increment of only 0.25 additional

parental candidates. To the extent that the number of candidates standing for election at a

school measures the willingness to participate in deliberative activities around school improvement, the 1996 LSC election statistics reject the strong egalitarian expectation that better-off neighborhoods and better-off schools will enjoy advantageous participatory reserves of candidates willing to serve.

Table 3. Predictors of Participation in 1996 LSC Elections, OLS Results

	Num. Parental Candidates			Parent Voting Turnout Rate		
Variable:	*B*	*SE B*	*Beta*	*B*	*SE B*	*Beta*
School Size	0.002**	0.0005	0.246	____	____	____
%Low-Income	-0.005	0.010	-0.035	-0.183**	0.048	-0.272
Mobility Rate	-0.006	0.009	-0.037	-0.092*	0.041	-0.117
%Black	-0.007	0.008	-0.107	0.113**	0.037	0.390
%Hispanic	-0.003	0.010	-0.039	0.122**	0.045	0.334

R-Squared: 0.075   R-Squared: 0.064
Observations: 465   Observations: 465

* Coefficient is statistically significant at the 0.05 level of confidence.
** Coefficient is statistically significant at the 0.01 level of confidence.

The right hand side of Table 3 reports the correlation between these same demographic variables and a second measure of participation: turnout rate of parents in the 1996 LSC elections. Turnout rate for each school is defined as the number of parents voting divided by the number of parents eligible to vote at that school's election. We omitted school size from this regression. As with the first regression, these variables account for only a small fraction—6.4 percent—of the observed variance in parent turnout rates. Unlike the previous model, however, all explanatory variables are statistically significant; the poverty, race, and ethnicity variables of statistically significant at the 0.01 level of confidence for a two-tailed t-test, and student mobility is significant at the 0.05 level. The magnitude of the coefficient on low-income is small, but in the expected direction; as the percentage of low income students at a school increases, parent turnout rate declines *slightly*. According to the regression results, an increase of 25% in the portion of low-income students at a school corresponds to a decrease of 4.5% in the fraction of parents turning out to vote in an LSC election (see figure 12.5 below). Similarly, increases in student mobility (and thus decreases in school stability) produce

small declines in parental turnout rates. Interestingly, the coefficients on race and ethnicity variables are also small, but in the *opposite* of the expected directions. Whereas previous studies have found that African-American and people of Hispanic backgrounds are somewhat less likely to vote than others,[35] higher proportions of black and Hispanic students in a school correlated with slightly higher parental turnout rates in the 1996 LSC elections.

While these data show that the participation rates compared *across* neighborhoods does not exhibit straightforward downward biases against the those in worse off areas, the same cannot be said for participation patterns considered *within* neighborhoods. Available data suggests that those who serve on local school councils and attend community beat meetings tend to be better off than their neighbors. A survey of all local school council members conducted in 1995 and 1996, reveals that LSC members were substantially better educated and employed than other adults in Chicago. 31% of LSC members surveyed had a Bachelor's degree or higher, compared to only 19% of adults in Chicago. Predictably, schools in more wealthy areas had more educated LSC members, but "even in schools with virtually all low-income students, the educational level of LSC members is almost equal to that of the general Chicago population."[36] LSC members are also more likely to hold professional jobs, less likely to occupy unskilled positions or be unemployed, and more likely to be "home with children" than the other adults in Chicago.[37] A similar pattern appears in community beat meeting participation: home owners and English speakers are more likely to know about beat meetings and attend them than are their less well off neighbors.[38] As with rates of overall participation, these bias patterns sketch an equivocal portrait for the Chicago style of deliberative governance. Contrary to skeptical expectations that reforms demanding active participation will further disadvantage badly-off areas, residents of poor neighborhoods participate at rates equal to or greater than those from wealthy ones. Nevertheless,

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[35] See Rosenstone and Hansen (1993: 275) and **Verba, Sidney, Schlozman, Kay Lehman, and Brady, Henry E.,** *Voice and Equality: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics* **(Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995): 233**.

[36] This survey was sponsored by the Consortium on Chicago School Research and its results are reported in Susan Ryan, Anthony Bryk, et. al., *Charting Reform: LSCs—Local Leadership at Work* (Chicago: Consortium on Chicago School Research, December 1999): 6.

[37] Ibid., p. 7.

affirming the inescapability of resource constraints, better-off residents are generally

disproportionately well represented within neighborhood meetings.

Gender Bias

In addition to socio-economic factors, some critics have raised gender and culture

as an important lenses through which to evaluate the design and performance of

deliberative arrangements. For example, Iris Marion Young, Nancy Fraser, and Lynn

Sanders (1997)[39] contend that deliberative modes privilege one style of

communication—assertive, reason-giving argument and consequently devalue other

importance modes of communication such as story-telling, rhetoric, greeting, and

expression of need. Deliberative institutions thus favor culturally specific styles of

communication by failing to recognize that those styles are typically possessed by

culturally advantaged—usually male, usually white—members of American society.

Young, for example, argues that:

> [The view of] Deliberative theorists... fails notice that the social power that can
> prevent people from being equal speakers derives... from an internalized sense of
> the right one has to speak or not to speak, and from the devaluation of some
> people's style of speech and the elevation of others. The model of deliberative
> democracy... tends to assume that deliberation is culturally neutral and universal.

> Deliberation is competition. Parties to dispute aim to win the argument, not to
> reach mutual understanding. Restricting practices of democratic discussion to
> moves in a contest where some win and others lose privileges those who like
> contests and know the rules of the game. Speech that is assertive and
> confrontational is here more valued than speech that is tentative, exploratory, or
> conciliatory. (Young 1996: 122-3)

From this perspective, one might expect women and members of cultural

minorities to find deliberative governance opportunities less attractive than white men,

and so participate at lower rates. In fact, however, more women than men participate in

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[38] Institute for Policy Research (1999): 28-9.
[39] Young, Iris Marion "Communication and the Other: Beyond Deliberative Democracy" in Selya
Benhabib ed. *Democracy and Difference: Contesting the Boundaries of the Political* (Princeton: Princeton
University Press, 1996); Fraser, Nancy. "Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of
Actually Existing Democracy," in Craig Calhoun ed., *Habermas and the Public Sphere* (Cambridge, MA:

both school governance councils and community policing beat meetings and there appears to be no significant racial bias in participation (see table 2 above). Between 1995 and 1996, researchers from Northwestern University studied monthly community policing meetings in 139 of the city's 279 beats. Using this data, we constructed a measure of gender bias for each beat by subtracting (i) the percentage of adults in living in a beat who were women from (ii) the percentage of participants in that beat who were women (over all of the beat's observed meetings). Thus, a gender bias result greater than zero indicates that women were over represented in a beat's meetings. The average gender bias over these 139 beats was 5.9%. Using a two-tailed t-test, the hypothesis that the means of a sample consisting of the percentage of adults living in each of the 139 beats who are women and a sample consisting of the percentages of participants in meetings in each of the 139 beats who are female can be rejected at the 0.01 level of confidence.[40]

Similarly, survey data from Local School Council members also reveals a substantial gender bias in participation: approximately 70% of Local School Council members are female.[41] Regarding race and ethnicity, studies show that African-American and Hispanics participate actively in local school council governance. According to the 1997 survey conducted by the Consortium on Chicago School research discussed above, 42% of LSC members are African-American (38% of Chicago's population is African-American, 14% of members are Hispanic (compared to 20% of Chicago population), and 40% of them are white (38% of Chicagoans are white, non-Hispanic). The authors of that report conclude that "the racial ethnic composition of individual councils tends to resemble the race and ethnicity of the students in the schools (Ryan, Bryk et. al. 1997: 11). Of course meeting attendance does not translate automatically into decision-power, and these data do not address the possibility that women are systematically dominated in these deliberative processes despite their numerical majorities; we turn to those and other concerns of domination in section 5 below.

MIT Press, 1992): 109-42; Sanders, Lynn M. "Against Deliberation," *Political Theory.* Vol. 25, no. 3 (June 1997): 347-76.
[40] Cite to dissertation, chapter 11, for more detailed results.
[41] Personal communication with Susan Ryan, Consortium on Chicago School Research, regarding unreleased data sets from Local School Council member surveys.

How Much Participation is Enough?

These participation patterns lead to no straightforward assessments, either positive or negative, regarding the operations of deliberative democracy as it actually exists in Chicago. On one hand, the proportion of total adults who participate in these direct governance opportunities is much less than for conventional forms such as voting. If we judge desirability solely on the basis of how many people participate, then these experiments must be regarded as failures compared to voting. If we include additional desiderata—for example citizens' knowledge over issues which they are asked to express opinions, the impact of those opinions on state action, and finally the effect of state action on social outcomes—then the current levels of participation exceed necessary minimums, greater participation might not be any more desirable, and so these patterns provide some ground for optimism about the Chicago reforms.

The eleven positions of LSCs are usually all filled and community policing beat meetings are on average attended by seventeen residents and six police officers. Meetings with much lower (say only two or three people) levels of average attendance would lead correctly to fundamental doubts about the viability of this variant of urban deliberative democracy. Very low participation would demonstrate lack of citizen interest, provide too few heads to generate information and effective solutions, and offer too few bodies to implement any resulting group decisions. On the other hand, much greater participation would create other difficulties. Neighborhood crises such as drive-by-shootings or serial rapes, for example, often draw dozens of additional participants to community policing meetings. When fifty or a hundred people attend, it becomes extremely difficult to conduct structured, much less sustained and inclusive, problem solving deliberations. If there is a magic number for a group that is small enough so that all of its members can contribute seriously to an ongoing discussion, and yet large enough to offer diverse views and ample energies, it is probably within an order of magnitude of the actual numbers of people that on average participate in groups constituted by the Chicago reforms.

Considering the increased demands on participants also leads to a reformulation of expectations away from the electoral ideal of 100%. Whereas voting is an infrequent activity for which there are few repercussions for either not voting or making poor choices, participation in local school councils or community policing groups requires

much more knowledge, commitment, and in exchange offers a modicum of real decision
power. Only those with an abiding concern in specific issues are likely to join these
efforts. If these reforms were expanded to include other public problems such as the
environment, social services, or employment—a possibility not developed here—the ideal
of participation would not be one in which every citizen deliberates about every issue,
but in which everyone deliberates seriously about something. Current institutional
arrangements do not offer such diverse opportunities for empowered discursive
engagement, in Chicago at any rate, except in the governance of schools and police. There,
actual rates of participation may not be far from this ideal.

   Patterns of participation with respect to time, socio-economic status, and gender
also ease some serious concerns about the sustainability and fairness of these intensively
deliberative governance institutions. Though both are relatively new, their short track
records of ten and four years for school governance and community policing indicate that
participation levels have been for the most part stable, and so no signs of citizen
exhaustion are yet visible. Regarding fairness, these institutions offer substantial
advantages over more familiar forms of political participation—such as voting, contacting
officials, and interest group activism—that display strong biases favoring the better off.
As shown above, these deliberative opportunities draw participants from the worst-off
areas at rates equal to or greater then those for better-off areas and gender patterns favor
female over male residents. Despite this surprising absence of conventional biases, these
quantitative characteristics of participation leave many open questions. While enough
people participate across many kinds of neighborhoods, it remains to be seen whether
their actions meet the demanding standards of deliberation or whether they fall victim to
pathologies such as domination, corruption, or incompetence. Having established that
diverse citizens do participate in the Chicago reforms, we turn now to questions about the
quality of their participation.

5. Pathological Deliberation: Domination, Exclusion, and Corruption

Do the diverse citizens and street-level bureaucrats[42] who join in school and police governance throughout Chicago actually engage in fair and open deliberation about how best to advance public ends? Or, do their decisions result from self-interested bargaining, deals based upon the exercise and balance of power, and the all around pursuit of private gain? The Chicago reforms enlarged the discretionary latitude of local actors in the hope that they would use their increased authority for creative governance and deliberative problem solving. Some local actors may instead exploit this contraction of centralized supervision to dominate other parties by imposing their own particular priorities or, worse still, corruptly use their newfound public power to line their own pockets. Though no study has yet examined all of the beats and schools in Chicago to definitively determine whether these governance transformations have produced substantial domination and corruption, less systematic evidence and observation affords some preliminary purchase on this critical set of issues. Except in one or two well publicized instances,[43] the most blatant forms of illegal theft and fraud has not surfaced in either the community policing or school governance reforms. At the other extreme, no informed observer would seriously argue that the school and police governance processes have been completely deliberative or free from domination. Both reforms offer centralized and local resources for detecting and rectifying such defects, and their overall success will to a large extent depend upon whether these mechanisms can curb temptations to violate deliberative norms.

The relationship between officials and citizens is particularly vulnerable to domination. Envisioned as equal partners in deliberative governance, they engage one another from very unequal positions. Professional educators and law officers necessarily have more experience, training, and knowledge than citizens, and they contemplate the relevant public problems through their entire work life rather than for several hours each month. Furthermore, the implementation of deliberative governance plans and decisions

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[42] This term comes from Michael Lipsky. *Street-Level Bureaucracy: Dilemma of the Individual in the Public Services* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1980).
[43] Cite high school, Puerto Rican independence movement scandal from Tribune.

generally depends upon the positive efforts of professionals more than citizens, and so their disproportionate influence on the extent and quality of action provides another source of unequal power. Should they try, then, professional participants have ample resources with which to dominate discussion by setting agendas, arguing stubbornly for their own positions, or simply refusing to act according to the group's will. In the case of school governance, LSCs' formal powers over principal selection combined with the fact that parents have a majority (six of eleven) seats on school councils encourages principals, and through them teachers, to deliberate with parents rather than attempt to control or exclude them. In light of these efforts to balance power, then, it is perhaps not surprising that surveys of LSC members report that they enjoy substantial power in determining the directions for school improvement and in monitoring school activities.[44] For their part, a majority of principals agree (58%) that LSC's contribute to academic improvement while a large majority (87%) disagrees with the statement that the "LSC pressures me to spend money in ways that I think are inappropriate."[45]

Residents who participate in community policing enjoy less power than their counterparts in LSCs because CAPS gives them no formal authority over the selection or actions of police officers. It is perhaps surprising, then, that residents who attend beat meetings generally report that they are included in the discussions and that the meetings themselves are effective. A Northwestern University survey of CAPS participants, for example, found that 92% of the residents report that meetings improved community-police relations.[46] In terms of agenda setting and problem-solving, residents brought up 67% of the problems that were discussed at the meeting, while police proposed 45% of the solutions.[47] Regarding the willingness of professionals and residents to implement collective decisions, 72% of survey respondents report that actions were taken following these meetings.[48]

While these survey results indicate no widespread domination of citizen participants by officials, there may be important exceptional cases where officials

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[44] Consortium on Chicago School Research (December 1997).
[45] Consortium on Chicago School Research (1992).
[46] One would expect a much lower level of satisfaction if police consistently dominated proceedings or ignored residents.
[47] Institute for Policy Research (1999), p. 32.
[48] Ibid., p. 29.

dominate or where some groups of citizens dominate other citizens as well as officials. Neighborhood-level studies of Chicago's deliberative governance have shown that factions of citizens—formed along cleavages of race, space, social class, or traditional animosity—sometimes use these governance opportunities to assert their particular interests and dominate others.[49] In one police beat, for example, upper-middle class whites lived on one side of the beat and lower income blacks on the other. For many months, problems affecting better-off residents were selected as priorities for the entire beat. In another school, residents were all African-American and poor, but had divided into factions that supported and opposed the principal. Discussion there degenerated into a paralyzing conflict that prevented any coherent school planning and action.

If reform consisted purely in decentralization, these cases and others like them would likely be trapped in domination or crippling strife. The Chicago reforms, however, offer several mechanisms that check and attempt to correct these pathological tendencies. First, the procedure of structured deliberation itself, described above, can transform procedures from domination to more fair discussion. When citizens of unequal status, wealth, or education face one another, domination can result almost unconsciously from the willingness of some to assert their preferences publicly and the shyness and acquiescence of others. While a town-meeting style of discussion that moves in a first-come, first-served basis will exacerbate these inequalities, a structured process in which participants are explicitly asked to rank problems according to how they affect everyone, and then to consider solutions in a ordered fashion, often dampens the propensity of the loudest to get their way and indeed can harness their strong deliberative capacities to solve problems that are important and common to the group.[50] Similarly, efforts by central authorities to train participants in deliberative governance and problem solving can mitigate some inequalities. Training reduces the probability of factional domination by "leveling-up" the deliberative capacities of less-able citizens and by imparting a clear understanding of the roles, responsibilities, and duties of police, educational staff, and citizens. Finally, central authorities in both school reform and community policing sometimes dispatch intervention teams when they detect severe performance failure or

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[49] Fung (1999).
[50] Fung (1999), Chapter 13.

domination. The presence of a third party, as mediator, facilitator, or disciplinarian, can re-establish deliberation in place of conflict or domination.[51] While there is case-level evidence that these three measures of procedural integrity, training, and intervention can be extremely effective in stemming pathological domination, further research is needed to determine whether these measures are enough, whether additional techniques ought to be developed, and indeed the full extent of the problem of factional domination.

These two kinds of domination—when professionals or factions of citizens hijack governance processes that should include the entire group—both concern participants inside the formal deliberative reform institutions. What about citizens who do not participate directly, but who nevertheless have a general interest in safe streets and effective schools and who pay taxes to support these public institutions? Yet a third pitfall of these reforms, then, is the possibility that direct participants such as those who spend their time in beat meetings or serving on local school councils, will exclude those who do not attend. In the most blatant forms of exclusion, those who serve would use public power to enrich themselves, for example by allocating school funds to pay their friends and relatives. There is very little evidence that these abuses occur with any frequency.[52] Less dramatically, direct participants might use public power to address their own narrow problems, for example a parent might demand a school program benefiting only his child or a beat meeting participant might demand police action on a problem that affects only her family. While participants do bring their own experiences and problems to deliberative governance, it should be noted that the small scale of decision often aligns the self-interested concerns with common ends, and that few problems in these arenas are purely private. So, many students might benefit from one parents' effort to develop a remedial reading program for his own child. A woman pushing police to help her shut down a nearby crack house would certainly benefit from concerted efforts against it, but so would her neighbors.

Several more intentional measures also help ensure that those who participate initially in school or police governance programs do not ensconce themselves to advance their own concerns to the exclusion of others. First, many who do directly participate

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[51] See Fung Dissertation, Chapter 15.
[52] Consortium on Chicago School Research (December 1997)

spend considerable energies on outreach efforts to draw non-participants into the process. Community policing activists, for example, frequently canvass their neighbors to invite them to meetings and solicit their input on neighborhood priorities. More than half of the LSCs report holding open meetings to solicit broad input on their School Improvement Plans.[53] Citywide media efforts by the CPS and CPD (discussed in Section 3 above) also aim to inform non-participants about the structure and opportunities for deliberative governance. As reported in Section 3, the vast majority of Chicago residents know about community policing and LSC awareness is likely to be just as widespread. The open character of both police and school governance guarantees that those who are dissatisfied with local decisions or outcomes have real opportunities to engage, perhaps become, the decision makers. All community beat meetings are open to the public, and so any resident can move from outsider to insider status, formally at any rate, simply by calling the police station to find out where the meeting is and then showing up. Since LSC positions are elected, they are less permeable bodies, but still quite open. All LSC meetings except those that deal with sensitive personnel issues are open to the public, and anyone can speak there. Someone who desires more influence than attendance affords can run for a position on their Council, and will usually get it since most of the seats are uncontested.

Despite this preliminary favorable evidence, many LSCs and community beat meetings no doubt fall far short of the deliberative ideal. The discussion here suggests only that reform has not resulted in widespread corruption, domination, and exclusion, as some feared, and that the reforms themselves have internal mechanisms such as training, outreach, monitoring, and when necessary intervention, to reinforce deliberative and combat its pathologies. Increasing the deliberative nature of these governance forms will no doubt depend on the perfection of these instruments and the development of additional ones. Before turning to those questions about how these institutions might be enhanced, however, we turn to the difficult issue of their effectiveness.

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[53] Consortium on Chicago School Research (December 1997): 23.

6. Institutional Performance: Competence and Effectiveness

For many activists, administrators, politicians, and perhaps for the public in general, this design of deliberative democracy stands or falls not according to whether it builds many active democratic partnerships between citizens and police and school officials, but whether it yields concrete, measurable improvements in the effectiveness of schools or the safety of neighborhoods. This demand for institutional competence is perfectly understandable in light of the dismal performance of many Chicago schools and its dangerous city streets and alleys. Indeed, the demand for the deliberative participatory reform would be an insensitive and scholastic extravagance if enhanced democracy did not also promise the performance gains described in sections 2 and 3. Unfortunately, these reforms are too young, and too quickly changing, to allow any definitive pronouncement concerning whether they perform better or worse than the institutions that preceded them, or whether other alternatives could do better. There have been substantial declines in crime rates and more modest gains in student test scores, but school and police systems in many other cities without deliberative reform show similar successes. Despite the absence of dramatic and unequivocal evidence, several kinds of kinds of observations do tentatively indicate that positive links connect empowered deliberative democracy to institutional performance.

First, careful examination of test scores suggests that the effectiveness of Chicago schools has improved since the devolutionary reforms of 1988, but especially since the accountability amendments to those reforms in 1995. Anthony Bryk and his associates[54] developed a metric of school productivity, described in section 3, that attempts to isolate the impact of school factors—such as teaching, curriculum, atmosphere—on student learning while discounting factors that cannot be controlled through site governance efforts such as the preparedness of children when then enter the school. Based upon an analysis that applies this productivity metric to the historical files of CPS student test scores between 1987 and 1997, the authors find that, while students entering the system have become increasingly disadvantaged and less well prepared, the majority of schools have become more effective in educating them. They conclude that:

> Chicago school reform has precipitated substantial improvements in achievement
> in a very large number of Chicago public elementary schools. The governance
> reforms of 1988 and 1995 have significantly advanced the learning opportunities
> afforded to literally hundreds of thousands of Chicago's children. While more
> improvements are still needed, these results should nonetheless encourage the
> public that Chicago's schools can substantially improve and that this is, in fact,
> occurring.[55]

While a similar metric to measure the productivity of the public safety efforts of police

and residents would be much more difficult to construct and no one has yet attempted to

develop it, the number of violent crimes has declined steadily since citywide community

policing program began in 1995:[56]

	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	94-98 %Chg.
Murder	928	824	789	757	702	-24%
Sexual Assault	3,048	2,896	2,752	2,545	2,387	-21%
Robbery	33,949	30,086	26,860	25,289	23,117	-31%
Aggravated Assault	40,425	39,205	37,097	36,519	36,740	-9%

In addition to these overall statistical gains, surveys of participants and direct

observers indicate that they also regard their deliberative problem solving efforts as

successful. Though certainly interested and biased, those who actually participate

community policing and local school governance are perhaps best positioned to evaluate

the success of their own efforts, as they enjoy dense information about their particular

situations and can more closely monitor the myriad factors and indicators of success and

failure. In the Consortium on Chicago School Research's 1995-6 survey of LSC members,

for example, most members reported being able to carry out their legally mandated

functions quite well: 56% report conducting "comprehensive" or "very comprehensive"

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[54] Bryk et. al. (March 1998)
[55] Ibid., p. 44.
[56] Source: Illinois State Police, Division of Administration, Crime Studies Section. *Crime in Illinois—1998* (Springfield, IL: State of Illinois, April 1999).

evaluations of their principal; 90% reported that they were "somewhat active," "active," or "very active" in formulating their schools' long term improvement plan; and 80% responded that they were "moderately" or "highly" involved in their schools' budgeting processes.[57] With respect to community policing, a Northwestern University survey of meeting participants, found that ninety-two percent of responded thought that the meetings were useful in finding solutions to neighborhood problems, and 72% reported that concrete actions were taken as a result of meeting discussions or that "they noticed a change in their neighborhood resulting from decisions made at the meeting."[58]

A third source of insight into the effectiveness of Chicago-style deliberative governance comes from examining the mechanisms, strategies, and plans actually developed and implemented by local groups. A central part of the justification for the effectiveness of these new reforms, after all, was that teams of local officials (school staffs, beat police) and neighborhood citizens would generate fresh perspectives, bring contextual information and diverse resources, and thereby develop novel and more effective problem solving strategies than could emerge from hierarchical direction. Case level research shows that these groups do select problems and develop strategies that substantially depart from conventional wisdom and the repertoire of professional approaches to policing and education. When one community policing group identified narcotics and gunfire at a local park as its most urgent problem, police proposed intensive patrolling of the area. While they proceeded with that strategy, residents organized a neighborhood park committee that organized community activities and pushed the City to provide staff for the park on the theory that they could displace socially undesirable activity there. After several months, both police and residents report that the area had become safer due in large measure to these synergistic efforts.[59] A community policing group in another area targeted a building that for years had been a site of prostitution, gang activity, narcotics trafficking, and less severe but still annoying social disturbances as it priority. This building, as it turned out, was owned by an absentee landlord who invested little money into its upkeep and even less energy in monitoring the tenants or

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[57] Bryk et. al. (1997): 24.
[58] Institute for Policy Research (1999): 29.
[59] Fung (1999), Chapter 15.

their activities there. The community policing group saw the irresponsibility of the
landlord as the cause of this problem, and so targeted him in a variety of ways that police
acting on their own would not likely have done. First, they conducted a title search to
identify the building's owner. They then petitioned him informally to clean up the
building and screen his tenants. When these entreaties failed, the group called a variety of
public inspectors who then cited the owner on health and building code violations. They
also organized themselves to monitor activities on the property and utilize a phone tree to
inform police when they saw illegal actions. Beat police, for their part, began to wear
pagers for residents in order to short-circuit the cumbersome city dispatch system.
Through these efforts, the owner was fined and imprisoned several times for both
violation and contempt, and he eventually sold the building to a more responsible party.[60]

  LSCs' improvement planning activities often exhibit similar creativity in problem
identification and solution. Many LSCs have targeted the lack of time for teacher
collaboration and class planning as a central obstacle, and so have implemented "time
banking" schemes that shorten the class day by ten minutes in order to gain fifty minutes
of unstructured time for teacher reflection each week. More dramatically, one school
decided to reinvent its identity from the ground up along an Afro-Centric theme in the
effort to build an enthusiastic school community and boost flagging staff morale. They
accordingly changed the name of their school, many elements of curriculum, and extra-
curricular activities.[61] Another school identified the absence of early intervention and
education as one of its main problems, and so used its discretionary monies and grants to
establish a pre-Kindergarten program. Many schools spend their energy on the quality of
the school's physical plant or on creating orderly surroundings to proved an environment
conducive to learning. Still others create additional facilities such as computer labs and
networks because they see technological literacy as a central need for their students.
While it remains to be seen whether these innovative strategies contribute to student
achievement in the long term, or indeed whether a governance regime that demands such
local creativity is on the whole superior to a centrally directed one, it is clear that many
LSCs have used their powers, contextual knowledge, and resources to develop and

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[60] Fung (1999), Chapter 14.
[61] Fung (1999), Chapter 14.

implement diverse strategies that more hierarchical arrangements would have been unlikely to generate.

These pieces of evidence do not do not show that empowered deliberative governance as it exists in Chicago is a magic bullet for the vexing problems of safety and education in American cities. What they do show is that these reforms have set in place institutional machinery that arguably performs at least as well as that which preceded it on gross metrics such as student test scores and crime rates and that those who are actually involved in these problem-solving teams rate their performance rather highly. Beyond that, the actual strategies and actions of these groups are remarkably innovative; they do not adhere to the traditional stock of policing or educational solutions and they do not respect conventional boundaries between administrative areas (such as policing, health and safety issues, building regulations, and parks operation) or between public and private spheres. Instead, they begin by identifying priority problems and then address them by bringing additional parties and resources as needed and as capacities allow.

7. Consolidation: Toward Self-Reinforcing Empowered Deliberation

These remarkable, but still limited, successes of locally empowered deliberation are made possible by the larger scale reforms that constitute LSCs and beat teams and then provide them with various supportive, monitoring, and accountability functions. While most of the discussion so far has treated those institutions as the structure that allows deliberative decision-making, as opposed to centralized command or interest group bargaining, we turn now to the possibility that the framework itself should be made a subject of deliberative inquiry and problem-solving. Macroscopic deliberation would enhance the participatory and deliberative character of local action, and the failure to expand the principles of deliberation to the administrative centers at the CPS, CPD, and city hall may well prevent the consolidation of intermittent local successes into definitive gains in both the processes and outcomes of school and police governance. While some moves toward expanding the principles of deliberative problem solving inward to the cores of administration are evident, this trajectory is far from certain. Many entrenched parties such as principals, the teacher's union, police officers, many upper level

administrators, and several powerful interest groups opposed the transformation of local decision making from command and bureaucratic procedure to participatory deliberation because it reduced their prerogatives and subjected them to increased public and administrative scrutiny. Similarly, the transformation of decisions at the center—about who should provide citizen training services, how the performance of schools and police problem solving teams should be measured, and how these groups can be held accountable—to the publicly deliberative mode would also reduce the reach of those who presently exercise almost unilateral control over such institutional design questions.

Consider supportive services such as outreach, training, and community mobilization. These are functions that that local units cannot provide for themselves due to resource constraints and other factors, and yet most observers agree that robust participation and effective problem solving depends in turn on the effective provision of these services. Decisions about who should provide these services and how they ought to be delivered took the same course in both school reform and community policing. Early in each of their reform histories, both the CPS and CPD hired community based organizations that had long been active in parent organization on one hand and public safety on the other to mobilize Chicago citizens for these opportunities and then to train participants in the various necessary skills, techniques, and procedure. In 1998 and 1997 respectively, both the CPS[62] and CPD[63] exercised their administrative prerogatives by bringing this function "in-house" and excluding independent organizations from providing basic training. Citizen reform groups argued that these decisions were politically motivated in order to recapture jobs on one hand and to control the content of training (in which activist organizations often taught citizen-participants to "trust but verify" officials) on the other. For their part, administrators claimed that these decisions would standardize training and increase its quality.

Because major city agencies have multiple incentives to provide training themselves in monopoly fashion, there will likely never be sufficient evidence to evaluate their claims about who can best provide training and mobilization so long these decisions are made in a top-down and commanding mode. In the deliberative mode, by contrast,

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[62] Scheid (September 1998).
[63] Fung (1997).

parties would be called upon to bring argument and evidence to publicly justify their proposals. Since the project of training citizens in participatory governance is so new, no single group can reasonably claim to know the best methods and content of training. One reasonable way to proceed, then, would have been to allow multiple training providers—perhaps some inside city government, some private consultants, and some CBOs—with diverse strategies, organizing, and pedagogical methods to operate simultaneously in different parts of the city. They might then be publicly ranked on various performance criteria—the number of LSC members or beat residents that they trained, meeting and voting turnout, the quality of beat and school improvement plans generated by their trainees, and perhaps eventually more concrete outcomes in school or police action—and by surveying the trainees themselves. This approach would generate a base of performance data that would help settle arguments that are now largely speculative between city officials and activists about who is more competent or who has better connections to the neighborhoods. More importantly, it would establish a competitive mechanism to improve the quality of training received by Chicagoans and consequently enhance their ability to deliberatively operate their local institutions.

The capacity of centralized agencies to effectively monitor local units and hold them accountable suffers from similar failures to incorporate deliberation into institutional design questions. We saw in section 3 that standardized test scores provide a very imperfect instrument with which to measure school performance and yet enjoy substantial political support. Perhaps for that reason, they seem to be the metrics favored by top CPS administrators and are currently used to impose disciplinary measures such as probation and reconstitution on particular schools. At the same time, other metrics such as the productivity index developed by Bryk et. al. and the rakings of a "Quality Assurance Agency," offer obvious, if not decisive, advantages over standardized test scores alone. Specifically, these would better enable high level administrators to accurately identify schools with ineffective governance and educational processes and LSCs to gauge the effectiveness of their improvement strategies. As with the provision of training, monitoring metrics and methods ought to be the subject of an open, and open-minded, debate that allows the simultaneous application of competing proposals in order to generate a base of empirical evidence as well as principled argument.

The CPD has yet to develop systematic methods with which to compare the effectiveness of its police and citizen beat teams. Routinely collected crime statistics are of limited use in comparing beats against one another due to great contextual variation. Beat teams and police supervisors do frequently use crime statistics to assess their own performance and target "hot spots," but there is no coherent system of ranking, monitoring, and disciplining as with the CPS school probation program. The Chicago Community Policing Evaluation Consortium generates excellent and detailed periodic reports on the effectiveness of program elements such as mobilization, problem solving, and planning, but these are integrated into police management only informally and occasionally. Finally, the governance activities of police beats are much less transparent than those of public schools. For example, each school has an Internet accessible "report card" that lists basic demographic and educational achievement information for its students over time and is required to file publicly accessible School Improvement Plans that document LSC deliberations and actions. In contrast, it often requires substantial effort to obtain beat level crime statistics and the availability of beat plans depends upon the discretion of district police officers. Innocuous factors such as resource limitations and administrative priorities explain the absence of more systematic monitoring and evaluation, but the "thin blue line" suspicion of outside interference in police matters and general reluctance to be evaluated may also figure substantially. Despite this reluctance, initial performance metrics in areas such as the level and character of public participation, beat plan quality and degree of implementation, plan effectiveness, and subsequent safety and social order outcomes have already been generated and used on an *ad hoc* basis by various groups of researchers and by police supervisors themselves. More systematic deliberation to apply these metrics and improve them would enhance the deliberative capacities of beat teams by letting them know how they stand in relation to others and by providing more information on the success of their strategies.

More generally, improving the instruments of monitoring through deliberation and applying them more widely and consistently would allow central authorities and the public at large to confidently identify leaders and laggards in deliberative governance. Public knowledge of these rankings would increase the integrity of the system overall by creating pressure for laggards to improve. Moreover, central authorities could utilize the

rankings to study and diffuse, as appropriate, the best practices of leaders while channeling additional resources to assist laggards and, when necessary, to discipline them. This system, in which deliberation about the institutional framework would strengthen deliberation in each of its parts—be they schools or police beats—would require those at the administrative center to subject themselves to the same public scrutiny and discussion, and engage in the same kind of open-minded problem solving, that they have fruitfully foisted upon their subordinate components. While this disciplined deliberation would arguably yield important gains for the democratic character, accountability, and effectiveness of the police and public school systems, it would supplant substantially entrenched political habits and bureaucratic privileges and for that reason seems rather unlikely.

On the other hand, the institutions of empowered deliberation that do exist in Chicago police and school operations themselves result from a series of improbabilities. Few reformers who looked out on the titanic and insular bureaucracies of the CPS and CPD in the mid-1980s could have predicted that in less than a decade these would become the most formally participatory democratic organizations of their kind in any American city. Consistent levels of public participation and absence of familiar socioeconomic biases in that participation surprises many who expect apathy among average citizens and despondency among the truly disadvantaged. Those schooled to respect the power of expertise and professional training would not have anticipated that teams of professionals and ordinary citizens regularly develop inventive solutions to public problems that had long stumped the pros. Finally, those who associate strong democracy and deliberation with endless talk and no action could hardly have foreseen that these reform institutions seem to perform at least as well, and arguably better than, the commanding bureaucracies that came before. The project of consolidating these participatory reforms by extending their principles of deliberation, already operational in the streets, to the highest ranks of administration and to the continuing redesign of the entire institutional frame should be viewed, then, not as a gamble against political improbability but rather as a challenge to perfect the Real Utopian reforms that most Chicagoans already take for granted.