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Framing Democracy and Conflict Through Storytelling in Deliberative Groups

Abstract

Disagreement is a fundamental part of deliberative discussion, but how group members understand their disagreement can profoundly influence their actions. These conflict frames have implications for members' perception of both the issue and as their relationships. Drawing on Putnam's (1990, Brummans et al., 2008) work on conflict frames, this study examines how members of an online deliberative group framed and reframed their conflicts through personal storytelling. Members drew on different models of democracy in their stories. Some managed their disagreements through reframing their conflicts and relationships as collaborative, even in response to adversarially-framed stories. This study advances research in conflict, group discussion, and deliberative discussion and offers practical suggestions for facilitators on how to recognize, interrogate, and help groups develop productive conflict frames.

Keywords

AmericaSpeaks, conflict, communication, disagreement, discourse analysis, framing, facilitation, storytelling

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As readers of JPD are well aware, the past three decades have seen an enormous growth in deliberative models of public engagement (see Delli Carpini, Cook, & Jacobs, 2004; Gastil & Levine, 2005) within communities, online, and with the help of organizations around the world. One basic premise of these deliberative meetings is that decisions that affect the public ought to involve giving ordinary citizens the time, information, and ability to discuss the issues thoughtfully with one another (for description, see Gastil & Levine, 2005). Foundational work in deliberative discussion argues that adequate treatment of differences and disagreement are at the heart of good public problem solving (Asen, 1999; Benhabib, 1996; Gutmann & Thompson, 1996), and normative visions of deliberation involve diverse groups of citizens engaging in thoughtful, respectful discussion of public issues (Burkhalter, Gastil, & Kelshaw, 2002; Gastil & Black, 2008). Yet, both practitioners and researchers of deliberation acknowledge that engaging groups in civil disagreement is difficult. Without thoughtful articulation and consideration of diverse views, groups are unable to adequately understand and weigh tradeoffs in complex public problems. However, engaging in direct conflict can be face-threatening, so deliberative events typically involve guidelines and process facilitators to help groups accomplish both the analytic and social tasks. Facilitators help group members ask questions, exchange ideas, listen to each other, disagree, consider different possibilities, weigh pros and cons, and offer suggestions and opinions. Facilitators also help groups frame their discussions in public terms and reframe problems if conflict becomes unproductive.

Deliberative scholars and practitioners also note that disagreement does not always come in the form of reasoned argument exchanges. A recent body of work has noted that one way participants in deliberative discussions manage their differences is to tell stories (Black, 2008; Ryfe, 2006). Yet, researchers have not closely examined the conflict dynamics involved in such storytelling. The work on conflict framing (Brummans, Putnam, Gray, Hanke, Lewicki, & Wiethoff, 2008; Putnam, 1990) indicates that people discursively create and negotiate their conflict by the way they frame the issue and their relationships. Because stories present people's experiences in a narrative form (Riessman, 2008), it is reasonable to assume that stories told during disagreements rely on some kind of conflict frame. Drawing on democratic theory and conflict framing, this study investigates how participants in a deliberative group discursively use storytelling to negotiate their conflict frames and move toward collaboration. A large part of this negotiation occurs through reframing both the issue and the relationships among deliberators. This investigation offers suggestions for facilitators on how to recognize conflict frames in stories and encourage reframing as needed.

Discursive Framing and Conflict

The concept of framing can be traced back to foundational works by anthropologist Gregory Bateson and sociologist Erving Goffman. Bateson (1972/1955) describes frames as psychological concepts that define how communicative actions ought to be understood. Bateson notes that frames indicate what information listeners ought to pay attention to and see as relevant and what ought to be ignored. This inclusion/exclusion acts much like a frame for a picture that draws observers' attention to the objects displayed within the frame rather than the wall on which the picture hangs. Frames are also meta-communicative because they define how communicative behaviors ought to be interpreted and give meaning to what group members see themselves as *doing* as they interact. Goffman (1974) describes frames as the way people define social situations. Goffman draws attention to the ways in which communication helps people manage multiple frames that are available in a particular situation. He argues that people rely on a primary framework for understanding situations, but they can reframe the situation by shifting their attention to different aspects of the situation. Like Bateson, Goffman highlights communication as the key aspect of this reframing.¹

Numerous studies of the news media have examined how frames affect public opinion and decision-making (see Druckman, 2001; Gamson & Modigliani, 1989; Levin, Schneider, & Gaeth, 1998; Scheufele, 1999). This body of work has focused primarily on the discourse of elites such as politicians or business leaders (Fairhurst, 2005; Fairhurst & Starr, 1996) and their highly crafted messages such as those involved in political campaigns. Although this work has been influential in building our understanding of the influence of framing, its limited focus on expert messages draws attention away from everyday discourse. In contrast, some communication scholarship examines how frames are constructed and negotiated through everyday talk (see Tannen, 1993; Tannen & Wallat, 2001). Rather than treating frames as static objects that define meaning for listeners, these scholars pay close attention to everyday interaction to examine how frames are created, maintained, challenged, and altered discursively. Such attention to the discursive aspects of framing can be useful for deliberative scholars and practitioners.

Conflict Framing

Linda Putnam and her colleagues (Brummans et al., 2008; Putnam, 1990; Putnam & Holmer, 1992) take this discursive approach to framing to help explain conflict. Putnam (1990) describes conflict frames as a process of “defining conflict issues through discourse.” In this view, conflict frames define how disputants view their

interactions: not only what their conflict is about, but also what their relationship to one another is and what kinds of interactions are appropriate.

Mediation scholars also note that conflict frames are inherently communicative and interactive. That is, *how* people respond to each other can perpetuate or challenge how the conflict is framed. Bodtker and Jameson (1997) argue, “Frames are reflexive, they both influence the messages considered appropriate and are in turn created by those very messages.... Communication, then, is the sole mechanism of framing: *what* interactants say, *how* they say it, and to *whom* all convey information that defines the frame” (1997, pp. 238-239). Because framing is an interactive phenomenon that is centrally anchored in communication, group members have the ability to challenge or alter relevant conflict frames. Indeed, conflict mediators often work hard to “reframe” the issues of dispute (Putnam & Holmer, 1992) in order to help conflicting parties find a mutually acceptable solution to their dispute.

Goffman (1974) refers to this dynamic as breaking the frame. Because frames help people establish meaningfulness, that meaning is threatened when a frame is broken. Breaking the frame requires some kind of repair either to return individuals to the safety of their original frame or to replace that frame with something new. In a deliberative event, facilitators make great efforts to frame the public issue and participants’ relationships in ways that are consistent with deliberative democracy. When group members disagree with each other, facilitators may work to reframe the disagreement to highlight questions of values, note the commonalities among different positions, or otherwise help group members see their disagreements in a positive light. The ability to reframe, however, does not lie solely with the mediator. Other group members can also be influential in reframing key issues and interactions (Bodtker & Jameson, 1997). When this reframing occurs, there is a great deal of potential for new meaning to emerge in the group.

Framing Democracy through Deliberative Discussions

Conflict framing is visible during deliberative discussions in groups, particularly when group members talk about their own experiences with public issues. A number of deliberative scholars have noted that group members engage in a great deal of storytelling (Black, 2008; Polletta & Lee, 2006; Ryfe, 2006). These stories serve a variety of purposes in the group (Black, 2009) including helping members deal with their disagreements. One way this conflict management occurs is that group members use their stories to help build arguments in support of their position on the issue being discussed. This occurs because people often

tell stories to help illustrate a point they wish to make, but do so in a way that is less confrontational than direct argument (Polletta & Lee, 2006).

Although framing can occur in many different kinds of communication acts, it is particularly evident in stories. When people tell stories, they describe characters and events in ways that demonstrate their understanding of the issues at hand. Yet, storytellers make discursive choices in how they present their stories, and the choices they make can influence how others are likely to respond. The moral of the story is often used as a way to make an argument for or against a particular position. As deliberative scholars have noted, this moral is sometimes ambiguous and disagreement is often indirect (Black, 2009; Poletta & Lee, 2006; Ryfe, 2006). Moreover, stories seem to orient the group toward the act of storytelling, which can be a break from the more straightforward argument exchange that normally occurs in a deliberative forum. In this way stories can redirect attention in a group and help frame the discussion as a whole.

The notion of conflict framing can help us understand how storytellers present their experiences during a disagreement and how the frame can be influenced or challenged by other group members. I argue that group members involved in deliberative discussions draw on different models of democracy to frame the issue, their relationships to one another, and their purpose as a group. These frames are evident in the way they tell their stories and respond to one another, and can shape how the group manages conflict.

Adversarial and Unitary Frames

In her foundational work on democracy, Mansbridge (1983) made a distinction between two different conceptions that, she argues, are at play in “every modern democracy” (p. 4). The first is “adversarial democracy,” which is characterized by the underlying assumption that individuals have conflicting interests in the issue at hand. Because their interests are in conflict, “citizens find it hard to agree on any principle for resolving differences other than counting each individual’s interest equally, weighing them up, and choosing the policy that accumulates the most weight (majority rule)” (1983, p. 4). The second is what Mansbridge calls “unitary democracy,” which assumes that community members share some common interests and have the ability to work toward consensus.

Mansbridge’s distinction is often described at the level of democratic bodies. Models of adversarial democracy are prevalent in many of our political institutions, and the articulation of unitary models has been influential in helping shape the deliberative movement. Mansbridge offers a caution and argues that when people’s interests fundamentally diverge, a unitary model of democracy

would not be effective—it would lead to stalemate or coercion. I agree with this assessment, but I believe it is useful to consider adversarial and unitary models as discursive frames. In public meetings, people may come in thinking mostly of their own interests, bringing a more adversarial mindset to the discussion, and have trouble seeing where their interests are diverging and where there is room for common ground. Others may bring with them a more collaborative understanding of the issue and community members' interests. These perceptions of self, other, and issue are evident in their discourse. As such, these models of democracy guide group members' interactions and are actively created, maintained, challenged, and changed through their communication. Although some scholars have drawn attention to the idea that group members may manage the distinctions between adversarial and more unitary relationships through their moment-by-moment communication choices (Barge, 2002; Black, 2008), very little research has investigated this framing and reframing by looking at actual group interactions.

Framing Democracy through Storytelling

In my prior research (Black, 2009), I presented a typology of stories that members of some online deliberative groups told during disagreements. Drawing on Mansbridge's (1983) models, I described how group members' argument stories seem to be informed by either adversarial or unitary models of democracy, and these two types of argument stories lead to different patterns of responses and different conflict termination strategies. Adversarial stories have clear argument positions that present the issues as two-sided. They tend to be used to establish the teller's authority to speak on a subject and persuade others to agree with the storyteller's position. In contrast, unitary stories present the speaker's perspective in a way that emphasizes shared values and interests with the other group members, highlights the connections between the storyteller's position and other perspectives on the issue, and emphasizes the potential for compromise or collaboration (Black, 2009).

While doing this research, I found that adversarial stories were very common during group disagreements. In fact, when people were engaged in a disagreement, most of the stories they told were used as evidence for an argument and were framed in an adversarial way. These stories received a high number of responses, usually directly expressing agreement or disagreement with the storyteller and sometimes telling a story of their own (Black, 2009). Most of the time these responses were also presented adversarially, which confirmed the two-sided presentation of the issue and demonstrated clear agreement or disagreement with the storyteller's argument.

However, in twenty-five percent of the cases, group members responded to adversarial stories by telling their own story, but in a unitary or collaborative way. When this occurred, the second story seemed to influence the subsequent discussion by *reframing both the issue and the relationship among group members*. The issue would be presented as one that is not simply a two-sided debate. Moreover, rather than placing the storyteller and other group members with whom the storyteller disagrees on two opposite sides of an issue, the second story emphasized the commonalities among group members and paved the way for collaboration.

This interactive pattern is noteworthy because the reframing was done by fellow group members—not trained facilitators. Also, the fact that the reframing occurred in story form seems to indicate that group members were orienting toward the act of telling stories, rather than toward directly discussing the issue. Although this storied reframing is not the most common outcome of a storytelling event, it is a useful one to examine because it may provide a key method for moving contentious disagreements toward collaboration. A fuller exploration of the communicative interaction of such reframing can promote theoretical development in deliberative democracy by developing our understanding of the functional roles of storytelling. Moreover, this investigation has the potential to offer advice to group facilitators and other practitioners who wish to understand how to respond to storytelling during disagreement.

To that end, this study offers a discursively anchored analysis of the adversarial and unitary frames as they occur in argument stories group members tell during their disagreements. Specifically, this study provides a qualitative discourse analysis of one group disagreement that involved reframed stories. The analysis is guided by the general descriptive question: *What happens when adversarial stories are reframed in unitary ways?* That is, what interaction patterns are indicative of storied reframing?

Methods

Case Description

The data for this analysis come from a two-week-long online discussion forum called “Listening to The City” (LTC), which was designed and orchestrated in conjunction with AmericaSpeaks (see Lukensmeyer, Goldman, & Brigham, 2005). The LTC online forum, which occurred in 2002, consisted of 818 New Yorkers discussing what should be built on the site of the former World Trade Center after the events of September 11, 2001. Participants were divided into groups, which engaged in discussions around topics such as: Hopes and Concerns,

Memorial, Economic Development, Transportation, Housing and Civic Amenities, and Environmental Concerns.ⁱⁱ

For this study, I have identified two discussion threads for analysis. One demonstrates a facilitator's attempt to reframe an adversarial discussion, which is presented here for comparative purposes. The other clearly exemplifies the phenomenon of participants using stories to reframe adversarial argument stories in a unitary way. These are used as examples to demonstrate patterns seen in the larger data set. As the goal of this paper is to illustrate how the framing occurs discursively, a close look at a small number of threads can be useful. Some of my other research (Black, 2009) presents findings based on the data set as a whole.

Analytic Approach

As Jaworski and Coupland (2001) argue, the analytic method of discourse analysis is appropriate for illuminating patterns of interaction, and interpreting the meanings of those interactions. They note that "in-depth single-case analysis (e.g., of a particular conversation or written report) are entirely appropriate in discourse analytic research, and have full validity, relative to their aims and objectives" (2001, p. 37). In this spirit, the analysis below aims to provide insights about the interactive process of this reframing.

Because the discussions analyzed here come from an online discussion forum, it is reasonable to assume that there are structural disjunctive differences between this conversation and what might happen in a face-to-face conversation (cf., Joinson, 2005; Leighninger, 2011, Black, 2012). One structural feature of this discussion is that it occurred asynchronously, which is a common feature of many online deliberative forums. Because participants did not all have to be online at the same time, conversations could seem structurally disjointed. However, both of the discussions presented here occurred in a relatively short span of hours and the conversations seem to have a high level of coherence. Moreover, some research has shown that deliberation online can have many of the same beneficial outcomes as deliberating face-to-face (Min, 2007). Online discussions are becoming very common as either stand-alone events or ways to complement more traditional deliberative forums (Leighninger, 2011). Additionally, a great deal of promising research on the content of deliberative groups' discussions is based on the records of such online discussions (see Davies & Gangadharan, 2009). For these reasons, it is beneficial to understand conflict framing in online deliberative groups even though the study's generalizability to face-to-face interaction may be limited.

Analytic Constructs

Before describing the specific discursive constructs that guide my analysis of adversarial and unitary frames, it is useful to discuss the basic units of analysis: stories and responses. Although there are a wide range of definitions of narrative (see Langillier, 1989), this study focuses solely on personal stories of participants' past experiences. To count as a story, the chunk of discourse must recount some past experience in a way that follows a basic narrative structure (e.g. Labov, 1972; Labov & Waletzky, 1967). This means that stories, at a minimum, involve characters who face some kind of complicating action that is resolved in some way. Typically the stories are evaluated by the storyteller, which helps provide the story's moral.

To locate responses I examine the posts immediately following the story and all subsequent posts in the discussion thread. To count as a response, a post needs to include a direct reply to the content of the story, mention the storyteller by name, or otherwise indicate that it was being directed to the storyteller in response to the story. The analysis provided here does not focus on standard narrative elements such as those identified by Labov (1972) because the focus of this study is on discursive framing and reframing. Yet, the characteristics of framing are evident in the initial stories told by group members and the responses that others provide. In this way, the stories that begin this discussion thread bring out the adversarial and unitary frames that are discursively negotiated throughout the rest of the conflict.

This analysis uses several discursive categories to identify the frames used by the group members. These constructs roughly correspond to categories Brummans et al. (2008) used to analyze conflict framing. Their analytic categories were identity, characterization of others, conflict management, social control, and power. Although the current paper has a different aim, some of the categories identified by Brummans and colleagues are useful. The analytic constructs used in this study fall into two overarching categories: identity statements and conflict management statements.

Identity statements. Generally speaking, identity statements are terms that speakers use to identify themselves and others involved in the disagreement. The first construct in this category is *self-identity* statements, which are those statements that a participant uses to characterize him/herself (Brummans et al., 2008). This includes both self labels (Martin, Krizek, Nakayama, & Bradford, 1996) and collective tokens (Hart & Jarvis, 1999) such as “we” “us” and “our.” One specific issue of interest to the current project is how inclusive the speaker's identity statements are. I have argued elsewhere that adversarial stories typically focus either on the speaker's unique individual characteristics, or demonstrate

identity affiliations that exclude other members of the discussion group (Black, 2009). I characterized these identifications as “exclusive” because they indicate important distinctions among group members and exclude some other group members from the category of “us.” In contrast, unitary stories have much more inclusive identity statements that emphasize all group members’ inclusion in the identity category.

Two other identity-related constructs that help guide this analysis are the ways in which the participant *characterizes other people* involved in the conflict and the extent to which the participant demonstrates *perspective taking*. Adversarial stories tend to characterize other people in the conflict in a negative way and portray the conflict as a struggle between “us” and “them.” In contrast, the unitary stories vary in the ways they characterize others and tend to demonstrate the storyteller’s understanding of other people’s perspectives.

Conflict management statements. The second major analytic category includes both the participant’s *characterization of the problem* and their arguments for what they perceive as the *appropriate action to be taken*. These constructs, based on Brummans et al (2008), can help identify how the speaker frames the issues at stake. Adversarial frames are likely to involve characterizations of the problem as a two-sided struggle or competition where the appropriate outcome is for one side to win. In contrast, unitary frames are more likely to involve problem characterizations that make room for actions such as collaboration or compromise.

Example One: Reframing by a Facilitator

This first example analyzed here comes from a group that had an active facilitator. A common topic of disagreement in the LTC online discussions was whether the rebuilding plan should prioritize tall buildings or a 9/11 memorial. Throughout the discussions, there is evidence of a widely shared framing of 9/11 that involves the “terrorists” as outsiders who have attacked the U.S. This framing is consistent with media coverage of the events, political actions taken in response, and much of the public discourse in the U.S. at the time. In all of the discussions analyzed here, not one group member disputes this official frame. Yet, they have considerable disagreement about what ought to be done in response. In many cases, the issue of whether or not to rebuild the towers (or a structure of comparable height) was described in terms of whether or not the terrorists will have “won.” In the example provided here, this is a consistent frame as articulated by a group member who called himself Apache.ⁱⁱⁱ He argues,

The towers were subtly quite exquisite, and *they need to rise again, stronger*... One thing's for sure, if we do not rebuild to full capacity, then terror has won because we have changed our way of life for them and that is their ultimate goal. The symbols of world peace and trade **must** stand again. (emphasis in original).

Apache refers to building any other kind of structure as making “symbols of surrender” and he suggests that if the towers are not rebuilt then the site should be left empty and referred to as “Osama bin Laden plaza.”

Not surprisingly, many of his posts are responded to with direct disagreement. In this particular case, a group member, Meg, replies,

I have to take issue here with the idea that the terrorists have won anything or that in any real way they could "destroy" this country. That does not mean they didn't do horrible, horrible damage or leave a hole which will remain for a long, long time to come, especially for those who lost those they love.

I reject the whole concept of doing anything—from planning the memorial to rebuilding the WTC site—that reflects the thinking that "we must show the terrorists they haven't won or they can't win." They didn't, and they won't. America is too strong, New York is too strong, and so it shall continue.... It's ludicrous to think that whatever we do with the site—whether we leave it empty or fill it—will somehow indicate that the terrorists “won.”

After another group member replies to disagree with Meg, Apache responds by telling a story.

Understood Meg, but I will say this. When I was working in NY, I took the cheap mini-buses into the city every day, not sure if any of you know them. Some of these drivers are Arabic & Muslim. Well one morning, I got the front passenger seat. As we rode down 495 to the Lincoln Tunnel, there is a part where you can see all of Manhattan. As we drove, the driver literally looked at lower Manhattan and giggled. I couldn't believe it! This low-life was actually laughing at us! The problem is, they have been laughing at us since 9/11/01. The sooner those buildings go up, the sooner they'll realize then that they can't beat us. Not rebuilding at Ground Zero as tall as before will only make them laugh harder, and yes they will have

won; the terrorists and all who support them, even some in our own country!

The adversarial frame runs through all of Apache's comments (and in many of the responses to him) and it is clearly evident in his story here. In addition to using emotionally charged language, he characterizes people according to two groups: people who agree with him and people who are somehow connected to "the terrorists." Although he uses terms like "us" to refer to a larger group of Americans, he implies that those who disagree with his position are part of the problem. His framing of the issue at hand, and the actions to be taken, are also clearly two-sided and based on an assumption of competing interests. In this frame, there are only two options. Rebuild the towers and restore them to their glory, or admit defeat at the hands of the terrorists.

At this point in the conversation the group's facilitator steps in and responds to Apache's statement in what I see as an attempt to redirect the group. The facilitator comments,

This raises the issue about the underlying values we hold. We may each see the situation differently because of those values. What we value might drive our motivations for wanting one thing or another in the rebuild process.

With the strong and great diversity of NYC, those values are bound to vary and at times conflict. So what might represent to one person a sign of external defiance, to another it could be an inward sign of remembrance or local pride.

It is really great how y'all are explaining WHY you feel the way you do. Increasing our understanding of the "whys" and their values takes us one step closer to next steps that can hold what seem like contradictions within one vision. Not either/or... but AND. Does that make sense? If we can live with "and" during these discussions, we can surface the values and really do a great service towards moving forward.

So keep up the good work of including not only the "whats" in your posts, but the "whys."

We continue to stand in deep respect of your sharing.

This post from the facilitator attempts to reframe the conversation away from the adversarial approach taken in Apache's posts. The facilitator's comments are

almost exclusively metacommunicative and process-oriented, which I think represent a well-trained and reflective facilitator's attempt to guide conversation toward more productive view of issues and relationships. In this post she highlights that underlying values shape perceptions, which in turn shape "motivations for wanting one thing or another." Her call to participants to articulate their underlying values (the "whys") and to be more open in their understanding of others' perspectives lays the groundwork for a more unitary frame. She uses the term "we" in two different ways. Most of the time she refers to herself and other facilitators as "we" and the discussion group as "you," but other times she has a more inclusive use of the term when she describes the act of surfacing values and moving forward toward productive outcomes. This move back and forth shows a particular role for the facilitator, one that is committed to the group and yet still outside of it. In the end, it is up to the group to do the work of coming to judgment.

The next three comments in this discussion are quite short and come from different group members, including Meg. All three articulate an argument that the plans ought to "address the issues and needs of the city and those who live here" rather than consider the terrorists' goals. The only one of these to engage Apache's comments directly comes from Kerry, who writes,

The terrorists will not have "won" if we can build something that reflects our values and vision beyond the destruction on 9/11. To me, that means honoring the value of those lives lost as well as the spirit of all New Yorkers, Americans, and people across the world who came to help. Those people reflect the true American spirit—humanity, courage, and grace in the face of horror.

The facilitator responds, "Kerry, that was a great job of surfacing the deeper issues! Thank you!"

In this example, the group faces a very strong adversarial frame from Apache and some of the other members who situate themselves either for or against his position. What the facilitator does is *redirect the conversation by calling for a different kind of framing*. In asking people to articulate their values and appreciate the values of others, she promotes a kind of unitary frame. As a facilitator whose role is to focus on process rather than contributing content to the discussion, she does not tell her own story. She also does not explicitly ask for the stories of others. Her attempt at reframing is very direct, sensitive, and process-oriented. This is somewhat successful in the group as some members

articulate their underlying values and concerns rather than responding directly to the content of Apache's story.

In many subsequent posts the group members have more inclusive and unitary framing of their relationships with each other, but they continue to have an adversarial approach to the conflict. Apache is a fairly extreme example in this case in that he continues to post comments that display an acutely adversarial frame. However, the facilitator's attempt to reframe seems to have shaped how other group members respond. In this way, the more explicit call for mutual consideration, respect, and articulation of underlying values had some success in reframing the group members' relationships.

Example Two: Reframing Through Group Members' Stories

The second example examined here comes from a group that did not have an active facilitator.^{iv} In this case the reframing occurred through a chain of stories told by different group members. Like many others, the discussion examined here involved a disagreement among group members about what approach ought to be taken to rebuilding the site. The disagreement begins with an adversarial argument story posted by Emily, which is reframed by a unitary story told by Dave B. The analysis includes five group members who contribute a total of nine discussion posts. The example provided in the analysis that follows is representative of the interactive process of reframing that was evident in several other discussion threads.

The Initial Frame: Rebuild the Towers vs. Create a Livable Environment

In their first discussion, group members had an opportunity to introduce themselves. One participant, whom I call "DarkMargot," contributes the following statements, which critique the popular viewpoint that the World Trade Center Twin Towers should be rebuilt to their original height or taller.

What I would like to see is a more people-friendly, less coldly monolithic use of the space than the former WTC represented. I do not want to see the towers rebuilt, I thought they were hideous, overpowering buildings. There should be space for a beautiful memorial to remember those who died. Something with the same kind of simplicity and impact as the Vietnam Memorial in Washington would be wonderful. There should be room to see the sunset.

...

We certainly shouldn't try to remake the destroyed space and buildings. They were of their time—the 1960s. It is now a different time. The

buildings suggested in the official plans are pathetic, undistinguished and ultimately insulting to the city and to the people who died there. We can defeat the people who destroyed them by creating something beautiful, with strength and spirit, not with drab and outdated boxes.

DarkMargot's comments sparked the disagreement that is analyzed below. Although her post does not contain a story, it makes a clear argument that the issue is a choice between plans that either emphasize rebuilding the towers as they were or design "a beautiful memorial for the 9/11 victims." This conflict analyzed below began when Emily began a new discussion thread called "The New Vision as We See It." The following message is the first message in that thread and includes an adversarial story (italicized for easier identification).

Turn 1 (Emily)

I'd like to agree with DarkMargot as far as rebuilding anything looking remotely like the twin towers. I thought they were ugly boxlike structures yes, became part of our cityscape only by default. Their size was the only thing that distinguished them. *I looked to the city as I returned from trip, passing through NJ and you know what my eyes went to? The beautiful Empire State Building and Chrysler Building. With the towers gone I find myself appreciated [sic] those and our other great buildings more—at least partly because they aren't overshadowed by the huge blockiness of those towers.* So can we try not to confuse the symbol of the towers and what was lost with their physical presence.

Certainly, there's no reason not to build a beautiful tall building in the area but I think it's more important to create a livable working, cultural environment.

Emily

Emily's post displays both individual and collective identities, but the primary focus is on her individual experiences and feelings. Throughout her story, and the rest of her post, she most frequently used the term "I" to describe herself. Her only mention of a specific other person involved in the discussion is DarkMargot, a person with whom she agrees. She has no explicitly stated collective identity labels, but does use the collective token "our" to describe the "great buildings" that had been obscured by the "huge blockiness" of the towers. This use of "our" seems to refer to the people of New York and, presumably, is inclusive of the other members of the discussion group.

Her other use of a collective token, in the comment “can we try not to confuse the symbol of the towers and what was lost with their physical presence” linguistically refers to members of the discussion group, but functionally seems more like an accusation of wrongdoing aimed at a second party (Emily herself is not performing the act of “confus[ing] the symbol” with their “actual presence.”) Although she is making an appeal to what seems to be an inclusive collective identity by using collective tokens that refer to other members of the group and the city (“our cityscape,” “our buildings,” “can we try not to confuse...”), she is using these collective identifications to persuade people who disagree with her to try to get them onto her side.

Like Apache, Emily frames the issue of development as a two-sided choice: Rebuild the towers as they were, or focus on “a livable working, cultural environment.” The course of action she proposes is to abandon the idea of rebuilding the towers and focus creative attention on figuring out how to create the working and cultural environment she envisions. Emily’s story demonstrates an adversarial frame because it conveys that the teller assumes that there are two sides in this disagreement and is trying to garner support for her position. Although she hints that there could be a compromise solution, the emphasis of her post is that the position she favors is clearly the “more important” consideration.

Reframing the Conflict

The next example is the first response to Emily’s post. It comes from Dave B, a very frequent contributor to the discussion, who had stated earlier that he supports building structures that are as tall as or taller than the Twin Towers to replace what was lost in the attack. His response is interesting because, although he disagrees with Emily, his post exhibits some attributes of a more unitary conflict frame. His post also includes a brief story (italics added).

Turn 2 (Dave B)

To a significant extent I agree with Emily and by extension at least somewhat with DarkMargot. As a longtime, and older (and hopefully wiser), Structural Engineer, I've come to accept that I have a certain bias towards enjoying human constructed 'bigness' (I guess it still engenders pride in my species).

Nonetheless, I hope and believe I’m not so constrained, narrow minded and / or unimaginative that I cannot understand the concerns and feelings of E. & DM. and perhaps others. I definitely agree with DM., "There should be room to see the sunset." as well as that the new construction and

the neighborhoods beyond the site ought to be much more pedestrian and cyclist friendly.

Like Paul, I now see a "painfully empty" hole in the NYC skyline. *When I travel into Manhattan on business or pleasure, I see this suicidal, terrorist void close up. When I'm home in Bergen County, and walk or bike to a nearby hilltop lookout, I can still see the lower Manhattan hole in panorama. While I luckily and thankfully did not lose any family in the 9/11 attack (although one brother-in-law was saved by luck), I have friends and acquaintances in and around my hometown that did. I am both sad and vexed we have lost so much from so many directions on so many levels.*

...

I respectfully, in part, disagree with Emily's final comment here. I think it is just as important to build a tall beautiful structure (usable or symbolic) as "to create a livable working, cultural environment." It's not so much vengeance as defiance in not letting the suicidal terrorists thugs have the last word on symbols of American democracy and ability.
Dave B

Dave B begins his response by explicitly demonstrating agreement with Emily and DarkMargot, both of whom advocated positions that, on the surface, seem to be different from his own. In the first two paragraphs of his response he used the pronoun "I" to refer to himself, and also used the label of "Structural Engineer" to describe himself. Both of these moves emphasize his individual identity, but also provide some explanation for his own perspective. He characterizes several others involved in the disagreement by aligning Emily and DarkMargot with a group of people he refers to as "others" who "perhaps" share their perspective. Although this group of other people does not share Dave B's "bias toward human constructed 'bigness,'" he can understand and see value in their perspective.

Not only did Dave B express interest in understanding their perspective, he goes on to articulate what he sees that perspective to be. He also brings in the perspective of "Paul," another discussion group member who previously advocated for rebuilding. In the story itself, Dave uses the collective token "we" to refer to what could be interpreted as America or New Yorkers, both of which are inclusive of other discussion group members. His statement, "I am both sad and vexed we have lost so much from so many directions on so many levels" expresses his sense that what was lost was something "we" all shared. The shared

identity, characterization of others in a positive light, and explicit perspective-taking all help frame Dave's post as unitary.

Dave B's conflict management statements also helped reframe the conflict as unitary. Rather than treating the disagreement as a contest between two options, Dave juxtaposes agreement and disagreement with a variety of statements made by different group members to indicate shared interests. He begins by stating that "to a significant effect" he agrees with Emily, but goes on to argue for a position that is different from hers. Although Emily, who did not want to see the towers rebuilt, and Paul, who felt a "painfully empty" hole in the sky, would conceivably be on opposite sides of an adversarial debate, Dave B reframes them to be more complementary. *The appropriate action to be taken, according to Dave B's post, is not to choose between either rebuilding or emphasizing the memorial, but to find ways to achieve both by recognizing the importance of the towers' symbolism of American values such as "defiance" and "democracy."*

The demonstration of perspective taking, the combination of individual and inclusive collective identity, and connection of different argumentative positions makes Dave B's response a unitary one. This response is crucial in changing the tone of the subsequent discussion. Turn 3 is Emily's response.

Turn 3 (Emily)

Dave B,

I think we're just disagreeing in degree not fact, if that makes sense. I personally don't feel the gap at the end of the island but my friend who lives in Battery Park City feels differently. She feels that Manhattan needs another tall building or group of buildings to balance a skyline that now feels out of whack for her (and a lot of other people). I can respect that.

I'm all for defiance but I guess I'm just more concerned with making downtown Manhattan more livable—making that area a cultural center and bringing together more people there than ever before is an act of defiance too, don't you think? And I reiterate, I'm not against building a tall beautiful structure that stands out on the skyline.

Emily

Emily's response mirrors Dave B's in its display of perspective taking and connection between apparently disparate positions. Although she still uses "I" to describe herself and is speaking solely to Dave B (as "you"), she provides a positive characterization of other people involved in the conflict: Dave B, her friend, and "a lot of other people." She demonstrates perspective-taking when she

describes her friend's opinion about the skyline feeling "out of whack" and then declares that she "can respect that" feeling.

Her characterization of the conflict also changes in this post. Rather than trying to persuade the group to focus on creating a livable environment *instead* of rebuilding the towers, as she was in Turn 1, here she characterizes what she is doing with Dave B as only "disagreeing in degree." By the end of this post she seems to be closer to Dave B's position than she did in her original post. Her final statements pose a question to Dave B about whether or not he agrees that bringing people together is an act of "defiance" (a value they now both claim to share) and a statement that "reiterate[s]" that she is "not against building a tall beautiful structure" in the place of the former Twin Towers. Her final sentence could be interpreted as a bit forceful because of the emphasis on the word "not" (indicated by underlining it) and the use of "reiterating," which indicates that she believes that she already stated her position in a way that demonstrates some level of agreement with Dave B's position.

Turn 4 is Dave B's response to Emily.

Turn 4 (Dave B)

Whoa <chuckle>... Emily,

It makes perfect sense. I positively agree we are not disagreeing in substance, but in degree, if at all. <smile> (see my comments in my intro concerning memorial, open space, cultural center and my guess about the need to expand the acreage involved). . . .

Dave B's response to Emily displays positive emotion, agreement, and a move toward consensus. He uses humor by starting with the word "Whoa" (ostensibly in response to her last two sentences, which directly call for him to respond) and textual representations of humor ("<chuckle>") and positive emotion ("<smile>"). Although he does not use many identity statements, the emphasis seems to be on what "we" (he and Emily) are engaging in, which involves at least some level of interdependence and shared identification.

He responds with agreement, saying that he "positively agree(s)" with her assessment that they are "not disagreeing in substance, but in degree" and adds the qualification "if at all." The reframing of the conflict from an adversarial choice between two competing options to a disagreement only "in degree" to potentially "not at all" disagreeing seems consequential here. If disputants do not see themselves as truly disagreeing, then it seems that the discussion is likely to change from adversarial argument toward more collaboration.

Group Members Reinforce Unitary Frame

Until this point, the disagreement between Emily and Dave B has been dyadic. However, the disagreement occurs on a group forum and other members eventually come into the discussion. The first response comes from Dark Margot, whose initial post had sparked the disagreement. After a brief statement of her position on the disagreement, she goes on to give a lengthy description of the architectural history of the “setback” as it has been used in New York City^v and then presents some ideas for redeveloping the site.

Turn 5 (Dark Margot)

I'd like to make it clear that I'm not opposed to at least part of the site having a tall building. Tall buildings are one of the things that make New York New York. However, one of the things that distinguishes classic New York buildings is the use of the setback.

...

I don't think that we want to go backwards to the giant slab concept. I think the best answer to the terrorists is to go forward. They are the backward thinkers, we shouldn't allow them to make us like themselves.

Perhaps we could have one or two tall (but not necessarily 110 stories) buildings with graceful setbacks crowned with beacons of hope that would echo the torch of the Statue of Liberty. That would be symbolic of what America really represents at its best.

One thing I did really like about the WTC was its skin. It picked up the light in interesting ways. Clothing the new buildings in the same surface would be a real concrete connection to what was destroyed and serve a fine aesthetic purpose as well.

In her response, Dark Margot displays her individual identity as an art historian, but she emphasizes an inclusive collective identity. Her references to “we” could be either Americans or New Yorkers, but in either case she expresses identification with a group that included her fellow group members. She also contrasts this “we” with “them,” or the “terrorists.” She portrays the terrorists negatively as “backward thinkers,” and positions the inclusive collective identity (“we”) as their opposite.

Her conflict management statements provided the foundation for a compromise position by emphasizing design elements other than the height of the buildings. These additional design elements build on the values that were made explicit in other posts (“what America really represents at its best”) and function to help

make compromise more possible in the group. In the next post, Emily responds to Dark Margot and picks up on her movement toward a unitary frame.

Turn 6 (Emily)

darkM,

Thanks for the brief history on the "setback" in modern skyscrapers. I agree that there are beautiful skyscrapers made of gorgeous building materials. The downtown area deserves great new buildings created by visionary architects.

In this brief post, Emily again aligns herself with Dark Margot. There are no clear collective identity statements in her post, but she talks about "the downtown area" as an entity. It seems likely that this is something that is either shared by all or inclusive of all because "we" all have an interest in the downtown area where all "our great buildings" (Turn 1) are located.

Emily's conflict management statements are interesting in this turn because in some ways, they seemingly contradict her initial argument for emphasizing cultural aspects over the rebuilding of the towers. However, here she frames the rebuilding as something that could be done by "visionary architects" who could make "great" and "gorgeous" buildings that downtown "deserves." This emphasis on greatness, vision, and beauty is consistent with the underlying values of her initial post. So, although there is a shift in her position, she is still in line with her initial values, which are shared by the rest of the group. Her identity and conflict management statements, then, add to the unitary frame begun by Dave B.

The next post comes from Joey, who had thus far been silent in the discussion of this issue. His post expresses agreement and identity in a way that is consistent with the unitary frame.

Turn 7 (Joey)

This discussion is at the core of many people's thoughts about the site, "What type of buildings to build." Before I give my opinion though, I'd like to agree with Emily in saying that I think the greatest tribute would be a thriving community on and around the site of this terrible tragedy. In my mind, that is the spirit of New York and indeed our country.

As I stated in my introduction, I am one who really liked the design and aesthetic of the towers. There was something beautiful in their simplicity. However, I do agree with Dark Margot in that we need to look forward and ensure that the design for the new site reflects our ingenuity and

defiance at those who seek to stifle our progress. A super-tall building would not only be inappropriate but also wouldn't be economically viable as I guess that businesses would be wary to lease high-altitude real estate. I do think that at least one new building on the site should be taller than all of the other buildings in the area in order to fill in the skyline.

Additionally, I agree with LocalResident in that there should be some thought that goes into the planning of the roads. I would love to see less traffic and more emphasis put on the transportation hub they are planning for the site. One of the best things about Manhattan is that you do not need a car. It is my wish that more cities in the US followed this model and we should keep this in mind when talking about the site.

Joey expresses individual identity by referring to himself as “I” many times. He does not have any collective tokens in this post, but provides very positive characterizations of specific other group members involved in the discussion. So, although he is not discursively identifying himself as connected to the other members of the group, he is very positive in the way he portrays his fellow group members.

His conflict management statements demonstrate a great deal of agreement with other group members (Emily, DM, LocalResident). He provides productive contributions to the group discussion and connects his contributions to suggestions made by other group members. In this way his post contributes to the unitary frame by noting the work the group is doing together. Joey also explicitly builds on the group's espoused values when he describes his contributions being in line with the “spirit of NY and indeed our country.” The next post is another contribution from Emily.

Turn 8 (Emily)

I like the idea that has been suggested in various news reports that some of the retail components be moved outside the original area. This I think would provide more services to the downtown community and give more flexibility to redevelop the site itself.

In this short post, Emily contributes more ideas on redevelopment. Like Turn 6, this post offers suggestions that are in line with the shared interest of the group. She also aligns with her position of developing a livable area (Turn 1), but her position is not framed in an adversarial way.

The final post in the discussion on this topic comes from Bunny, who had been a frequent contributor on other topics, but until this point had not participated in this particular conflict. Bunny's comments further build on the unitary frame.

Turn 9 (Bunny)

We all seem to envision buildings and designs that would be spectacular and inspiring, and could we find such a plan it would be as much a memorial to the victims as the actual memorial itself. This probably requires the expertise of a visionary group of architects and urban planners, people who can work together, adjust their ideas to fit together, and make all aspects of the plan harmonious in every respect.

Bunny's identity statements clearly fit the unitary frame. The only time she mentions herself is as part of the group "we all," which is an inclusive reference to the discussion group as a whole. Her characterizations of other people who could potentially be involved in the situation are very positive. These others (architects, urban planners, etc.) are "experts" who bring unique characteristics that are beneficial to the group's goal. In Bunny's portrayal, people can work together and adjust their ideas to fit together and make all aspects of the plan harmonious. Whether or not this portrayal comes to fruition, the point here is that the way Bunny talks about herself and others involved in the potential conflict builds an ideal of togetherness and harmony that is clearly in line with a unitary frame.

This unitary frame is also evident in Bunny's conflict management statements. According to her post, "we all" are "envision(ing)" and trying to "find" a "plan" for "spectacular and inspiring" buildings and designs. To make this plan a reality, "we" will need help from experts, but if they can "find" this plan, the building itself will be a memorial. In this case the discussion itself is an object of value not just because of what it can lead to, but because the process of planning together is a positive memorial to the 9/11 victims.

Discussion and Conclusion

The analysis of this group's discussion shows how Dave B's reframing, and Emily's uptake of the new frame, move the group away from viewing the rebuilding process as a two-sided singular issue. This framing occurs in participants' personal stories and their responses to one another's experiences. By breaking the adversarial frame, Emily and Dave's interaction demonstrates possible collaboration and allows the group to explore creative new alternatives to the problem.

One facet of this shift from an adversarial to unitary conflict frame is evident in the changes in the group members' identity statements. In Emily's early post, she describes her personal position as against other members in the group (I vs. you). Dave B's response and the subsequent posts change the identity statements to emphasize "we," including all members of the discussion group, as in contrast to "them," which typically refers to the "terrorists." The terrorists are portrayed negatively in all the posts that mentioned them, which further cements the group members' collective identity by positioning the terrorists as outsiders. Although early posts contain some negative portrayals of members of the discussion group, later posts portray all group members positively, which helps contribute to the unitary frame. The posts also demonstrate some perspective taking, which emphasizes the inclusive nature of group members' collective identity. The end of the discussion refers to group members' identity to as "we all," which is an inclusive group of people working toward a common goal.

There is also a shift in how group members define the conflict. Emily's early post uses her personal story to frame the conflict as a two-sided issue requiring adversarial debate. As more and more posts demonstrate possible connections among the various positions held by group members, this adversarial frame loses its power for the group. Partway through the discussion Emily and Dave B agree that they "disagree only in degree." Later it seems that they do not disagree at all, and by the end of the conversation Bunny portrays the group as all working together on a common goal.

The shifts in identity statements and in portrayal of the conflict are essential to the reframing process in this group. *Part of what made these shifts possible is the way in which the group members articulated their key values through telling and responding to stories.* Some of the values they emphasized were: defiance, democracy, the spirit of New York, beauty, "What America is at its best," and a "tribute" to the 9/11 victims. Articulating key values is an important part of group deliberation (Gastil & Black, 2008). Facilitators can directly ask group members to articulate their values, as demonstrated in the first example, which can help participants reframe adversarial approaches to find more common ground. Yet, speaking the language of underlying values is often difficult for group members to do. Stories display participants' values, and in this discussion talking about shared values was an essential part of reframing their relationships and their tasks.

Implications for Deliberative Scholarship

This study makes a theoretical and empirical contribution by emphasizing how frames are evident in stories and can be discerned through a close attention to interaction. Viewing unitary and adversarial models of democracy as frames allows us to see how language choices give meaning to both the issues under discussion and group members' relationships. Moreover, this study demonstrates how frames can shift during discussion. Whereas theoretical models of democracy can seem abstract, frames are inherently communicative and embodied in interaction. Because of this embodiment, it is evident that adversarial and unitary frames can be altered or changed through group interaction. Frames, then, are not static objects provided solely by the news media or other experts. They are also not firm portrayals of a conflict. Frames are actively negotiated through group members' everyday discourse. Although democratic ideals offer powerful frames for group interactions, the potential exists for skilled communicators to reframe other members' stories to break an adversarial frame and help members see the potential for consensus. These results provide evidence for the power of one or two influential group members and may offer insights into how group members can use inclusive identity and conflict descriptions to promote reframe conflicts in productive ways.

This study raises the question about the inherent value of adversarial and unitary conflict frames. In considering this question, we should resist the simplistic notion that unitary frames are always best. Instead, we should ask: Under what circumstances are these different frames helpful for deliberative discussion and community problem solving? In Emily and Dave B's group, a unitary frame seemed more productive in helping the group meet its deliberative task. The group was asked to generate ideas in response to the general questions: "what should be built here?" and "what values are important to your group?" The goal of this part of the forum was to be open to a range of ideas from the public, and to gain many, varied suggestions that responded to the values of the community. An adversarial frame that treated the issue as two-sided (as evident in Apache's group) would limit the group's ability to meet its generative task. Similarly, a unitary frame of group member relationships was appropriate for this situation because it promoted a sense of community and collaboration within the group, and it could help further the healing required after a tragedy of this scale.

In other circumstances, adversarial frames may be more appropriate. For instance, an adversarial issue frame could be helpful after a group has finished generating ideas and must make a difficult choice between limited options. In this situation, an adversarial frame of the issue could promote weighing of pros and cons and enhance a spirited debate that helps groups achieve the analytic dimension of deliberation. An adversarial frame of relationships may be useful for

advocacy situations where a group comes together to fight for social justice or otherwise advocate for their cause. Yet, in deliberative groups, it is most likely to be useful to frame *relationships* as unitary because the group needs to collaborate in their discussion of the issues, their values, and the potential options. In contrast, *issues* could be productively framed as either unitary or adversarial depending on the group task faced during the deliberative process.

Practical Implications

This study also has implications for facilitators. Facilitators are a standard part of many deliberative designs (Gastil & Levine, 2005; Leighninger, 2006; Ryfe, 2006); and civic engagement organizations such as Everyday Democracy, the Kettering Foundation, and many others have extensive training programs or manuals for facilitators. Although some scholars have raised concerns about facilitators having too much power in the group (Guttman, 2009; Toker, 2005) there is general support for the fairness, integrity, and immense importance of facilitators (Gastil & Levine, 2005; Jacobs, Cook, & Delli Carpini, 2009; Leighninger, 2006).

The current study connects to some prior research on facilitation. For example, one study examined facilitator's understandings of good and bad moments of deliberation (Mansbridge, Hartz-Karp, Amengual, & Gastil, 2006). The inductive study found that facilitators judged quality both on the basis of "group atmosphere" and making progress on group task. Facilitators found emotional language to be noteworthy, and they valued the free flow of ideas among participants. Of particular relevance to this study, facilitators expressed discomfort with situations where participants presented issues adversarially, and instead valued the times when participants went from "I" to "we" language.

These observations about current understandings and facilitation practices are very useful. The current study adds to them by encouraging facilitators to have more specific understandings of discursive frames for conflict and to recognize that collective tokens such as "we" can hold the key to reframing identities from adversarial to unitary frames. It is quite likely that facilitators already listen for pronoun use in deliberators' talk. This study encourages facilitators to be reflective about how group members are positioned via these identity statements and to ask follow-up questions for group members that help them reflect on what "we" means to them in any particular case. It is important to remember that not all "we" language is the same; the use of identity statements can be exclusionary and adversarial, and further exploration into the identity dynamics in stories can help highlight how group members see themselves in relation to one another and other relevant stakeholders. Such conversation can highlight identity distinctions that

are helpful for bringing in different perspectives and those that provide areas for common ground.

A second implication for facilitators is that it may, in some cases, be more productive to ask people to tell stories about the experiences that led them to hold their beliefs rather than explicitly ask for people to articulate underlying values. Many deliberative events begin with asking group members to tell stories, but it is less common to elicit stories in the midst of a more issue-oriented deliberative discussion. Yet, if stories can portray conflict frames and can serve to reframe identities and issues in adversarial and unitary ways, they may do a better job of bringing the underlying values to the floor than the kind of metacommunication and process-oriented talk that is more common for facilitators.

Finally, this study complements and extends suggestions from David Ryfe (2006) who notes many positive attributes of storytelling in deliberative forums. Ryfe argues that facilitation styles that are too “strong” can close down the opportunity for storytelling and thus deprive deliberators from the benefits of narrative. On the other hand, a facilitation style that is too “weak” or hands-off can fail to guide group members through a thorough process of reflection. Ryfe advocates that facilitators should occupy a middle ground between strong and weak approaches in order to encourage group members to tell and respond to one another’s stories. The present study reinforces Ryfe’s argument and adds the suggestion that facilitators listen carefully for how group members frame both the issue and the relationships with others. Simply calling for stories is not enough, of course. More subtle understandings of discursive means of framing and reframing conflict can help facilitators guide group conversations in productive ways.

Stories seem to beget other stories, and in some cases, like the example here, group members are able to frame and reframe one another’s statements without a need for intervention from a moderator. However, when groups are struggling with adversarially framed relationships, facilitators can solicit stories and ask questions to help interrogate how group members view themselves, the issue, each others’ perspectives, and the possibility for common ground. By listening for frames and prompting deliberators to be reflective, facilitators can encourage conflict management that interrogates issues and encourage groups to move toward collaboration when needed.

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Notes:

ⁱ See Putnam & Holmer (1992) for a more thorough comparison of Bateson and Goffman's approaches to framing and reframing.

ⁱⁱ See Polletta & Lee (2006) for a complete description of this event.

ⁱⁱⁱ This is the screen name that this person chose for himself, and I have chosen to leave it here as I think it helps reinforce his approach to the discussions and it does not identify him. All other names provided in this manuscript are pseudonyms.

^{iv} By design, half of the LTC online dialogue groups had facilitators and the other half had moderators who were not active in the conversation and only intervened in extreme instances.

^v Due to space constraints, this description is not included below, but its location is indicated by the ellipse in her displayed post.