

Deliberation across Deeply Divided Societies

From local to international politics, deliberation helps to increase mutual understanding and trust in order to arrive at political decisions of high epistemic value and legitimacy. This book gives deliberation a dynamic dimension by analyzing how levels of deliberation rise and fall in group discussions and by introducing the concept of “deliberative transformative moments” and how they can be applied to deeply divided societies, where deliberation is most needed but also most difficult to achieve. Discussions between ex-guerrillas and ex-paramilitaries in Colombia, Serbs and Bosniaks in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and police officers and locals in Brazilian favelas are used as case studies, with participants addressing how peace can be attained in their countries. Allowing access to the records and discussion transcripts opens an opportunity for practitioners of conflict resolution to apply this research to their work in the world’s trouble spots, thereby creating a link between the theory and practice of deliberation.

JÜRIG STEINER is Professor Emeritus of Political Science at both the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and the University of Bern. He is the author of *Deliberative Politics in Action* (Cambridge University Press, 2005, with André Bächtiger, Markus Spörndli, and Marco R. Steenbergen). He is the sole author of *The Foundations of Deliberative Democracy* (Cambridge University Press, 2012) and is a frequent consultant on the practical application of deliberation, especially in the Balkans.

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This book gives a real twist to studies on deliberation. It examines deliberation as it happens in practice, and it considers deliberation as a practice that all humans are capable of doing; some more, some less skillfully. The book is a felicitous attempt to put deliberation back with its feet on the earthly ground of mundane human activities.

Giovan Francesco Lanzara, University of Bologna

This is a thought-provoking book on a radically new approach to deliberation in the sense that it looks not just at deliberation but also at the transformative moments in the deliberative process. The description of these transformative moments is incredibly rich, and the authors really put a lot of effort in framing their findings in theoretically sound ways. I have read very few books that offer such an inspiring framework. There is no doubt in my mind that this book will eventually be a bestseller among academics and practitioners alike.

Didier Caluwaerts, Free University of Brussels

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Transformative Moments

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To Ruth

*She was from the very beginning at our side with empathy
and advice.*

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