Despite Jon Elster's caveat that the market potentially endangers the forum, Goodin insists that commercial innovations, such as the focus group and the market test, would actually strengthen democracy and citizen engagement. His thesis in this book is that governments should task members of small-scale deliberative bodies — or what he calls, in the singular, a 'micro-public', and what Robert Dahl before him termed a 'mini-populus' — to experiment with alternative solutions to public problems. While the book is a collection of previously published essays, many are extensively altered and rewritten to support this thesis and to round out a literature that has recently become increasingly oriented toward deliberative practice. Indeed, Goodin is more circumspect than some of the less praxis-focused deliberative theorists — for instance, Jürgen Habermas — concerning the capacity of deliberative forums to displace traditional democratic institutions: 'Inevitably . . . deliberative democracy can only supplement rather than supplant the institutional apparatus of representative democracy as we know it' (7-8). The book is organized into two sections, one concerning the design and function of small-scale deliberative bodies or micro-publics, and the other devoted to deliberative activities in macro-political institutions, including the translation of micro-public recommendations into sound public policy (what is often called 'uptake').

In Chapter 2, 'Making Use of Mini-publics', the author adumbrates a series of practical experiments in deliberative democracy, involving groups of average citizens convened to clarify and, in some cases, resolve public issues of considerable importance. They include: the UK Power Project, *America-Speak*s Town Meetings, Participatory Budgeting in Brazil, Citizens' Juries, Consensus Conferences, Deliberative Polls, National Issues Forums and the 'GM Nation?' public debate in the UK (13-19). Designers of these small-scale deliberative engagements, or micro-publics, confront two critical obstacles: i) scale and ii) legitimacy. Since assembling the entire nation or public-at-large proves too time-consuming and resource-intensive, smaller groups — anywhere from twelve to fifteen-hundred — must suffice. However, the smaller the group, the less legitimacy the outcome has and, consequently, the less capacity the deliberative exercise has for leveraging change in macro-political processes, policies and institutions. Despite popular perceptions that deliberative assemblies lack the political power of elected representative bodies, Goodin concludes that '[i]nnovative mini-publics genuinely have, from time to time, had major impacts on macro-politics' (37).

In the second chapter, Goodin collaborates with Simon Niemeyer to answer the question (as the title suggests) 'when does deliberation begin?' through a combination of empirical observation, data analysis and normative

theorizing. Observing the pre- and post-test surveys of participant preferences in an Australian citizen jury, the authors show that the greatest changes in attitudes occurred during the stage of receiving information, not discussing it (48). This conclusion reinforces Goodin's earlier theory that deliberation possesses a strongly monological component, whereby agents internally weigh reasons, imagine others' perspectives and render personal judgments prior to talking. Many deliberative democrats (over)emphasize the dialogical component, and thereby neglect what Goodin calls 'deliberation within' (see Goodin, 'Democratic Deliberation Within', *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 29 [2000]: 79-107 and my forthcoming 'Dewey and Goodin on the Value of Monological Deliberation', *Etica & Politica* 2 [2010]). However convincing Goodin and Niemeyer's argument is, though, the reader is left with the suspicion that the confirmation of Goodin's earlier theory is not just coincidental. An alternative analysis of the same data pointing to the same conclusion would dispel this looming suspicion.

The last three chapters in the book's first section (entitled 'Talking Politics: Perils and Promise', 'How Talk Informs', and 'First Talk, Then Vote') address the three significant stages of deliberative engagement: i) agenda-setting, ii) information-gathering and iii) deciding, respectively. In setting the agenda for a micro-public, deliberators must determine whether some topics or issues are 'off the table' — or as Goodin calls them, 'politically undiscussable' (66). He classifies these subjects as those that are 'pointless' to discuss (e.g., the issue of when to close the debate, a problem that is impossible to resolve, and a controversy that is either unripe or radically polarizing) and those that are 'impolitic' (e.g., the issue evokes emotionally charged reactions, a problem that is offensive to some minority and controversies that either involve state secrets or are politically inconvenient). Moving to the next stage (and corresponding chapter), the author distinguishes two kinds of information-pooling: i) mechanical and ii) discursive. While the mechanical kind occurs when agents independently update their beliefs based on conditional probabilities that the information gathered is true (i.e. a Bayesian decision model), discursive information-pooling happens when agents talk and form their beliefs through interaction. In many cases, mechanical information-pooling risks engendering what Goodin calls an 'unwelcome cascade', or a flood of undesirable consequences based on prior critical choices (e.g., when jury members propose lowered plaintiff damages after miscalculating that their fellows will vote for higher ones), which could have been avoided if the matter had been discussed up front, i.e., through discursive information-pooling (101-3). In 'First Talk, Then Vote', Goodin demonstrates that this skepticism about mechanical information-gathering does not militate against voting *per se*. Voting is still a paradigm case of independently formed democratic judgment, whereby the principle of 'one person, one vote' ensures procedural fairness. Rather, the process of deliberating should complement voting, such that 'talking together' (or deliberation) delivers a superior 'discovery procedure', and after talking, voting provides 'a particularly good decision procedure' (124).

The second half of the book shifts to the topic of deliberation in large-scale institutions. Chapter 7, 'Who Counts?' addresses the perennial question of whose voices should be included in large-scale electoral and deliberative decision-making exercises, from the expansive standard of all those with affected interests to the more restrictive account of all those within a particular sovereign territory. Goodin persuasively argues for a qualified version of the latter. In Chapter 8, 'Modes of Democratic Accountability', the author evaluates three forms of accountability — hierarchical, competitive and networked — and concludes that the last is, by far, the most cooperative and also the best suited for accommodating political demands across multiple sectors of society. Chapter 9, 'Sequencing Deliberative Moments', illustrates how specific deliberative virtues (e.g. openness, authenticity, common-good emphasis) emerge in different phases of institutionalized decision-making processes, such as the debates of parliamentary assemblies, electoral campaigns and formal negotiations. Still, Goodin argues that deliberation does its best service when employed as a 'discovery procedure' and not a 'decision procedure' (267).

In Chapter 10, 'The Place of Parties', the author considers whether a democracy without political parties would be possible. In the end, they prove necessary for organizing publics around principles and 'ratios' (reasons), 'ideationally unifying' them around policy positions and broader political platforms (220-21). Chapter 11, 'Democratic Mandates', features Goodin and Michael Saward's brief argument that engaging in dog-whistle politics, or political campaigning that selectively communicates racist and other questionable messages to some audiences that mean little to others, is a sure-fire way for the eventual party-in-government to weaken its mandate to rule. In Chapter 12, 'Representing Diversity', the author demonstrates that the mirroring metaphor in political representation, i.e., a popular assembly should be demographically identical to its constituents, is infeasible, and that the better route is to let small-'d' diversity in representative bodies 'serve as a reminder' of big-'D' diversity, or of 'the even-wider-diversity that is absent' (252).

Though the last half of this book might pique the interest of the political philosopher or theorist less than that of the political scientist, its emphasis on institutions and institutional design is an undeniable trend in contemporary deliberative democracy scholarship (see, for instance, Gastil and Levine, eds., *The Deliberative Democracy Handbook*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass 2005). Goodin's collected essays cover a great deal of ground, detailing how democracy and deliberation work at the local, national and global levels, and how 'deliberative mini-publics can serve as invaluable adjuncts to those other familiar features of the democratic process' (269). Overall, this volume represents a significant contribution to the burgeoning literature on deliberative democratic theory.

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